



Musk-kosiminiziibing
Housing Policy (DRAFT)

Musk-Kosiminiziibing 2026

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PART 1 Purpose & Introduction

Purpose

The Purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the administration of the on-reserve housing program for Big Grassy First Nation.

The objectives of Council, as expressed in this policy, are to fulfill its commitment to provide better living conditions for Big Grassy First Nations' band members, while operating in accordance with clear business principles and remaining fiscally responsible and accountable to the membership.

This policy is based on the following principles:

- That membership is aided in the provision of their basic housing needs on-reserve.
- That continuous effort is made to achieve steady improvements in the quality of life on-reserve.
- That the Big Grassy First Nation Housing Program be administered in a cost-effective, service-oriented and accountable manner.
- That all band members be treated in a fair and equal manner with respect to the allocation and distribution of band housing.

Section II.1 Chief and Council

Chief and Council provide the overall governance and oversight for the program with a Portfolio Councilor assigned to liaise between Council and the Housing Committee.

Chief and Council rely on the sound judgement and recommendations of the Housing Committee to make informed and fair decisions with respect to the Housing Program.

Chief and Council serve as final arbiters in the appeals process where members dispute Housing Committee decisions.

Section II.2 Chief and Council Mandate

The mandate of Chief and Council is to provide affordable and suitable housing information and direction on available housing programs to all First Nation community members living on- and off-reserve.

Chief and Council have installed and entrusted a Housing Committee, comprised of Big Grassy First Nation members, to oversee the Housing Program and to provide sound judgement, advice and recommendations to Chief and Council on all Housing Program matters, including but not limited to, new construction, renovations, major repairs, and allocation of units.

Chief and Council will investigate financing options for both rental and home-ownership housing activities in Big Grassy First Nation.

PART 2 HOUSING COMMITTEE

Section 1.0 Composition

- a) The Big Grassy Housing Committee is made up of community member representatives.
- b) The Housing Committee shall consist of five (5) individuals who are 18 years of age or older and are registered members of Big Grassy First Nation.
- c) Two (2) community members will include:
 - i. One (1) youth Big Grassy member, aged 18 – 29 years of age
 - ii. One (1) Big Grassy Elder, aged 55 or over
- d) The Chairperson shall be a Housing Portfolio Councilor.
- e) The Chairperson shall be responsible for facilitating Housing Committee meetings. If the Chairperson is absent, he/she shall appoint a designate from the Housing Committee.
- f) The Housing Manager shall be present at all meetings of the Housing Committee and will provide advice and information only.
- g) The Housing Manager shall take and keep minutes from Housing Committee meetings and will provide minutes and agendas to Housing Committee members prior to each meeting.

Section 1.1 Appointment & Term

- a) The Community member positions for the Big Grassy Housing Committee will be chosen through an informal selection process undertaken by Chief and Council and the Housing Manager.
- b) Community representatives are selected based on their good character and reputation in the community as well as their interest in housing issues.
- c) All Big Grassy Housing Committee members must be 18 years of age or older and be enrolled on the Big Grassy First Nation membership roll, and reside within the Big Grassy First Nation.
- d) Housing Committee members are appointed for a period of ### (#) years.
- e) Housing Committee Member positions are appointed.
- f) Terms are staggered on a rotation. In Year 1, all members will be appointed as follows:
 - i. 2 members appointed for one (1) year
 - ii. 2 members appointed for two (2) years. (One of these appointees will be a community member position)
 - iii. 3 members appointed for three (3) years. (One of these appointees will be a community member position)

Section 1.2 Accountability

- a) While the Housing Committee is an arms-length committee separate from Chief and Council, the Housing Committee shall report to Chief and Council and to the Big Grassy First Nation community.
- b) Each member of the Housing Committee will sign and adhere to a Non-Disclosure Statement which prohibits them from discussing Housing Committee matters outside of Housing Committee meetings, including with spouses and immediate family.
- c) Each member of the Housing Committee will sign and adhere to a Conflict-of-Interest Statement which will ensure the integrity of the Housing Committee's decisions remain intact. A Housing Committee member will be required to remove him/herself from any discussion or decision that involves their immediate family member. An immediate family member is defined as mother, father, children or siblings of a Housing Committee member.
- d) It is further required that a Housing Committee member will also remove themselves from the discussion and decision if they feel they may be in a conflict with respect to a person or persons who fall outside the prescribed definition of immediate family member but with whom the Housing Committee member may have an obvious bias toward.

Section 1.3 Meetings

- a) Quorum will consist of three (3) members.
- b) Emergency meetings may be called with a minimum of 24 hours' notice and will require Quorum.
- c) The location of the meetings will be at the Band Office unless otherwise arranged in advance.
- d) Housing Committee meetings shall normally be restricted to only Housing Committee members.
- e) Notice of meetings, minutes and agendas shall be prepared by the Housing Manager or his/her delegate in conjunction with the Chairperson and distributed to Housing Committee members at least one week in advance of each Housing Committee meeting.
- f) Any member of Big Grassy First Nation has the right to be heard by the Housing Committee at a duly constituted meeting, provided the Housing Committee has been advised at least 24 hours in advance of the presentation and it has been included on the agenda.
- g) Any member of Big Grassy First Nation may request that all or part of his or her presentation be heard in-camera provided the matter to be heard deals with personal, or financial concerns.
- h) Minutes are recorded for every meeting, however are not for public view due to the sensitive and personal nature of some information.

Section 1.4 Removal from the Housing Committee

- a) Members are subject to removal from the Housing Committee if they:
 - i. Breach their Conflict of Interest or Non-Disclosure agreements
 - ii. Take a bribe relating to a Housing issue
 - iii. Fail to attend three (3) consecutive meetings without a valid reason
 - iv. Do not follow and abide by policies in place
- b) The process for removal from the Housing Committee shall be:
 - i. Consensus by remaining Housing Committee members
 - ii. Written notification from the Chairperson of the Housing Committee to Chief and Council explaining the violation.
- c) Where a Housing Committee member is removed, they may appeal the decision to Chief and Council. The decision of Chief and Council is final.

Section 1.5 Resignation

- a) Members may resign by giving written notice to the Chairperson of the Housing Committee
- b) Members must resign if they become involved in any facet of Housing construction during their term of office. Failure to resign will lead to dismissal from the Housing Committee.

Section 1.6 Duties and Responsibilities of the Housing Committee

The Housing Committee is mainly responsible for the providing advice related to the Housing Policy and to make informed recommendations to Chief and Council on all housing issues. More specifically, the Housing Committee shall:

- a) Oversee the Housing Policy established and adopted by Big Grassy First Nation.
- b) Carry out an annual review of Housing policies, procedures.
- c) If needed, recommend changes to the Housing Policy for amendment to the Chief and Council and notify Big Grassy First Nation community members of any approved changes.
- d) In coordination with the Housing Department, review and/or develop long and short-term housing goals annually for approval by Council.
- e) Ensure fairness in allocating funds and resources by means of a Tenant Selection Criteria. Attached hereto as Appendix G.
- f) Analyze cost effectiveness of housing construction, renovations and repair components whenever necessary.
- g) Ensure staff adheres to the Housing Policy.

- h) Receive and deal with disputes arising from the scheduling and established priorities for repairs, new housing units, etc.
- i) Receive, assess and deal with all housing applications in a timely manner.
- j) At the request of Chief and Council, provide housing activity reports to the Chief and Council.

Section 1.7 Recommendations

- a) Recommendations of the Housing Committee are made by a simple majority vote of the members' present.
- b) All recommendations made are based on the policies and procedures in place.
- c) All recommendations rendered by the Housing Committee are forwarded to Chief and Council for decision.

