



GITSEGUKLA HOUSING

HOUSING POLICY FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The following outlines Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) about the Gitsegukla On-Reserve Housing Policy. The Policy will be implemented in two phases, as described below:

- **Phase 1: “Band Owned Units”** – defined as the Band’s duplexes, six-plex, ten-plex, and all teacherages. Specific information for residents in Band Owned Units is located on page 7.
- **Phase 2: “Homeowner Units”** – defined as units owned by Gitsegukla residents and all associated activities such as the purchase of on-reserve houses and self-financed home construction. Specific information for these residents is located on page 11.

Information in this FAQ is mainly focused how the policy affects residents in Band Owned Units (Phase 1). High level information on how the policy affects Homeowners is outlined at the end of this FAQ.

A NOTE ABOUT PAYING RENT

All residents living in Gitsegukla Band Owned Units will pay rent. Rent paid from residents will pay for costs to maintain the homes to support the goal of safe and secure housing in Gitsegukla.

The Band is considering a fair way to set the amount of rent that each household will pay. A “Rental Rate Guide” is currently being developed and will be out in the coming weeks. Please stay tuned!

MISSION AND GOALS

Reference: Section 1 of the Housing Policy.

1) What is the Housing Policy?

- Gitsegukla has created a new Housing Policy that applies to all homes on-reserve.
- Gitsegukla Band Council approved and ratified the Housing Policy on January 13, 2019.
- The Housing Policy will be implemented starting August 1, 2019.

2) Why does Gitsegukla have a Housing Policy?

- The Housing Policy has been developed to guide Gitsegukla in all matters related to housing.
- The Housing Policy will help Gitsegukla Band in providing affordable, safe, and secure on-reserve housing to current and future band members.



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USE AND AUTHORITY

Reference: Section 4 of the Housing Policy.

3) How does the Housing Policy apply to me?

- The Housing Policy applies to all homes on-reserve. That means it applies to everyone living on-reserve – members and non-members.
- There are responsibilities for all people living on-reserve, including things like maintenance of homes, payment of rents (if in Band owned homes), and conduct.
- See Question 4 if you live in a Band-owned home on-reserve.
- See Question 5 if you live in a privately-owned home on-reserve.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Reference: Section 5 of the Housing Policy.

On-Reserve Tenants

4) What are my responsibilities as a tenant?

- If you are living in a Band-owned unit, you are responsible for:
 - Ensuring your actions and the actions of others in your unit supports the health and safety of people living on reserve in Gitsegukla;
 - Paying rent;
 - Paying utilities;
 - Undertaking everyday cleaning and maintenance of your home, including the yard and any common areas; and
 - Following the Gitsegukla on-Reserve Housing Policy and the Rental / Tenancy Agreement.

On-Reserve Homeowners

5) What are my responsibilities as a home owner?

- If you own your home on-reserve in Gitsegukla, you are responsible for:
 - Ensuring your actions and the actions of those in others in your home supports the health and safety of people living on reserve in Gitsegukla;
 - Paying all costs related to your home (mortgage, utilities, insurance etc.);
 - Maintaining your home (including undertaking repairs, renovations etc.) and keeping the yard and common areas clean; and



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- Following the Gitsegukla on-Reserve Housing Policy.

Gitsegukla Band Council

4) What responsibilities do the Gitsegukla Band Council have?

- Gitsegukla Band Council provides oversight for implementation of the Housing Policy.
- Gitsegukla Band Council reviews and approves decisions made by the Housing Committee.

Housing Department

5) What does the Housing Department do?

- The Gitsegukla Band Housing Department is responsible for the day-to-day administration, management, application, and enforcement of the Gitsegukla Band Housing Policy.
- This includes carrying out the directions / decisions of the Housing Committee.

Public Works Department

5) How has the Public Works and Housing Department changed?

- To provide more efficient services to the community, the Public Works and Housing Department has been divided into two separate departments; the (1) Public Works Department, and (2) Housing Department.
- When authorized by the Housing Department, the Public Works Department deals with all repairs and maintenance on Gitsegukla Band units and premises. This includes overseeing external contractors hired by the Housing Department to complete repairs.

