

HOUSING DIVISION

HOUSING MANAGEMENT, ALLOCATIONS, RESEARCH AND PLANNING UNIT

PROCEDURE MANUAL

A. INTRODUCTION

The purposes of this manual are:-

- To state proper procedures to be followed in the allocation of residential stands
- To assist staff to understand their responsibilities in the allocation process and to guide them to understand the whole process from allocation until a person obtains Title deeds.
- To enable work routines to be performed in a logical sequence.
- To minimize errors and duplication of work thereby allowing staff to produce quality work in an efficient manner.

B. PROCEDURE IN THE ALLOCATION PROCESS

1. Registration on the Waiting List

Any person seeking residential accommodation in Harare should be registered on the Waiting List for at least a minimum of six months before they can be considered for allocation, to avoid new entrants superseding those registered earlier

1.1 Eligibility

1.1.1 Applicant should be a resident working in Harare.

1.1.2 Applicant should be 18 years old and above

1.1.3 Applicant or their spouse should not own property within Harare, Chitungwiza, Ruwa, Norton or Epworth.

The Waiting List is the initial stage in which an applicant needs to register before being considered for allocation of a residential stand or rented accommodation.

1.2 Application For Alternative Accommodation

A person who feels that his or her social status has changed for the better qualifies to apply for alternative accommodation, in an area which is of a lesser density and higher value to the one currently owned, on condition that they dispose of the existing property on completion of development of the allocated property.

2.1 Application Methodology

2.1.1 The person approaches the Housing Allocation Section at the Department of Corporate Services and Housing, Head Office at Mbare, Remembrance Drive where he/she obtains an application form upon payment of an application fee.

2.1.2 The form must be date stamped by his/her employer. In case of those in self employment proof of such status should be produced. If the person is not formally employed he/she self employment on the employment section of the form and states the amount that they get during the month. The source of income is not necessary.

2.1.3 The fully completed form should be submitted at the Housing Allocations Section accompanied by the applicant's and/or his spouse identify cards, copies of children long birth certificates (if any), payslips (if any), and proof of regular income.

2.1.4 On alternative accommodation the application form should be date stamped by the Housing officer under whose purview the current property falls.

2.1.5 The application form is processed and the waiting list number is allocated there and then.

2.1.6 Data Capture of Information

2.2 **Renewal of Application**

2.2.1 Applications are renewed annually at a fee on the anniversary of the initial allocation, failure to renew results in applicant being deleted from the waiting list.

2.2.2 When renewing one is updating his/her financial status and change of residential address and employment.

2.3 **Application for Rented Accommodation**

2.3.1 A person is applying for rented accommodation should be on the housing waiting list.

2.3.2 In so far as Council employees are concerned, the applicant is required to approach his/her Departmental head who will issue him/her with a Memorandum requesting for special consideration for rented accommodation. When accommodation becomes available the applicant will be notified

2.3.3 Members of the public qualify for Council accommodation.

3. **Allocation Process**

3.1 **Residential Stands**

3.1.1 When a housing scheme arises through approval of the circulation plans which may be in low, medium or high density areas, conditions are set through preparation of a fact paper by the Research Unit. This establishes the criteria which will be used to assess applicant's potential.

3.2 **Interview**

3.2.1 Upon receipt of applicant (interviewee) with an invitation letter and all related official documents (391 Forms) being in place.

3.2.2 Officer (Interviewer) proceeds to give the appropriate background information concerning the housing scheme, that is, the location, number of stands available, sizes and valuations of the stands.

3.2.3 Following item 1 above, Research Officer verifies the applicant's eligibility.

- 3.2.4 Furthermore, applicant should demonstrate capacity to develop by producing proof of monthly (regular) earnings and savings or other various investments. Sometimes Employer's Guarantee may be used as back up on applicant's capacity.
- 3.2.5 Where an applicant fails to produce all required documents stated in the invitation letter, he/she is disqualified.
- 3.2.6 After the interviewee fills the interview form, applicant signs to confirm that he/she understands and accepts the conditions.
- 3.2.7 The interview forms are processed. The process includes countersigning, data analysis documentation and attachment of completed Committee Papers to be used for Deeds check and by the Inter- Departmental Allocations Committee. Lastly the interview forms are forwarded to the Chief Planning and research Officer.
- 3.2.8 The Inter-Departmental Allocations Committee comprises of members from the Audit, Legal, Department of Works and Housing Officials.