PART 3 BIG GRASSY HOUSING POLICY

Section II.1 Duties and Responsibilities of the Housing Department

- a) Implement the Housing Policy established and adopted by Big Grassy First Nation.
- b) Recommend changes in policy for amendment to the Housing Committee and Chief and Council annually.
- c) In coordination with the Housing Committee, review and/or develop long and short-term housing goals annually for approval by Council.
- d) Maintain an inventory of all housing units within the community that includes references to the age and condition of the unit.
- e) To the best of their ability, ensure householders assume responsibility for the up-keep of their units as described in the Tenant Manual attached hereto as Appendix J.
- f) Maintain a priority list of all band members whose units need repair or who qualify for renovations.
- g) Maintain a waiting list of band members who need housing. Members on the wait list will be selected for a housing unit according to the Tenant Selection Criteria attached hereto as Appendix H.
- h) Receive, assess and process all housing applications in a timely manner. Once processed, housing applications shall be reviewed and actioned by the Housing Committee at their next scheduled meeting.
- i) Receive and process housing disputes so they can be heard at the next scheduled meeting of the Housing Committee.

Section II.2 General Provisions

- a) The rules and regulations contained herein are to be applied to all residential construction, renovation or repair for all rental units on Big Grassy First Nation
- b) All new residential construction, renovation or relocation of housing units shall comply with or exceed the minimum standards as set out in the National Building Code.
- c) Chief and Council shall be deemed as the "Authority having Jurisdiction" as related to housing matters.
- d) To be eligible for a new unit, renovations or repairs to a band-owned unit, the applicant must be a registered member of Big Grassy First Nation and in good standing with the Housing Department
- e) Big Grassy First Nation Housing Staff may inspect all new and existing housing units in Big Grassy with 24 hours written notice to the householder. The inspection is to observe any deficiencies, so they can be recorded and addressed based on their urgency.

- f) If 24-hours' notice is not sufficient, a second attempt will be made to inspect the house at another time. On the third attempt, the Housing Department will enter the house, in its capacity as Landlord, to ensure the inspection is completed.

Section II.3 Construction of New Units

- a) Wherever and whenever possible, housing construction or improvements shall be carried out using labor provided by band members.
- b) All housing construction and maintenance contracts will be managed by the Housing Department.
- c) All construction carried out under this policy shall be undertaken with due regard for the natural environment so that trees, plants and grass are not destroyed unnecessarily.

Section II.4 Tenancy Agreements

- a) All tenants will be required to sign a Tenancy Agreement. This agreement must be renewed annually. A housing unit will not be allocated to a member who is not willing to sign a Tenancy Agreement.
- b) Tenancy Agreements will list all occupants of the house. This information may be changed with notice in writing to the Housing Department.
- c) If it is determined a Tenant falsified a Tenancy Agreement, eviction procedures will commence immediately.

Section II.5 Eligibility to Apply for Housing

- a) Registered band members 18 years of age and older and who have been members for a minimum of three (3) years are eligible to apply for band housing

Section II.6 Application Procedure

- a) Band housing applications, for both CMHC and Band-owned rentals, must be complete and submitted to the Big Grassy Housing Department.
- b) If an application appears incomplete, the applicant will be contacted by the Big Grassy Housing Department for further details. This will ensure the applicant is placed in proper priority for Housing Selection.

Section II.7 Selection Process

- a) Priority for new housing units and major renovations shall be determined as per the Tenant Selection Criteria. Attached as Appendix G.
- b) All requests for special consideration for medical reasons must be supported by a written report from a Physician or Health-Care Personnel.

Section II.8 Appeal Process

- a) Any member of the Big Grassy First Nation may appeal a Housing Committee decision by notifying the Housing Committee, in writing, at least seven (7) days prior to the next regular meeting. If the appeal is received at least seven (7) days prior to the next regular meeting, the appeal must be heard at the next regular meeting.
- b) If an appeal is received less than seven (7) days prior to the next regular meeting, the appeal will be heard at a later meeting but no more than forty (40) days after it has been received.
- c) The Appellant may be asked to make a presentation to the Housing Committee if further information is required.
- d) The Housing Department shall prepare full information for the Housing Committee on any matter of appeal and be available at the meeting for consultation.
- e) The Housing Committee will make its recommendation to Chief and Council.
- f) Chief and Council will render a final decision based on all the information and the recommendation of the Housing Committee.
- g) The Appellant shall be notified in writing of Chief and Council's decisions. Reasons for the decision must be provided to the Appellant and the decision is final.

Section II.9 Responsibility of the Housing Department to the Tenant

- a) To make sure the unit is clean and ready by the agreed upon Tenant move-in date.
- b) To do a walk through the unit with the Tenant to complete a unit condition review and answer any questions about the unit the Tenant may have. (How the HRV works, how to change the furnace filter, when to call about emergency maintenance, etc).
- c) To perform annual inspections on the unit
- d) To provide a receipt to the Tenant for rent payments made in cash.
- e) To do repairs and maintenance to heating, plumbing, electrical, roof and appliances that come with the unit and are the property of the Housing Department. If damage is done by the Tenant, the Tenant is responsible for the repair.
- f) To investigate complaints about a Tenant disturbing another Tenant or Neighbors.
- g) To provide documents to the Tenant – a copy of your Tenancy Agreement, the Tenant Handbook, the Housing Policy, and rent receipts.
- h) To make sure the Tenant understands their responsibilities as a householder prior to moving in.

Section II.10

Responsibility of the Tenant as a Householder

Understanding your responsibilities as a Tenant is one of the most important factors to ensuring the Big Grassy Housing Program runs efficiently and effectively so all members living in Big Grassy Housing units can enjoy a safe and healthy home.

Any Tenant of the Big Grassy Housing Program is required to adhere to the following:

- a) To be responsible for the basic maintenance, upkeep and cleanliness of the home.
- b) To be responsible for cleaning all areas of the unit, including but not limited to, living room, dining room, kitchen, hallways, laundry room, bedrooms, closets, bathrooms, outdoor walkways, yard and parking spaces.
- c) To ensure written approval is obtained from the Big Grassy Housing Department **PRIOR** to doing any modifications or renovations to the housing unit. Any costs for modifications or renovations done to the housing unit without prior consent will not, under any circumstances, be reimbursed by Big Grassy First Nation or the Big Grassy Housing Department.
- d) To prevent the infestation of rodents and insects. Tenants must remove any collected trash and food waste from their housing unit at least once a week.
- e) Carpets and rugs should be vacuumed at least once a week. Hardwood floors or tiles should be swept once a week. Bathrooms must be cleaned regularly, and as frequently as needed to prevent the formation of mold and mildew.
- f) To pay for and repair any damage they or their guests cause, as soon as possible to an acceptable standard (or pay the Big Grassy Housing Department for repairing the damage) within a reasonable time after receiving a written notice to do so by the Big Grassy Housing Department.
- g) To maintain the yard.
- h) To make sure they and their guests don't disturb others property.
- i) To make sure they do not endanger the safety of others in their housing unit or any other Big Grassy housing unit.
- j) To respect the Big Grassy Housing policies.
- k) To notify the Big Grassy Housing Department of any income changes that may affect payment of rent on time.
- l) To notify the Big Grassy Housing Department of changes from Social Assistance to Employment status as soon as possible.
- m) To respect the Tenancy Agreement.

Section II.11

Maintenance of the Housing Unit – Tenant Responsibility

Regular Maintenance

- a) Change furnace filters once every three (3) months
- b) Change range fuses as needed, if applicable.
- c) Cleaning/maintenance of appliances (cleaning stove, fridge, rinsing washer and making sure lint trap is cleared after each dryer use and vent is connected)
- d) Change light bulbs as needed
- e) Door knob tightening/replacing as needed
- f) Bathroom fan cover kept clear of accumulated dust – wipe down every 6 months
- g) Wash siding once yearly
- h) Clean eaves troughs yearly
- i) Clean behind appliances every 6 months
- j) Clean/replace range hood filters
- k) Regular floor and carpet care
- l) Maintain smoke detectors and inform the Big Grassy Housing Department immediately if a smoke detector is not working correctly
- m) Maintain yard/grass – cut and keep free of debris
- n) Snow removal from walkways and driveway in winter for safe access to and from the housing unit.

