Canada Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB)
Year 3
Addressing Technological Barriers

TAEH Forum

July 13, 2022

TORONTO

Overview

- COHB Program Overview
- Year 3 Implementation
- Online application process
- Addressing technological barriers
- Questions / discussion

TORONTO

COHB Program Overview

- Provincial Federal program - part of the National Housing Strategy

- **Portable housing benefit** to assist with rental costs in the private housing market. The benefit is tied to the household and can be used to help pay rent **anywhere in Ontario**.

- Benefit calculation is **income based** and reflects benchmarked Average Market Rents for the Service Manager area
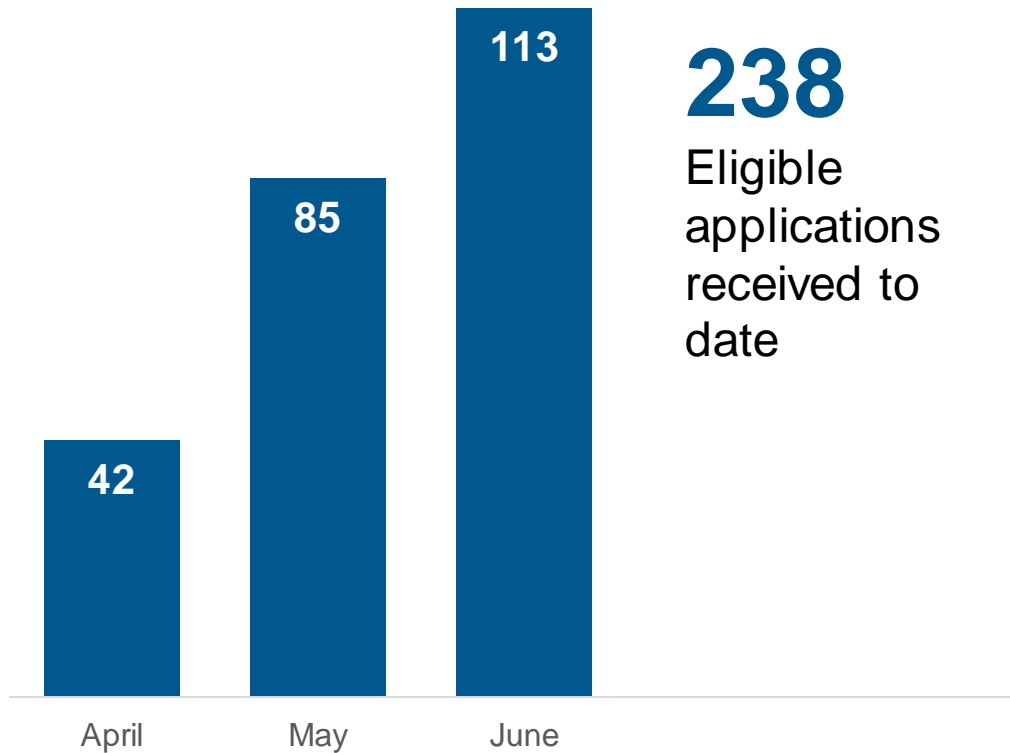
- COHB is now in **Year 3**