Housing Committee

6) What does the Housing Committee do?

- The Housing Committee makes important housing decisions on behalf of the entire community.
- The Housing Committee advises Gitsegukla Band Council on housing issues of the community.
- The Housing Committee supports the Gitsegukla Housing Department in applying and enforcing the Housing Policy.

7) Who is on the Housing Committee?

- There are seven (7) members of the Housing Committee, made up of:
 - Three Band Councilors;
 - Two Community Members, (to be appointed);



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- The Band Manager; and
- The Housing Manager.
- The Band Manager and the Housing Manager do not vote on decisions made by the Housing Committee.

8) Can I be part of the Housing Committee?

- If you are a Member of Gitsegukla Band, you can be a member of the Housing Committee if:
 - Your spouse, married or common law, is not on the Committee;
 - Your child is not on the Committee and;
 - You live on the Gitsegukla reserve.
- To be on the Housing Committee, you must be committed to:
 - Fair and impartial decision-making;
 - Advancing the best interests of the Gitsegukla Band as a whole;
 - Understanding the housing needs of the Gitsegukla Band;
 - Possessing technical skills related to housing or property management (if available), and;
 - Upholding the Housing Policy.

9) How do I become part of the Housing Committee?

- If you would like to be part of the Housing Committee, you must apply at the Band Office. Applications will be available when a call-out is posted coming soon.
- Applicants who are shortlisted for consideration will be interviewed by a Panel who will be responsible for choosing two applicants to sit on the Housing Committee.



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PHASE 1: GITSEGUKLA BAND HOUSING

Reference: Section 6 of the Housing Policy.

The following subsection of Q&As apply to all members renting Band-owned units.

Eligibility

10) Can I become a Tenant in a Band-Owned home?

- You may be eligible to become a tenant in a Band-owned home if:
 - You are a Gitsegukla Band Member over the age of 19;
 - You have a regular source of income that pay for rent and other financial responsibilities you have (e.g. utilities);
 - You are in good financial standing with the Gitsegukla Band;
 - You have not been previously evicted and;
 - You must support the health and safety of people living on-Reserve in Gitsegukla.

Application

11) How do I become a Tenant in a Band-Owned home?

- To become a Tenant to a Band-Owned home you need to submit an Application to the Housing Department.
 - The Housing Department will review the Application.
 - If your Application is accepted, and you meet eligibility criteria within the policy, you will be notified and put on the Housing wait list.
 - The Wait list will be used to select potential Tenants once a unit becomes available. Depending on what information was provided and the timing of an available home, the Housing Department may ask applicants to submit a new application.
 - It is the responsibility of an Applicant to update wait list applications by December 31st of each year (to remain on the wait list).
 - The Housing Department will remind Applicants for housing each November to update applications.
 - If an application is not updated, the application would be inactive and removed from the wait list.



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Unit Allocation

12) What happens once a unit becomes available?

- If a Housing unit becomes available, the Housing Department will review the wait list and select a potential Tenant(s) based on:
 - Being able to meet eligibility requirements for housing; and
 - Other factors such as the number of bedrooms available and the number of bedrooms the Tenant requires.
- The potential Tenants will meet with the Housing Department.
- The Housing Department will provide information of the potential Tenants to the Housing Committee.
- The Housing Committee will interview the potential Tenants.
- The Housing Committee will select a Tenant to receive the home, and the Tenant will sign the Rental/ Tenancy Agreement.

Occupancy

13) How many people can live in my home? Who can live in my home?

- Where possible, the Band supports occupancy guidelines according to the National Occupancy Standard. The standard provides guidance for single / cohabitating adults, and children (same sex and opposite sex). Please see the Housing Department to learn more.
- Any person living in your house must be listed on your Rental / Tenancy Agreement.

14) Can I lease my home?

- If you are a tenant in a Band-owned unit, you cannot sub-lease your home.

15) Do I need insurance for my home?

- Gitsegukla Band will insure all band-owned units and premises.
- Tenants are responsible for insuring the contents of their home e.g. personal belongings.

Maintenance

16) What maintenance and repairs am I responsible for?