Bed Bugs

- a) If a Tenant, who is a signatory on the Tenancy Agreement, is on Social Assistance and finds that their unit has Bed Bugs, the Tenant will qualify for Bed Bug removal covered by the Social Program
- b) If a Tenant, who is a signatory on the Tenancy Agreement, and who is employed, finds that their unit has Bed Bugs, the Tenant will be responsible for the cost of Bed Bug removal.

Emergency Maintenance

Emergency Maintenance are issues that require the Housing Department to act sooner than later. This type of maintenance gets prioritized and taken care of ahead of non-emergency maintenance items.

Please make a request for Emergency Maintenance through the Housing Department during regular business hours for any of the following issues:

- a) Electrical and Wiring
 - i. If lights dim when multiple appliances are on
 - ii. If circuit breakers trip frequently
 - iii. If outlets are hot to touch
 - iv. If there is electrical sparking from any source of electricity
- b) Roof Damage
 - i. Water pooling on roof
 - ii. Water damage on ceiling or walls around the ceiling
 - iii. If you notice a moldy damp smell
 - iv. Damage to shingles
 - v. Algae growth
- c) Basement and Foundation (Structural)
 - i. Sagging beams
 - ii. Large cracks in the foundation
 - iii. A new dip or slant in the floor
- d) Gutters and Drainage
 - i. Damaged, dented or split gutters and downspouts that don't connect
- e) Heating/Furnace and HRV
 - i. If the furnace cannot regulate the temperature in your unit
 - ii. If the furnace seems to be struggling to start
 - iii. If the HRV isn't working correctly

Section II.12 Unit Adjustments and Material Purchasing by Householders

- a) A Tenant shall not make major adjustments (modifications or renovations) to a housing unit without **PRIOR** consent of the Housing Department. Major adjustments include, but are not limited to:
 - i. Flooring
 - ii. Additions/Extensions to the unit
 - iii. Changing countertops, cabinetry
 - iv. Bathroom renovations

Please speak to the Housing Department if you are considering making adjustments to your unit.

- b) Tenants who make major adjustments without prior consent of the Housing Department, will not, under any circumstances, be reimbursed for materials and/or labor and may be evicted.

- c) Major adjustments completed without prior consent of the Housing Department will be considered damage and the Tenant will be held responsible.
- d) All approved major adjustments are subject to inspection by the Housing Department, regardless whether the work was carried out by the Big Grassy Housing Department or the Tenant.

Section II.13 Collection of Rent/User Fees/Damage Deposit

CMHC Units

- I. The monthly rent for all CMHC units shall be \$387. Rent is due on the 1st day of the month, should the 1st fall on a weekend or statutory holiday, the rent will be due the next business day that falls after the 1st.
Should a tenant not pay their rent, a notice will go out, not later than the 14th of the month and eviction procedures will commence. (See Section 3.21).

Should a tenant owe arrears prior to the date that is Housing Policy was formally adopted by Big Grassy First Nation, this policy does not forgive those arrears and the Big Grassy First Nation Housing Policy will continue in their attempt in collecting said arrears until the debt is resolved.

A tenant of a CMHC unit, upon turning 65 years of age, will not be required to pay rent. However, in lieu of rent, the tenant (aged 65 years or older) will be required to move into a more appropriately sized unit.

Band-Owned Rentals: The monthly rental fee for all band-owned units will be as discussed.

Rent is due on the 1st day of the month, should the 1st fall on a weekend or statutory holiday, the rent will be due the next business day that falls after the 1st.

Should a tenant not pay their rent, a notice will go out, not later than the 14th of the month and eviction procedures will commence. (See Section 3.21).

Should a tenant owe arrears prior to the date that is Housing Policy was formally adopted by Big Grassy First Nation, this policy does not forgive those arrears and the Big Grassy First Nation Housing Policy will continue in their attempt in collecting said arrears until the debt is resolved.

A tenant of a Band-owned unit, upon turning 65 years of age, will not be required to pay rent. However, in lieu of rent, the tenant (aged 65 years or older) will be required to move into a more appropriately sized unit.

User Fees

All tenants will pay a user fee of \$10.74 per month. The user fee is for water and sewage and garbage removal services.

Damage Deposit

All tenants moving into a unit will be required to pay a damage deposit of \$200 prior to their move-in date. If the tenant does not pay the damage deposit, they will not move into the assigned unit and may lose their priority on the waiting list.

Section II.14 Possibility of ownership of CMHC unit upon mortgage amortization

Should a tenant choose, and Big Grassy First Nation agree, a tenant may assume ownership of the unit they are residing in upon amortization of the unit's mortgage.

Ownership (and associated costs) will be dependent upon the tenant paying their rent and on how many years the tenant has been residing in the amortized unit.

Should a tenant and Big Grassy First Nation agree to allow a tenant to purchase a housing unit that has been fully amortized (paid off), the new owner will be fully responsible to undertake all future repairs and renovations on their unit – Big Grassy First Nation will not be any under obligation to provide funding, materials or labor on an owned housing unit.

Section II.15 Pet Policy

- a) Tenants may have up to three (3) dogs or cats.
- b) Tenants MUST inform the Housing Department of all pets being kept in the unit.
- c) All pets will have the required shots.
- d) All pets will be kept in the proper care and control of the Tenant always. - For example: dogs will be properly leashed, etc.
- e) The Tenant is responsible for cleaning up excrement from the pet, both inside and outside the premises.
- f) The Tenant is responsible to pay for any damage the pet may do to the Premises. Example: chewing/gnawing on walls/cupboards/carpet; pet stains on carpets; etc.
- g) If any part of this Pet policy is violated, or the pet becomes a nuisance or a hazard to others, the First Nation, through the Housing Department, can require the pet to be removed or can terminate the tenancy agreement. If the pet is removed, there will be no effect on the validity of the tenancy agreement.

Section II.16 Right to Occupy a Unit (in the event of relationship/marriage break-up)

- a) If the householders are married or have been living common law for over one (1) year, and if both are members of Big Grassy First Nation, then the unit will be held in joint

tenancy.

- b) If a couple separates, the parent who has custody of the child(ren), and who is a member of Big Grassy First Nation shall be the householder and will have the right to continue residing in the unit.
- c) If the custodial parent is not a member of Big Grassy First Nation, and the children are under the age of 18 and are registered members of Big Grassy First Nation, the custodial parent will be the householder until the eldest child turns 18.
- d) If the parents are unable to reach an agreement regarding the care and custody of the children, the Housing Committee will register the unit with the appropriate Child and Family Services agency in the name of the children until the issue of custody has been resolved. (Need to run by CFS)
- e) Upon resolution of the custody issue, the right to occupy the unit shall fall to the parent who has custody of most of the children.
- f) Should a situation arise where an equal number of children are in the custody of each parent, the Housing Committee shall address the matter with both parents and attempt to reach a solution that is agreeable to all parties. If this is not possible, the Housing Committee will review the facts of the matter and make a recommendation to Chief and Council as to who should occupy the unit.

Should the situation warrant and Child and Family Services deem that, for their own safety and well-being, a family's child(ren) ought to be separated from their parent(s), arrangements will be made and resources provided by CFS for the child(ren) of the family to remain in their family's allotted home. The parent(s) will seek treatment or programming until such a time that CFS determines that they may return to their children and the family's home.