3.3 **Rented Accommodation**

- 3.3.1 When a rented property falls vacant, the District Housing Officer advises the CS&H Director by issuance of a vacant slip which he/she immediately sends to Head Office and ensures that the property is secure from vandalism.
- 3.3.2 The Senior Housing Allocations Officer goes through the special consideration list in the case of Council employees and where such accommodation is restricted to Council employees. He/she produces a shortlist in order of priority taking cognizance of family sizes, seniority, length of service and/or other extenuating circumstances. This list will be submitted to the Allocations Committee for final allocation and approval.
- 3.3.3 Where the accommodation is not restricted to Council employees; members of the public will also be considered using the waiting list. However, Council employees are given a positive bias.
- 3.3.4 Institutional accommodation is allocated to designated officers of the City of Harare such as Heads of Departments and their deputies and other

staff who are to reside as close as possible to their work stations. Their tenure is restricted to the term of the occupants' service in Council.

C. PROCEDURE IN THE HOUSING MANAGEMENT PROCESS

3.4 Deed Check

3.4.1 After recommendation for allocation applicants' forms are checked against dual ownership at our rates hall offices and Deeds Office before forwarding them to Allocations Committee. Anyone found to own another property is automatically disqualified.

4. Signing of The Agreement of Sale

4.1 After recommendations and approval by the Director a person is then given an offer letter that they present to the Housing officer. The beneficiary will then sign an Agreement of Sale upon payment of the purchase price or deposit.

5. The Agreement of Sale

5.1 It is a contract which stipulates the rights, interest and obligations over the property. The beneficiaries become the purchaser and City of Harare Seller.

6. Transfer /Title

6.1 Title is a process which starts with the application for the transfer at District Office after all charges owing to Council have been cleared.

6.2 It can be processed upon request by the purchaser for transfer after the full purchase price has been paid and the development is completed or guaranteed by any financial institution and evidence of satisfactory guarantee to complete the improvements is produced. Legal Division will then nominate a conveyancer to effect transfer at the expense of the beneficiary.

7. Cessions

7.1 Cession is the ceding or assigning of rights, interests and obligations of the property which does not have Title Deeds from one person to

another. A cession can be a deceased estate cession, Court Order or Ordinary Cession.

7.1.1 **Deceased Estate**

- (i) It is carried out on properties of those who have died. When the owner of the property dies, the family of the deceased is supposed to inform the Housing Officer who in turn introduces them to the Community Court and then to the Master of High Court.
- (ii) The Master of High Court then appoints the executor and the heir to the estate by issuing Letters of Administration which are used for the execution of cession into the heirs name by Housing Management.
- (iii) The executor is expected to bring the Court papers to the Department of Housing, head Office for processing.

7.1.2 **Court Order**

- (i) These are cessions carried out following the Court Order and are usually a result of disputes. They are carried out by Housing Management following orders from the Court's judgement.
- (ii) It is incumbent upon the applicant to bring the Court Order to CS&H Department. He/She should have a copy of the Certificate of Service to ascertain that the respondent(s) has also been served with the Order.

7.1.3 **Ordinary**

- (i) These are carried out when a person wants to dispose off the property he/she owns.
- (ii) The person who wants to buy the property should be registered on the Waiting List and should not own or is not in the process of purchasing another property in Harare.

- (iii) The two parties, the Assignor(s) the Assignee(s) should approach the District Office where the property in question falls under for an application for cession before bringing the same to Head Office for approval by the Corporate Services and Housing Director.

