Hastings County
Housing Programs Branch
Administrative Policies and Procedures

SUBJECT : Suspected Deceased Person Policy		
APPROVED BY : Hastings County Council		
POLICY #: 11-07		
ORIGINAL ISSUED	**SUPERCEDES**	**CURRENT VERSION**
May 2007	N/A	May 2007

PURPOSE

To establish procedures that are to be followed by the Housing Programs Branch to ensure safety in the event that there is a suspected deceased person in a unit or common area of the units directly managed by the Housing Programs Branch.

SCOPE

The policy applies to the units directly managed by the Housing Programs Branch.

REFERENCES

Housing Programs Branch Administrative Policies

REQUIREMENT

The Housing Programs Branch staff are required to follow proper procedures when dealing with possible health or safety issues.

RESPONSIBILITY

Occasionally a family member or community worker will contact the Housing Programs Branch to express concerns regarding a relative or client that they have not been able to contact and request that a staff member enter the unit to check on the person. The *Residential Tenancies Act* states that if a unit is entered without 24 hours written notice, it is considered an illegal entry. This does not apply in the case of an emergency.
If it is believed that the tenant's health and safety is being threatened or property damage will occur, a unit may be entered without 24 hours written notice following the guidelines below;

- Contact the police in the event that you suspect a tenant may have died in their unit and wait for their instruction to unlock the unit door
- If the tenant is deceased, do not tamper with anything in the area and secure the unit's access doors to ensure that non-emergency personnel do not enter the area
- do not leave the area until notified to do so by the police
- notify your supervisor of the situation

The Housing Programs Branch directly manages over 1,600 social housing units. Occasionally staff encounter people who they suspect may be deceased. It is important to have specific procedures in place so that these situations can be addressed in a consistent and safe manner.