Section II.17 CFS and Big Grassy Housing will remain in contact over the course of the family's re-integration period. Through regular visits to the family's allotted house, CFS will provide updates to Big Grassy Housing on the cleanliness and maintenance of the exterior and interior of the family's home. Should it be determined that the parent(s) are not fulfilling their responsibilities as tenants, the process for eviction will commence (see Section 3.21).

Section II.18 **Death of a Householder**

- a) If a householder, who is the primary tenant and whose name is on the lease, passes away, the unit will revert to the care and control of the Big Grassy First Nation Housing

Department and will be considered a vacant unit.

- b) If a householder, who is a co-tenant and whose name is on the lease, passes away, the unit will revert to the surviving co-tenant listed on the lease only if the surviving co-tenant is a Big Grassy member, and that person will become the primary tenant, if he or she so wishes.

If the surviving co-tenant does not wish to remain in the unit, it will revert to the care and control of the Big Grassy First Nation Housing Department and will be considered a vacant unit.

- c) If the surviving co-tenant is not a member of Big Grassy, he or she will have 90 days to vacate the unit, unless the co-tenant is a biological parent to children under the age of 18, who are Big Grassy members and who live in the unit with the surviving co-tenant. The surviving co-tenant may remain in the unit and on the tenancy agreement until the youngest child is 18, at which time that child, or any of the other children who are over the age of 18, may apply to have the unit put in their name and become the primary tenant.
- d) Big Grassy First Nation understands that extenuating circumstances will arise. These will be evaluated on an individual basis by the Housing Committee for decision within the guidelines of the Big Grassy Housing Policy.

Section II.19 Vacating of Units

- a) Any householder who wishes to vacate their unit, may do so provided 30 days' written notice is provided to both the Housing Department and Housing Committee.
- b) At no time, shall a householder vacate their unit and sublet to another person. All rent paid on any Big Grassy First Nation housing unit is payable to the Housing Department.
- c) At no time, shall a householder "sell" their unit to another person. All CMHC and band-owned housing on Big Grassy First Nation is owned by Big Grassy First Nation.
- d) If it is found that a householder is subletting or has "sold" their CMHC or Band-owned unit to another person, the Tenant Agreement will be deemed null and void and both the householder and the current occupant will be evicted. The unit will revert to the care and control of the Big Grassy First Nation Housing Department.
- e) If a householder is going to be away longer than thirty (30) days, they must advise the Housing Department, in writing, stating the reason for their absence, how long they will be away and who, if anyone, will be staying in the house during their absence. It is understood that the person who stays in the house during the householder's absence will sign a Temporary Tenancy Agreement, be responsible for any damages to the unit during their stay, take over the rent payments for the unit for the duration of their stay and will vacate according to the time set out in their Temporary Tenancy Agreement.

Section II.20 Vacating of Units in Poor Condition

- a) If a unit is vacated because of its poor state of repair, it is to be inspected by the Housing Department. If, in the opinion of the Housing Department, the unit is unfit for use as a

dwelling and poses a threat to the health and safety of any occupant, the Housing Department shall prohibit occupancy.

- b) The Housing Department shall make a full report on the condition of the vacant building to the Housing Committee, who shall determine what action should be taken, (e.g.: demolition or major repair and renovation).

Section II.21 Abandoned Units

- a) If a housing unit has been unoccupied for a period of thirty (30) days and notice were not provided to the Housing Department, the unit will be considered abandoned and will return to the care and control of the Big Grassy Housing Department.
- b) Once a housing unit has been deemed abandoned, the Tenancy Agreement will become null and void and the Housing Department will seek to recover any lost rent for the unit from the former Tenant.
- c) Any belongings left in the housing unit will be sent to storage for a period of thirty (30) days. It is the former Tenant's responsibility to pay for storage if they wish to recover their belongings. After thirty (30) days, all belongings left in storage will be disposed of. Storage, cleaning and removal fees will be billed to the former tenant.
- d) Once the abandoned unit has been cleaned and necessary repairs have been made, it will be allocated to a new tenant according to the waiting list and tenant selection criteria.
- e) Any damage to the unit that is not considered normal wear and tear will be the responsibility of the former tenant. Costs for repair will be billed to the former tenant.
- f) A former tenant who has abandoned their unit will not be eligible for a housing unit in Big Grassy for a period of three (3) years. Should the former tenant wish to apply for housing after three (3) years, they may. Their application will be assessed by the Housing Department and Housing Committee. The former tenant must be in good standing with Big Grassy First Nation and may be asked to appear before the Housing Committee for an interview prior to their application being considered.

Section II.22 Eligibility to Apply for Housing

- a) All registered band members, 18 years of age and older, are eligible to apply for band housing.

Section II.23 Application Procedure

- a) Band housing applications, for both CMHC and Band-owned rentals, must be complete and submitted to the Big Grassy Housing Department.
- b) If an application appears incomplete, the application applicant will be contacted by the Big Grassy Housing Department for further details. This will ensure the applicant is placed in proper priority for Housing Selection.

Section II.24 Selection Process

- a) Priority for new housing units and major renovations shall be determined as per the Tenant Selection Criteria. Attached as Appendix G
- b) All requests for special consideration for medical reasons must be supported by a written report from a Physician or Health Personnel.

Section II.25 Appeal Process

- a) Any member of the Black River First Nation may appeal a Housing Committee decision by notifying the Housing Committee, in writing, at least seven (7) days prior to the next regular meeting. If the appeal is received at least seven (7) days prior to the next regular meeting, the appeal must be heard at the next regular meeting.
- b) If an appeal is received less than seven (7) days prior to the next regular meeting, the appeal will be heard at a later meeting but no more than forty (40) days after it has been received.
- c) The Appellant may be asked to make a presentation to the Housing Committee if further information is required.
- d) The Housing Committee will make its recommendation to Chief and Council.
- e) Chief and Council will render a final decision based on all the information and the recommendation of the Housing Committee.
- f) The Appellant shall be notified in writing of Chief and Council's decisions. Reasons for the decision must be provided to the Appellant and the decision is final.

Section II.26 Responsibility of the Housing Department to the Tenant

- a) To make sure the unit is clean and ready by the agreed upon Tenant move-in date.
- b) To do a walk through the unit with the Tenant to complete a unit condition review and answer any questions about the unit the Tenant may have. (How the HRV works, how to change the furnace filter, when to call about emergency maintenance, etc).
- c) To perform annual inspections on the unit

Section II.27 Eviction & Eviction Procedures

The First Nation remains responsible and accountable for the proper use and maintenance of

the First Nation's housing assets. The First Nation, therefore, reserves the right to evict an occupant of a Big Grassy First Nation's house.

An occupant(s) who fails to comply with the occupancy agreement, policy, and laws that govern Big Grassy may be subject to eviction.

Eviction is, essentially, the removal/expulsion of an occupant from a housing unit.

The following will be deemed to be "just cause" for the eviction of a Big Grassy housing unit occupant:

- Regular and/or serious damage to, or abuse of, the Big Grassy housing unit; including serious neglect of the maintenance and repair of the Big Grassy housing unit;
- Refusal by the occupant to pay rent or maintenance fees; an eviction notice will be served to the occupant if rent has not been paid within one month and two weeks of due date;
- Refusal of the occupant to renew their Operating Agreement on an annual basis;
- Repeated abandonment of the house;
- Repeated cases of criminal activity within the house;
- Should the occupant be charged, convicted and imprisoned for a period greater than ninety (90) days; the occupant forfeits their privilege of residing in the Big Grassy housing unit and the house may be reallocated to another First Nation member. In instances of incarceration, the occupant and the occupant's family must meet with the Housing Authority within thirty days to deal with tenancy issues, storage of possessions and other related issues.