8. Consent

- 8.1 When a person acquires Title without developing a stand, there is a condition which is carried forward in the Title Deed, (the building Clause) which prohibits that person to dispose off the property without the consent of the City.
- 8.2 The Building Clause safeguards the interest of the City so that a person will not sell an undeveloped stand or hold it for speculation purposes.
- 8.3 Housing Management Section issues the City's consent upon satisfaction that the Building Clause has been fulfilled by production of a Certificate of fitness/occupation. The CS&H Director will exercise discretion to issue that consent to a purchaser who has not complied with the building clause but the purchaser will be required to produce acceptable evidence to support the failure .

9. Evictions

- 9.1 They are usually carried out as a result of dual ownership, non-payment of rent or subletting of rented accommodation. Case history of the matters is documented and forwarded to the Legal section.
- 9.2 It is the duty of the Housing Assistants at District Offices level to inspect all Council rented accommodation and reports, vandalism, abuse, dual occupancy and subletting of such properties. Once any of the above is established, the eviction process ensues.
- 9.3 The District Housing Officer is required to give the requisite notices in terms of lease of Council rented accommodation to the tenants in breach, failure to comply will end in eviction.

10. Repossessions

- 10.1 The minimum number of rooms stipulated in the Agreement of Sale completed within an agreed period.

10.2 Failure by the beneficiary to comply will lead to the repossession of the stand, written notice of such will be given by Housing Management.

11. Research and Planning Unit

The Unit is responsible for the Research function for the Department. It is the custodian of the Planning, Selection/Screening, Implementation and the monitoring functions for housing development project. It also edits the Annual report for the Department.

11.1 Research Activities

11.1.1 For any required research the Unit shall carry out the following duties:-

- Preparation of research proposal and getting it approved
- Preparation of data gathering instruments
- Data Analysis
- Report Writing
- Dissemination of information/report

11.2 Annual Report

11.2.1 Edit submissions from Divisions

- Collect and Compile the report for Director of Corporate Services and Housing
- Oversee binding of Report
- Submit report to Council
- Disseminate information/report (National Activities to get report yearly without fail)

11.3 Planning Duties

11.3.1 Comment on residential layout plans circulated for new housing development schemes including infill areas and maintain register of same

11.3.2 Keep custody of layout plans as outlined in 11.3.1 above

11.3.3 Follow up approval of layout plans referred to in Paragraph 11.3.1 and 11.3.2 above.

11.3.4 Submit and follow up residential stands intended for allocation

including repossessed stands.

11.3.5 For unserviced stands obtain cost estimates for servicing area and details of services required.

11.3.6 Use cost estimates and all prices provided to prepare FACT PAPERS. No interviews shall be done without FACT PAPERS and availability of costs to the Research Unit. Fact papers to include provisions of Agreement of Sale.

11.3.7 Identify land for development/construction of superstructures.

11.4 **Screening /Selection Interviews**

11.4.1 Objective is to assess affordability and eligibility of prospective home owners for available residential property (including repossessed stands).

- Other investments/assets bring in elements that are very difficult to verify and are not uniform hence should be ignored in the process of assessing eligibility.
- Endorse amount, date and name of savings account.

11.4.2 Salaries and Waiting List numbers shall also form part of the selection criteria.

11.4.3 Any special written request shall be attached to the interview schedule For the benefit of the Allocations Committee.

11.4.4 Committee Papers shall be prepared and attached to each recommended applicant for Allocations Committee consideration. These must be completed accurately in full to match information on the interview schedule.

11.4.5 All forms of persons invited to an interview shall be submitted to the Housing Manager together with an analysis showing those Recommended, Not Recommended and Failed to /Did Not Turn Up for Interview.

11.4.6 The unit should maintain a comprehensive register of applicants invited

for interviews and the disposal thereof. Such records shall be easily available to all requiring accessing them (e.g. Audit, Investigating officers).

11.5 **Monitoring and Evaluation Process**

11.5.1 The Unit shall also keep a register of all allocations on residential stands as a benchmark for monitoring purposes.

11.5.2 For Virgin land the Unit shall cause the formation of a Project Implementation Management team comprising allocated members or their company representatives for Employer Assisted Schemes to spearhead development.