City of Toronto COHB Year 3 Implementation

Year 3 COHB will prioritize **shelter residents** and people experiencing homelessness as a primary target group under the **Shelter Relief Stream**
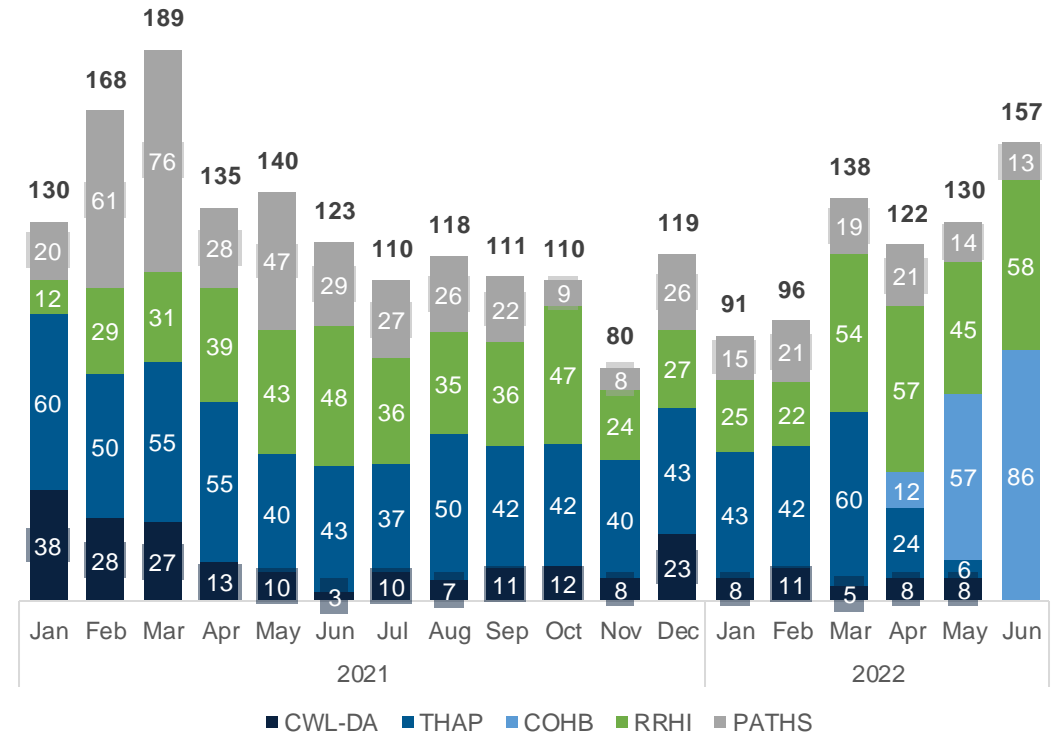
- Eligibility criteria include
  - **3 months of homelessness**
  - **Secured a rental tenancy** (Lease, Promise of Address, Landlord Confirmation Form)
  - **Referred** by a POS, DOS or Streets2Homes and partner agencies from the 'By Names' list.
- New **online application process** and applicant (e)signature requirement.
  - End of interim verbal consent provision

Year 3 COHB Initial outcomes Shelter Relief Stream

Eligible applications received

April	May	June
42	85	113

238 Eligible applications received to date

Households

Legend: ■ CWL-DA ■ THAP ■ COHB ■ RRHI ■ PATHS

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Total	130	168	189	135	140	123	110	118	111	110	80	119	91	96	138	122	130	157
PATHS	20	61	76	28	47	29	27	26	22	9	8	26	15	21	19	21	14	13
RRHI	12	29	31	39	43	48	36	35	36	47	24	27	25	22	54	57	45	58
COHB																12	57	86
THAP	60	50	55	55	40	43	37	50	42	42	40	43	43	42	60	24	6	
CWL-DA	38	28	27	13	10	3	10	7	11	12	8	23	8	11	5	8	8	

2021   2022

COHB Application Process

CheckMarket Survey

Agency Referring Worker completes initial referral

ONT-TAXS

HSS staff reviews CM survey, if approved, client details input into ONT-TAXS to generate application email to the client

Portable Housing Benefit Online Application

Client receives email with application link to be completed within 21 days. Agency referring worker may need to assist

Provincial Approval

Application is reviewed by Province to determine eligibility and benefit amount

Technological Barriers

Initial referral – (housing worker)

- Each adult applicant must have their own **personal and unique email address.**

Online application process – (applicant)

- Must receive email from Province with **application link** and **access code**
- Must successfully **access online portal** and **complete application** within **21 days** of receiving the link.
- Application process is extensive with **6 separate sections**
- **E-signature process** must be completed correctly by all adult household members within **24 hours** of opening.
- If e-signature process is done **incorrectly**, application will be **submitted but not processed.**

Addressing Technological Barriers

- Engagement, Training and Regular Check ins
  - Site Leads and staff for each referring partner receive COHB training and information packages to support clients
  - Weekly check ins for Site Leads and workers to receive updates, bring forward issues and questions

- Application progress monitoring
  - The City's COHB team **tracks each application and communicates with the referring worker**
    - at 14 days, 18 days and expiry of the 21 day window.
    - When submitted applications do not appear in the Province's system within 5 days.

- **Paper application** is available
  - Cannot be tracked
  - Longer timelines for completion, particularly if there are any errors

TORONTO

Questions / discussion

TORONTO