- As the Tenant, you are responsible for general household maintenance and minor repairs such as cleaning inside and outside the house, replacing light bulbs, minor repairs to walls and replacing batteries in smoke alarms. See Section 6.10.2 of the



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Housing Policy for more details on maintenance and minor repairs you are responsible for.

- In general, Tenants are responsible for keeping their homes clean, tidy, and free of clutter to support the health and safety of all occupants.
- The Band will provide you will basic home maintenance training.

17) Something in my house is broken, how do I get it fixed?

- Depends on what it is!
- If it is a minor repair, you are responsible for fixing it.
- If it is a major repair, you must notify the Housing Department and they will complete the repair (according to priority and available funds).
 - Major repairs include such things as repairing electrical wiring and switches, repairing leaking pipes and replacing doors, windows, and furnaces.
 - The Band will also deal with issues in your unit that are a threat to health and safety such as fire hazards, material visibility of mould, and structural deficiencies.
- If a repair is required due to actions by you or another occupant of or visitor to the home, you will be required to pay for the repair.

18) I notified the Housing Department that my house needed a repair, why hasn't it been fixed yet?

- The Housing Department will make a priority list for all repairs based on level of urgency, the availability of funds and capacity to complete repairs, and other factors.

19) Why did I receive a notice that someone is coming to inspect my home?

- The Housing Department will complete at least four inspections (one each quarter or at the Housing Departments discretion) throughout the year.
- You will receive a written notice at least two weeks before scheduled inspections or maintenance work.

20) I want to renovate my Band owned home, what do I do?

- You must submit written notice to the Housing Department for approval before doing any renovations or upgrades.
- You must include details on the work you want to complete, including the actual work to be done, costs, and the proposed contractor.

Rent Payment

21) When is rent due, how do I pay it, and how much is it?



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- Rent is due at the beginning of every month.
- It must be paid directly to the Gitsegukla Finance Department through post-dated cheques, cash, or payroll deposit (if employed by the Band).
- Please see the Housing Department for information on rent for your home.

Rental Arrears

22) What happens if I am late paying rent?

- If you are late in payment of rent, you are in violation of the policy and are subject to increasing discipline that may lead up to eviction from your home.
- If you have any issues with payment of rents, please see the Housing Department.

AMENDMENT

Reference: Section 11 of the Housing Policy.

23) I don't agree with a certain section of the Housing Policy, what can I do?

- The Housing Policy is a living document so it will change from time-to-time.
- If you would like to see a change to the Housing Policy, you must submit the suggested change, and any materials that support your suggested change, in writing to the Housing Department.
- The Housing Department and the Housing Committee will review the suggested change.
- The Housing Committee will either:
 - Make a recommendation to Gitsegukla Band Council to approve the amendment;
 - Ask the Housing Department to revise the amendment for additional clarity at the next Housing Committee meeting;
 - Reject the amendment;
 - Consult with membership at a community meeting to receive additional feedback.
- If the Policy changes, the Housing Department will keep appropriate documentation.

APPEALS

Reference: Section 12 of the Housing Policy.



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24) I think a decision has been made that is against the Housing Policy? What do I do?

- You can appeal any decision that you feel is against the Housing Policy.
- You must submit your appeal in writing to the Housing Department within 14 days of the decision being made.
- The Housing Department and Housing Committee will review the appeal and decide whether to accept or reject the appeal.
- You may need to meet with the Housing Committee to discuss.

PHASE 2: GITSEGUKLA HOMEOWNER UNITS

While this FAQ is mainly focused on how the Housing Policy affects residents in Band Owned Units, there are other sections of the policy that apply to residents in Homeowner Units. Sections listed from the Housing Policy below will be the focus of how the policy is implemented in Phase 2.

- Purchase of Gitsegukla Band Units (Section 7 of the Housing Policy)
- Self-Financed Home Construction (Section 8 of the Housing Policy)
- Homeowner Units (Section 9 of the Housing Policy)
- On-Reserve Construction (Section 10 of the Housing Policy)

Please refer to the Housing Policy for more information on these sections.

OTHER QUESTIONS?

Thanks for reading this FAQ, please see members of the Housing Department at the Band Office if you have any questions!