PROCEDURE

- a) An occupant(s) who is in serious breach of the occupancy agreement, policy or laws may be subject to eviction.
- b) the following steps will be used to address eviction procedures:
 - 1) a verbal warning will be provided to the occupant by the Housing Authority informing the occupant of the misconduct. A verbal warning be issued and noted in the occupant(s) file. Should the misconduct reoccur, the next steps for eviction will be initiated (see 2));
 - 2) an interview will take place between the occupant(s) and the Housing Authority to address the misconduct of the occupant(s). Interview notes will be placed in the occupant(s) file. If the conduct reoccurs, the eviction procedure process will continue (see 3));
 - 3) a written warning will be provided to the occupant and; the occupant and the Housing Authority will develop an action plan to immediately correct the behavior that warranted the written warning. The written warning will be noted in the occupant(s) file. If there is no change in the occupant's behavior then (see 4));

- 4) An eviction notice will be provided to the occupant(s) after all efforts to correct the occupancy have been exhausted by the Housing Authority.
- c) every attempt will be made by the Housing Authority to provide an occupant(s) with the opportunity to correct their misconduct/issues (i.e., arrears, noise complaints, damages to unit, neglect of unit, etc.).
- d) If the Housing Authority determines that to protect the house from serious damage or destruction, or that members are in immediate risk of injury; the First Nation reserves the right to immediately evict all occupants of the First Nation's house.

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Appendix A – Housing Committee Terms of Reference

Big Grassy First Nation Housing Committee Terms of Reference

The Big Grassy First Nation Housing Committee has been established to oversee the administration and management of the Big Grassy Housing Program and to apply all housing policies and procedures in a fair and consistent manner.

1. ROLE/PURPOSE

The role of the Big Grassy First Nation Housing Committee is to provide direction and leadership on matters related to housing on Big Grassy First Nation. The Big Grassy First Nation Housing Committee will adhere to established policies and procedures and apply them in a fair and consistent manner to all members of Big Grassy First Nation.

The Big Grassy First Nation Housing Committee will be a decision-making body and will render decisions on new construction projects (in conjunction with Chief and Council) and on housing allocation (as defined in the Big Grassy First Nation Housing Policy).

The Big Grassy First Nation Housing Committee sets out to achieve healthy and adequate housing for all members of the Big Grassy First Nation.
Membership:

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- a) To oversee the Housing Policy as established and adopted by Big Grassy First Nation.
- b) To carry out an annual review of the Housing Policy, recommend to Chief and Council any changes/amendments to the Housing Policy and to provide the community-at-large of these changes.
- c) To assist in developing long- and short-term housing goals annually for approval by Council
- d) To ensure fairness and consistency in allocating funds and resources by means of a Tenant Selection Criteria
- e) To analyze cost effectiveness of housing construction, renovations and repair components whenever necessary
- f) To ensure staff adheres to the Housing Policy
- g) To receive and deal with all disputes arising from the scheduling and established priorities for repairs, new housing units, housing allocation, etc.
- h) To review, assess and deal with all housing applications in a timely manner
- i) To provide housing activity reports to Chief and Council as requested

The membership of the Housing Committee will commit to:

- a) Attending all scheduled meetings of the Housing Committee
- b) Sharing all relevant communications and information with fellow Housing Committee members
- c) Adhering to the Conflict of Interest and Non-Disclosure agreements all members must sign so as not to jeopardize the integrity of the Housing Committee's work

- d) Notifying members of the Housing Committee of any potential conflict of interest, be it real or perceived, prior to any discussion or decision.

Members of the Housing Committee will expect:

- a) That each member will be provided with complete, accurate and meaningful information in a timely manner
- b) To be given reasonable time to make key decisions
- c) To be alerted of any potential risks and issues that may impact housing projects/decisions
- d) To have open and honest discussions, free of misleading information and free from judgement

3. MEETINGS

- a) All meetings shall be chaired by the Housing Committee Chairperson, who is appointed collectively by the Housing Committee
- b) A meeting quorum will be XXX (X) members of the Housing Committee
- c) Decisions will be made by consensus (members are satisfied with the decision even though it may not be their first choice). If consensus cannot be reached, the Housing Committee Chair shall make the final decision
- d) Meeting agendas and minutes will be provided by the Big Grassy Housing Department
- e) Meetings will be held monthly.
- f) Emergency meetings may be called with 24-hours notice.

4. AMENDMENT, MODIFICATION OR VARIATION

This Terms of Reference may be amended, modified or varied in writing after consultation and agreement with a quorum of Housing Committee members and a quorum of Chief and Council.

Appendix B – Housing Committee Conflict of Interest Agreement

Conflict of Interest Agreement

As a member of the Big Grassy Housing Committee, I, _____, recognize that I have a duty to avoid conflicts of interest and to act always in the best interests of the Big Grassy First Nation Housing Department and Authority.

The purpose of this Agreement is to help inform the Authority and First Nation about what constitutes a Conflict of Interest, assist the Authority and First Nation in identifying and disclosing actual, potential or perceived conflicts and help ensure the avoidance of conflicts of interest where necessary. **Any actual, potential or perceived Conflicts of Interest, shall be disclosed and presented to the Housing Committee in writing.**

Members of the Big Grassy Housing Committee shall disclose to the Authority, prior to engaging in any activities that may be seen as a conflict of interest, such as, but not limited to:

1. Having a vested interest in an external business that may provide materials or service to the Housing Department or Authority or any of the projects overseen by the Housing Department or Authority
2. Being offered services or materials because of your position with the Authority
3. Making use of a position with the Authority to solicit services or materials for personal gain
4. Utilizing Housing Department or Authority equipment, services or materials for an external business
5. Pursuing personal gain over the well-being or needs of Big Grassy First Nation members

Non-Compliance of this Agreement pertaining to a Conflict of Interest on the part of Big Grassy Housing Committee members shall constitute cause for removal from the Authority.

Authority members shall confirm by way of signing this Agreement prior to their first meeting, that they have read and understand this Agreement and consent to abide by it.

Big Grassy Housing Committee Member (Print)

Signature of Big Grassy Housing Committee Member

Date

Name of Witness & Position (Print)

Signature of Witness

Date

Appendix C – Housing Committee Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Agreement

Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Agreement

This Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Agreement is given to Big Grassy First Nation Chief and Council in consideration of my position as a member of the Big Grassy First Nation Housing Committee ("the Housing Committee").

I, _____, acknowledge that as part of my role on the Housing Committee, I will be given access to information that is of a personal, confidential and/or proprietary nature, for example: personal information related to staff, Chief and Council, and members of the Big Grassy First Nation, such as names, email addresses, income information, marital/family status, and financial information ("Confidential Information"), to fulfill my obligations as a member of the Housing Committee.

I therefore agree:

1. To hold all Confidential Information in trust and strict confidence and agree that it shall be used only for the purposes required to fulfill my Housing Committee obligations, and shall not be used for any other purpose, or disclosed to any third party.
2. To keep any Confidential Information in my control or possession in a physically secure location to which only I and other persons who have signed a confidentiality agreement for the Housing Committee have access.
3. To not remove any Confidential Information from the Big Grassy Housing Department unless, and to the extent that, I obtain written pre-authorization from the Housing Manager. Whenever I am pre-authorized, I agree to take all necessary steps to keep such Confidential Information secure and to protect such Confidential Information from unauthorized use, reproduction or disclosure.
4. To maintain the absolute confidentiality of personal and confidential information in recognition of the privacy rights of others always, and in both professional and social situations.
5. To comply with all privacy laws and regulations, which apply to the collection, use and disclosure of personal information.
6. After any discussions, or at the request of management, to return all Confidential Information, including written notes, photographs, memos or notes taken, to the Big Grassy Housing Department possession and the responsible manager/director.
7. To not disclose confidential and/or personal information to any employee, consultant or third party unless they agree to execute and be bound by the terms of this agreement and have been approved by Big Grassy First Nation in an official capacity.