11.5.3 The Unit shall hold regular meetings with the project Implementation Team to direct development and assist in solving challenges that may arise.

11.5.4 Monitoring of development shall lead to recommendations for Cancellations of Agreements to Housing Management if targets are not met or specified time to advise Director of Corporate Services and Housing and, eventually, Council (Quarterly and Annual Housing Development Reports shall always be done).

11.5.6 From time to time monitoring and evaluation research shall be undertaken to identify challenges faced by developers and to come up with possible mitigations for these.

11.6 **Partnerships in Construction of Residential Units**

11.6.1 Co-ordinate the activities of partners who are engaged to develop/construct housing units on Municipal land.

11.6.2 Attend Technical Committee Meetings as well as Site Meetings in areas where construction is taking place.

11.6.3 Take a facilitative role for the above to overcome challenges and constraints among various Municipal Departments and the Contractors.

11.6.4 Prepare progress reports on such projects.

11.7 **Refurbishment of Hostels/Residential Properties**

11.7.1 Engage relevant technical Municipal Departments to come up with works to be done, diagrams schedules of materials required and source finance from organisations willing to partner City of Harare in the project.

11.8 **Housing Policy**

1.8.1 Interrogate, review and revive Housing Policy in line with prevailing scio-economic conditions and in line with Central Government Policy.

12. **HOUSING CO-OPERATIVES**

12.1 **Housing Co-operative Development Sector**

12.1.1 Ensuring the establishment of viable Housing Co-operative in terms of:-

- Urban Council's Act
- Co-operative Societies Act
- National Housing Development Policy
- Government Policy on Co-operatives
- Government Policy Statement on Housing Co-operatives.
- Municipal Enterprise and Co-operative Development Policy.
- City of Harare Operational Manual on Housing Co-operatives.

12.1.2 Liaise with other Council and Government departments, Civic and Community Leaders on matters related to housing co-operative development.

12.1.3 Recommend allocation of residential stands in terms of:-

- The Municipal Enterprise and Co-operative Development Policy.
- Council Resolution Item 47 (i) and (ii) of September 1990.
- CSO(1) Co-operative Officer Job Description.
- Clause '2' of Housing Co-operative Policy

12.1.4 Arbitration and Settlement of disputes among Co-operatives, Co-operative members and other parties.

12.2 **Allocation of Land to Housing Cooperatives**

Housing Co-operatives are allocated land in terms of the provisions of Section 152 of the Urban Council's Act (Chapter 20:15) and in line with Council's Policy. On the allocation of residential stands (item 47 (i) (ii) of the Finance Committee, 20th September 1990 and subsequent Council Resolutions.

12.3 **Criteria Considered when recommending Co-operatives for Allocation of Land**

The co-operative should have attended at least three consecutive bi-monthly meetings. The names of the groups are derived from the register which has the names arranged in a chronological descending order.

Factors to be considered prior to the recommendations are:-

- The date of registration
- Attendance of bi-monthly meetings
- Organisation and management
- Financial feasibility
- Updated membership list
- Current audited financial accounts
- Application letter

12.4 **Procedures for Allocation of Land**

Housing Co-operatives may be allocated serviced and unserviced stands.

With regard to serviced stands, the number of stands to be allocated to a co-operative is determined on a pro-rata basis. The Co-operative accumulated savings are divided by the cost of one stand. The list of groups recommended is then handed over to the Allocations Committee for approval. After the approval, a provisional letter of allocation is then issued and payment of intrinsic land value for allocated stands is expected to be made within forty eight hours of receipt of the allocation letter.

After the signing of the Agreement of Sale, the co-operative prepares the building plans and then build uniform units which are to be rented out to members until the completion of the housing project.

12.5 **Allocation of Housing Units and Tenure**

During the development stage of the project residential stands remain in the name of the City of Harare, but being owned the Co-operative. Individual members cannot claim ownership of the stands/units before the completion of the project. Completed Housing Units shall be rented out to members. Individual Titles will be issued simultaneously upon the completion of the Housing Project.