I understand that a breach of confidentiality or misuse of information could result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of my role on the Housing Committee.

I understand that this undertaking survives the termination of my tenure on the Housing Committee.

The laws of Canada, shall govern this Agreement and its validity, construction and effect.

I fully understand and accept responsibilities set above relating to personal, confidential and/or proprietary information.

Employee Name: (please print) _____

Employee Signature: _____

Date: _____

Witness Name: (please print) _____

Witness Signature: _____

Date: _____

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Appendix D – Housing Manager Job Description

OVERVIEW:

Under the general supervision of the Band Manager, and with oversight from the Big Grassy Housing Committee, the Housing Manager will be responsible

- to provide an effective housing program;
- to manage and administer the housing department and
- to consistently work with other Big Grassy First Nation department managers, Chief and Council and the Housing Committee to enhance and improve current services.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS:

- College Diploma in a relevant area of study
- Experience in First Nation Housing
- Knowledge and understanding of federal government housing programs and reporting requirements

ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATIONS:

- Valid driver's license and access to a vehicle
- Advanced computer skills – particularly in Microsoft programs and database experience
- Financial management experience
- Experience in housing construction, maintenance & management
- Sound judgment, analytical and decision-making skills
- Excellent written and communications skills
- Knowledge of current building codes
- Ability to work under pressure and adhere to deadlines and commitments
- Understand the roles and responsibilities of the Housing Committee
- Clear Criminal Record – this will be done at Big Grassy First Nation's expense

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Manage all aspects of the housing department. This includes: CMHC units, Band-owned units, repair/maintenance and renovation requests, emergency repair/maintenance,
- Manage housing and maintenance staff
- Prepare housing budgets and anticipated expenditures annually
- Prepare funding applications and reports
- Implement, administer and always abide by the Big Grassy Housing Policy
- Communicate with government and funding agencies regarding programs Big Grassy Housing is engaged in or wishes to be engaged in
- Oversee the management all housing units
- Work collaboratively with all related departments and the Housing Committee
- Manage and maintain an effective rental program
- Prepare, manage and maintain an effective maintenance program and budget
- Analyze past and current operations and provide recommendations to the Housing Committee as required

- Maintain a database/spreadsheet of all units and activities
- Regular review of the Housing Applications and Wait List
- Attend meetings as required
- Ensure annual inspections are performed on all units
- Perform other related duties that may be required

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Appendix E – Tenant Relations Officer Job Description

OVERVIEW:

The Tenant Relations Officer (TRO) shall work closely with the Housing Manager in the collection of rent/housing payments and to address housing concerns from tenants and homeowners. The incumbent must be prepared to interview Tenants and Homeowners to arrange for rent collection and other housing concern requests.

The incumbent reports to the Housing Manager and/or Housing Committee when required.

MAJOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Performs all duties and responsibilities in accordance with the Big Grassy Housing
- Must work closely in a team-oriented environment.
- Must be able and willing to work with or without supervision.
- Must be prepared to provide reports to the Housing Director, Housing Committee and/or Chief and Council.
- Must be able to produce concise, accurate and timely reports as requested by the Housing Manager.
- Must be able to negotiate rent collection agreements and perform job requirements in a timely manner.
- Must review and respond to all incoming calls related to the collection of rent and/or housing concerns.
- Must ensure that proper, factual and timely information is presented to the tenants.
- Must be flexible in dealing with tenants in the collection of rent, renovation requests and other housing concerns.
- Should meet regularly and consistently with tenants to establish positive communication and relationships.
- Must ensure a work plan is followed in completing work as per approved budget, all in a timely manner.
- Must ensure updated tenancy agreements are completed with each new tenant and renewed annually for existing tenants.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE, ABILITIES AND SKILLS:

- Must possess excellent interpersonal skills.
- Must be professional in daily contact and interactions with co-workers, Chief and Council, and the public.
- The ability to understand and communicate in Ojibway is considered a definite asset.
- Must have excellent organizational skills.
- Must have knowledge of the Big Grassy Housing Policy, particularly as it relates to rent and responsibilities of the Tenant.
- Must have knowledge of CMHC requirements.

- Must be able to produce concise, clear, accurate and timely reports.
- Must be able to deal with difficult and sometimes irate clients/tenants.
- Must be willing to adhere to the strictest principles of confidentiality, during and after term of employment.

TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE:

- A two-year College Diploma in a relevant discipline is considered a definite asset
- Minimum of three-year work experience, preferably in a property management role.
- Minimum Grade Twelve education.

Appendix F – Housing Application

Appendix G – Tenancy Agreement

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Appendix H – Tenant Selection Criteria

Tenant Selection Criteria has been established to ensure fair selection of housing candidates.

Housing Applications must be filled out completely, signed and submitted to the Big Grassy Housing Department. All Housing Applications are reviewed by the Big Grassy Housing Committee and Housing Department to ensure eligibility.

Housing Applications remain on file for a period of one (1) year. After one (1) year, applicants must submit a new application. Applications not renewed will be removed from the wait list.

Candidates for new or vacant housing in Big Grassy First Nation will be categorized based on several factors:

- a) New or vacant housing unit size
- b) Family size (must align with the housing unit size to ensure families or not over- or under-housed)
- c) Current living conditions
- d) How long the member has been on the wait list
- e) Ability & willingness to pay rent
- f) No outstanding debts to the Big Grassy First Nation – debts include:
 - i. willful damage to Big Grassy housing
 - ii. outstanding hydro bills
 - iii. rental arrears
 - iv. any other monies owing to Big Grassy First Nation for whatever reason.
- g) Willingness to enter into and abide by the Big Grassy Tenancy Agreement
- h) Willingness to abide by the Big Grassy Housing Policy
- i) Willingness to provide references (previous landlord, employer and/or personal)
- j) Successful and full participation in a Basic Home Maintenance workshop (meaning the potential tenant attended the workshop in its entirety)

Priority List for Housing Applications

Big Grassy First Nation attempts to grant housing to those in the greatest need for the housing available at any given time. That said, as a general rule, priority will be determined as follows:

- a) Married or common-law couples with families
- b) Single parents with children
- c) Elderly 60+ or special needs
- d) Married or common-law couples without children
- e) Single adults

Selection of Candidates

Based on the above, candidates will be selected by the Big Grassy Housing Committee and will be notified in writing if they have been selected for a housing unit.

The candidate will be asked to meet with the Housing Committee and/or Housing Department where the Tenancy Agreement will be presented and signed by the appropriate parties. A Tenant Manual and, if the candidate so wishes, a copy of the Housing Policy will be provided.

Appendix I – Eviction Notice

**Big Grassy First Nation
Housing Committee
Notice of Eviction**

Name of Tenant: _____

Address of Rental Unit: _____

Your tenancy is terminated effective _____, 20____ for the following reason(s):

- ☐ Refusal of the Tenant to pay rent. (Section 3.08 (a) of the _____ First Nation Housing Policy)

Current arrears owing and payable immediately: \$ _____

Please note, paying your arrears may assist in overturning this notice provided there are no other issues contributing to your eviction.

- ☐ Regular and/or serious damage or abuse to the unit (Section 3.08 (b) of the Big Grassy First Nation Housing Policy)
- ☐ Repeated abandonment that the Big Grassy Housing Department has not been advised of
- ☐ Repeated cases of criminal activity in the unit
- ☐ You have been charged, convicted and/or imprisoned

You must move out no later than _____, 20____

If you do not agree with this notice, you must speak to the Housing Department, within 48 hours of receiving this notice. The Housing Department can be reached at (807) 488-5614 ext. 1003

If you do not move out, legal authorities will be asked to escort you out and you may lose your possessions remaining in the unit.

Appendix J – Arrears Repayment Agreement

Rental Arrears Repayment Agreement

Date: _____

Tenant's Name: _____

Address: _____

Amount of Arrears: \$ _____

I, _____, acknowledge that my rent is in arrears as shown above and I will take the following steps to resolve my debt.

1. I will pay \$ _____ today, upon signing this agreement.
Tenant Name
2. I will pay my full monthly rent of \$ _____ on the first day of the month beginning on _____, 20____.
3. In addition to my full monthly rent, I agree to pay \$ _____ each month, on the first day of the month beginning on _____, 20____, until all arrears are paid in full.

I understand that to keep myself in good standing with the Big Grassy Housing Department and continue to reside in my housing unit, my payments MUST be made on time each month. I further understand that if my payments are not made as outlined in this agreement, eviction proceedings will begin.

Tenant

Date

Housing Manager

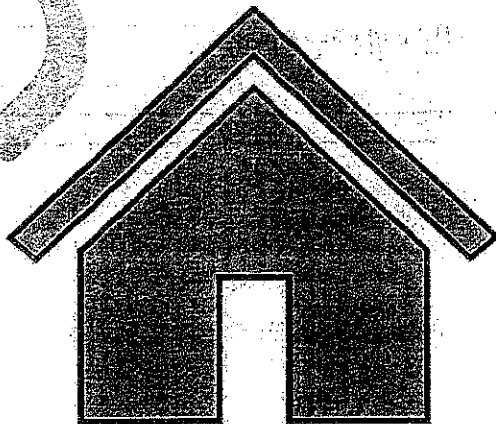
Date

Housing Committee Representative

Date

Welcome Home!

**Big Grassy First Nation
Tenant Manual**



Big Grassy First Nation Housing Committee Welcomes You!

The Big Grassy First Nation Housing Committee and Housing Department welcome you as a new tenant. To help ensure a successful Tenant/Housing Committee relationship, we have prepared this Tenant Manual to help with your tenancy.

We recommend keeping it in a handy spot so you can refer to it easily.

You'll find maintenance guidelines, rental payment instruction, general information, tenant responsibilities and more.

Right below, you'll find the names and contact information for the Big Grassy Housing Department. They are responsible for the day-to-day management of all housing units on Big Grassy First Nation.

Whether your issue is big or small, these are the people to call.

Any housing issues brought directly to a member of the Housing Committee or Chief and Council will be redirected to our Housing Department to handle.

The Housing Department is located at the Band Office.

Phone: (807) 488-5614 ext 1003

Fax: (807) 488-5533

Office Hours: 9:00am – 4:30pm

After Hours/Emergency #:

Project Director: Tim Archie

Tenant Relations Officer: N/A

Housing Coordinator: Buck Morrison

Housing Coordinator Assistant: Darryl Jr Lapensee

Tenant Communication

Telephone Calls During Office Hours

During office hours, we make every attempt to ensure your call is answered in person. If you get our voicemail, this typically means we are on another call, it is the lunch hour or we are in a meeting. Our office is closed each day between 12:00pm – 1:00pm for lunch.

Voicemail

If, during the day, you reach our voicemail, we make every attempt to return that call within one business day.

After Hours/Emergency Calls

During normal office hours, immediately state if you have an emergency. If you reach the voicemail system during office hours, or after the office is closed, immediately hang up and call the emergency number, -XXX-XXXX .

Maintenance Requests

If you have a maintenance issue, send a written request in person or by email to: housing@biggrassy.ca. You may also call our office at: (807) 488-5614 ext. 1003.

If you are leaving a message on voicemail, please describe the issue in detail. Also, be sure to leave your property address and a contact phone number so we can get back to you.

Email

This is the preferred method of communication to/from you. We send out notices, requests and general correspondence using this method of communication. If you do not have email, we will send this information to you in the mail or leave a voice message.

Change in Contact Information

Please notify our office if you change your phone number or email address.

Renters Insurance

Big Grassy First Nation, Housing Committee, or Housing Department shall not be liable or responsible for loss or damages to articles or property belonging to the tenant.

It is highly recommended, if possible, that the tenant obtains Tenant Insurance for their personal property as well as liability insurance coverage. We are happy to refer you to an agent if you need one. For a reasonable monthly fee, you could save yourself tens of thousands in the event of a loss.

Paying Rent

- Rent is due on the 1st of each month. It is considered late when received after 4:30 pm on the 5th of each month and late fees will apply.
- Make cheques payable to **Big Grassy First Nation**
- Rent may be paid by cheque, money order or cash.

Fees

We want to ensure that you are aware of all fees and what they are for. These fees are written into the Big Grassy Housing Policy and in your Tenancy Agreement

- **Late Fees** – a late fee of \$XX will apply to rent that is not received by the 5th day of the month by 4:30 pm. This Late Fee is due in the month that it has been charged.
- **User Fee** – a user fee of \$XX per month per household is due with your rent payment. The User Fee covers garbage removal, sewer, water and road maintenance.

Change in Tenant(s)

While the Primary Tenant(s) will remain the same on a Tenancy Agreement until the expiry date, other occupants/tenants may be added or removed from the Tenancy Agreement with notice, in writing or in person, to the Housing Department.

It is mandatory to update this information when tenants change as it could impact rent and/or hydro.

If changes are not reported to the Housing Department by the Primary Tenant and it is found that tenants have moved in or out, the Primary Tenant will be responsible for any extra charges in rent and/or hydro. Non-payment of these items could negatively influence your good standing with the First Nation and in some cases, could lead to eviction.

Tenant Responsibilities

The following items are the responsibility of the tenant at their expense while they are living at the property.

- Replacement of light bulbs with the correct wattage
- Replacement of furnace filters every three months
- Replacement of smoke alarm batteries (if not hard-wired). The smoke alarm must be working at all times.
- Reporting non-functioning smoke alarms immediately if battery replacement does not solve the problem.
- Reporting all necessary repairs.
- Cleaning of carpets while living in the home
- Normal insect control (bees, spiders, ants, etc.)
- Normal rodent control, such as mice
- Keeping the property clean, inside and out, free of grease, mold, mildew, cobwebs, etc.
- If you are responsible for your lawn maintenance, you need to mow, water, weed and dispose of all yard debris on a regular basis
- If you have a pet, you are responsible to clean and dispose of all pet droppings in and around your home regularly

Care of Property

When you move into your unit, it is helpful to know where important items are located. The Big Grassy Housing Department will do a walk-through with you in your unit and answer any questions you might have. In particular, you should know where to locate the:

- Main circuit breaker in case the power goes out
- Gas shut off valve – turn off during emergencies/disasters for safety
- GFI plug(s) – so you can test them to make sure they are functioning properly if your appliances fail to work
- Electric and/or gas meters to check your utility bills
- The main water shutoff valve in case of major flooding
- Water shutoff valves below the sinks and behind toilet(s) in case of water leaks
- Method of cleaning the oven so you use the right products

Maintenance

Unit Adjustments and Material Purchasing by Tenants

It is the Big Grassy Housing Department's policy that tenants do not make major adjustments to their units without PRIOR consent from the Housing Department.

Under no circumstances, will any unit adjustment (renovations/alternation) be reimbursed if prior consent has not been obtained.

Unit adjustments include, but are not limited to:

- Flooring
- Additions or extensions to the unit
- Changing countertops, cabinetry
- Bathroom renovations

- Please speak to your Housing Department if you are considering making any adjustments to your unit.

Maintenance Requests

If you have a maintenance issue, please submit in writing to the Housing Department. Our Maintenance crew will be in contact with you to schedule the repair. Please be advised that all repairs are prioritized based on the urgency of the matter.

Emergency Maintenance

If you have a maintenance emergency and our office is closed, please call _____ -
xxx-xxxx

Emergency maintenance includes:

- Electrical and Wiring – shut off main breaker and call
- Roof Damage
- Basement and Foundation (Structural)
- Gutters and Drainage
- Heating/Furnace and HRV – if you smell gas, turn off gas valve and call
- Flooding in basement or backed up plumbing – stop using and call

Preventative Cleaning Tips

Cleaning is always easier when you use a preventative approach. Here are some helpful cleaning tips for you.

- Always put away food and wipe up food debris
- Clean pet bowls regularly to avoid attracting ants and other insects
- Do not allow grease to build up in the kitchen – use a sponge and soapy water regularly on counter tops, stovetops and hood filters
- Avoid cooking with very high heat. This will add to more grease build-up and cause damage to appliances. It can also be dangerous.
- Avoid mildew by venting rooms and bathrooms properly, especially after showers or baths
- Clean bathroom tile or other surfaces regularly (once a week) to prevent grime build-up
- Clean toilets regularly to avoid grim build-up, rings, and mildew
- Sweep and mop tile, wood, linoleum to get rid of dust bunnies and grime build up
- Vacuum all flooring surfaces regularly, particularly carpets. This will save carpet cleaning bills.
- If you have a pet, regularly pick up debris and pet feces.

Additional Cleaning Tips

Cleaning products can be expensive but it's not always necessary to purchase these expensive items. Vinegar, baking soda, ammonia and salt are some inexpensive cleaning products with many uses. They are also helpful for people who have allergies or may be sensitive to cleaning products. And they can be better for the environment than commercial products.

- Air freshener
 - Place a bowl of vinegar in the kitchen or bathroom to absorb odors
 - Place a bowl of baking soda with a few drops of your favorite essential oil in any room for a fresh scent
- Drains:
 - For a great once-a-month drain cleaner, pour ½ cup baking soda into the drain, follow with ½ cup white vinegar – it will foam. Cover and let sit for 30 minutes and then flush with cool water.
 - For stubborn, slow running drains, pour 1-cup baking soda and 1-cup salt down the drain. Follow this with 2 quarts boiling water. Let sit for 30 minutes and then flush with cool water.

- Tiles:
 - To clean ceramic tile, where mold and mildew accumulate, use a combination of ¼ cup baking soda, ½ cup white vinegar, 4-litres warm water and -cup ammonia.
 - Alternatively, regularly clean these surfaces by using a spray bottle mixed with ½ cup vinegar and 1 liter of water.
- Glass Cleaner:
 - When glass cleaning products leave residue on bathroom mirrors, mix 3 tablespoons of vinegar with a quart of water in a clean plastic spray bottle (can be found at your local dollar store)
 - Spray glass and wipe clean with a paper towel.
- Refrigerator:
 - Clean regularly and place a cup of baking soda in a bowl on a fridge shelf to absorb odors
 - A cup of dry unused coffee grounds can also absorb odors when placed on a fridge shelf
- Washing machine:
 - A half cup of baking soda can be added to the washing machine with regular detergent to help with mild odors
- Toilets:
 - Remove waterline marks in the toilet bowl by pouring in 2 cups of white vinegar. Let soak overnight, then flush to rinse. If this does not work, scrub the waterline mark with a wet pumice stone or toilet brush.
- Carpet stains:
 - Vacuum the carpet if the stain is dry.
 - If the stain is still wet, blot gently to remove excess – BLOT, do not rub.
 - Lightly soak the carpet stain with clean water first to remove the stain – BLOT, do not rub.
 - If the stain remains, mix 3 tablespoons of vinegar with a quart of water in the spray bottle and spray the stain again; blot again, do not rub.
 - If this fails, consult a professional carpet cleaner immediately; the longer you wait may mean the stain will not come out.
- Carpet odor:
 - Regular vacuuming cures most carpet odors, but if the carpet odors persist, lightly sprinkle the carpet with baking soda and vacuum thoroughly, removing all baking soda from carpet. Repeat if necessary.

Energy Saving Tips

To lower your Hydro bills:

- During cooler months, keep all windows and doors tightly closed
- Report any major drafts to the Housing Department
- Use a reasonable level of heat in the home – sometimes turning down the heat just a few degrees can reduce your hydro bill
- Turn the heat down during the night and use warm covers and comforters
- When leaving the home, turn down the temperature on the thermostat
- Do not turn the heat completely off. It will take more heat to heat a cold house than it will save. In addition, this can cause pipes to freeze which will cause more problems
- If there is a woodstove, close the damper if you are not using it, but please be sure to open it again if you do start a fire
- Replace the furnace filter often, at a minimum of every three months. A clean filter helps the furnace run more efficiently

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Safety Tips

The safety of you and your family is important to us. Here are some tips to follow:

- Window screens are not a safety device – do not leave your children unattended near open windows
- Unplug all heat-producing appliances like toasters, irons, coffee makers and curling irons when not in use to prevent fire hazards
- Never leave heating pads or electric blankets on indefinitely and turn them off when you leave the residence to prevent fire hazards
- Never leave water running unattended in a plugged bathtub or sink or when leaving the residence
- If you have an upstairs bathroom and you see water in the ceiling below, particularly in the light fixture, report the leak immediately to our office
- Do not operate electrical appliances while standing or sitting in water
- If you have small children, use child protector plugs when you are not using outlets
- Do not overload extension cords with too many appliances
- Place lamps on level surfaces and use the correct wattage
- Avoid running extension cords over walkways, under rugs, or any other place that could cause tripping.
- If you suspect an electrical problem, report it to the housing department immediately. If it is after hours, please call our emergency line
- Do not remove smoke alarms, even if they are beeping. Smoke alarms are for safety and Big Grassy First Nation is required to have them in every housing unit as the landlord. Removing them can endanger all residents and guests in the unit
- Do not allow children to leave toys on walkways or on/near the road
- Replace outside light bulbs so you can utilize lights properly when it is dark
- Report any exposed tree roots to our office
- Keep a portable fire extinguisher in the kitchen – one should be provided to you by the Big Grassy Housing Department when you move into your unit
- If you use a grill or BBQ, use common sense and never leave the grill unattended. Do not set grills up against the house
- If you have a woodstove, be sure to store hot ashes and coals away from the residence. Do not place ashes in garbage bins/cans unless certain they are cold
- Always be certain the damper is open before starting a fire in the woodstove
- Do not build “roaring” fires in the woodstove – build reasonable fires suited to the size of the woodstove

Vacation Checklist

It is important to let the Housing Department if you are going away for an extended amount of time – any time away that is one week or longer should be reported to the Housing Department.

The reason for this is to keep your unit safe. If the Housing Department is aware of your extended absence, we can plan to have the house checked on while you're away.

It also benefits you in case there is any damage done to the unit while you are away – if we don't know you're gone, you will be responsible for any damage done in your absence.

Here are some items to check before you go:

- If you are going away for an extended period, please let the Housing Department know how long you will be gone and supply an emergency telephone number – then if any problems arise with your unit, we are able to get a hold of you to let you know.
- Check your rent payment to make sure it is not late – it would be disappointing to come home and find you owe late charges.
- Notify all necessary/trusted parties such as your family and neighbors.
- If you're leaving a vehicle in your driveway, remove all valuables.
- Avoid leaving a message on your voicemail that says you are away.
- Avoid posting your absence on social media.
- Be sure to check all windows, window locks and doors before leaving.
- Turn off/unplug all appliances, large and small (coffee pots, irons, curling irons, etc.).
- Unplug TVs and computers in the event of lightening or power surges.
- Turn your water heater to low or "vacation" setting, but do not turn it off.
- Anything else living in your house besides you? Such as pets or plants? Then be sure to water plants and have someone take care of your animals. Do not leave pets in the house unless a reliable person is going to care for them daily.