



NUNAVUT HOUSEHOLD ALLOWANCE (NHA) POLICY

Objective

The Nunavut Household Allowance program (NHA) is a taxable allowance for eligible employees designed to offset some of the costs of owning or renting a home in the territory.

Summary

The NHA is a program for indeterminate and term employees of the Government of Nunavut (GN) and the Legislative Assembly who own a home or are renting a home on the private market, and paying rent at or above the rental rent threshold.

A monthly allowance, paid through the GN payroll system, is available to eligible employees on a per household basis.

Principles

This policy is guided by Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and Inuit Societal Values. By supporting GN Employees, and through the delivery of GN programs and services, the NHA aligns with the Inuit Societal Value of *Pijitsirniq*; serving and providing for family and/or community. Further, by supporting GN employees who do not have the benefit of living in staff housing, the NHA aligns with the principle of *Inuuqatigiitsiarniq*; respecting others, relationships, and caring for people.

Definitions

The following terms apply in this policy:

Allowance – The set of payments the GN pays to a specific eligible applicant or co-applicants under the NHA.

Applicant – An indeterminate or term employee of the GN or the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut who submits an application for the NHA.

Application – The form(s) submitted by an applicant to enroll in the NHA program.

Co-Applicant – Defined as an “applicant” that is a second resident of a rental unit or owned home, who is included on, or added to, an NHA application.

- A co-applicant must meet all NHA program eligibility requirements.
- If an eligible co-applicant is added to or included on an NHA application, the allowance will be split 50/50 between the applicant and co-applicant.

Principal Residence – The primary location that a person inhabits. An individual can only have one principal residence, even if they own or rent more than one property.

Rental Rate Threshold – Applies to rental units only, and represents the minimum amount an applicant must be paying in rent each month to be eligible to receive the allowance. The rate is determined by the Department of Finance, and will be reviewed periodically.

Retroactive (“retro”) payments – NHA payments that may be provided to an applicant, based on past eligibility for the allowance. Retroactive payments may be available for new applicants, or applicants returning from leave, and are provided in lump-sum, upon application approval.

Update Request – A formal request by an applicant or co-applicant to change information about themselves and/or their housing situation, as it relates to the NHA.

Contribution

Through the NHA, eligible recipients can receive a set monthly allowance, per household. The total allowance rate can be found in the GN Household Allowance Guidelines. The contribution is payable only through GN payroll, and is a taxable benefit.

Eligibility Requirements

- Applicants must be indeterminate or term employees with the GN or the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut.
- Applicants must not be receiving any form of housing subsidy, including subsidized GN or federal staff housing, public housing, or any other housing allowance.
- Applicants must own a home or rent a home at or above the rental rate threshold in Nunavut.
- Applicants must occupy the home or rental unit in Nunavut as their principal residence.

- There may be circumstances that allow for eligibility to the program outside of the requirements set above. For clarity on eligibility, please contact the Department of Finance.

Co-Applicants

In some circumstances, the household allowance may be split between two GN employees sharing accommodation. The total amount of the allowance paid to co-applicants will not exceed the approved NHA amount for any one physical address. The details regarding co-applicants can be found in the *GN Household Allowance Guidelines*.

Leave of Absence

A GN employee on leave may be eligible for continued receipt of the household allowance, or retroactive pay of up to six months upon return to work. Details on eligibility regarding leave can be found in the *GN Household Allowance Guidelines*.

Appeals

Any applicant or recipient wishing to appeal a decision regarding the NHA, may make their appeal in the form of a formal letter to the Deputy Minister of Finance. In making a decision, the Deputy Minister of Finance may consult with other Deputy Ministers, where appropriate. The decision of the Deputy Minister will be considered final.

Applications and Updates

The NHA is **not** an automatic benefit. Employees must apply to receive the allowance and must demonstrate that they meet all program eligibility requirements.

Recipients are responsible for informing the Department of Finance of any change in their housing situation. Failure to submit required updates may result in termination of the allowance and potential claw back of payments through the Department of Finance Payroll Division and possible future applications being declined.

Prerogative of Executive Council

Nothing in this Policy shall in any way be construed to limit the prerogative of the Executive Council to make decisions or take actions regarding the Nunavut Household Allowance, outside the provisions of this Policy.

Sunset

This policy will be effective from the date of signature until April 1, 2024.



NUNAVUT HOUSEHOLD ALLOWANCE (NHA) PROGRAM GUIDELINES

1. Objective

The Nunavut Household Allowance program (NHA) is a taxable allowance for eligible employees designed to offset some of the costs of owning or renting a home in the territory.

2. Summary

The NHA is a program for indeterminate and term employees of the Government of Nunavut and the Legislative Assembly who own a home or are renting a home on the private market and paying rent at or above the rental rent threshold.

A monthly allowance of \$400, paid through the Government of Nunavut payroll system, is available to eligible employees on a per household basis.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Government of Nunavut

The Government of Nunavut, through the Department of Finance, administers the NHA.

Department of Finance Payroll Division

The Payroll division at the Department of Finance is responsible for the administration of the policy, including tracking and processing applications, and managing allowance payments.

4. Definitions

The following terms apply in this policy:

Allowance – The set of payments the GN pays to a specific eligible applicant or co-applicants under the NHA. The current allowance amount is \$400 per month, per household.

Applicant – An indeterminate or term employee of the GN, or the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut who submits an application for the NHA.

Application – The form(s) submitted by an applicant to enroll in the NHA program.

Co-Applicant – Defined as an “applicant” that is a second resident of a rental unit or owned home, who is included on, or added to, an NHA application.

- A co-applicant must meet all NHA program eligibility requirements.
- If an eligible co-applicant is added to or included on an NHA application, the allowance will be split 50/50 between the applicant and co-applicant.

Number of bedrooms – Used for determining rental rate thresholds, Number of Bedrooms means the number of bedrooms in a rental unit. For the purposes of determining eligibility for the NHA, the rental rate of one bedroom in a shared multi-bedroom unit is equivalent to the rate of a bachelor unit.

Principal Residence – The primary location that a person inhabits. An individual can only have one principal residence, even if they own or rent more than one property.

Purchase date of home – The first day the applicant moved into their house after they officially took ownership of their home or started a tenancy-at-will at or above the rental rate threshold.

Rental commencement date – The date the applicant moved into their rental unit and started paying rent.

Rental Rate Threshold – Applies to rental units only, and represents the minimum amount an applicant must be paying in rent each month to be eligible to receive the allowance. The rate is determined by the Department of Finance and will be reviewed periodically. Current thresholds can be found in *Appendix A*.

Retroactive (“retro”) payments – NHA payments that may be provided to an applicant, based on past eligibility¹ for the allowance. Retroactive payments may be available for new applicants, or applicants returning from leave, and are provided in lump-sum, upon application approval.

Update Request – A formal request by an applicant or co-applicant to change information about themselves and/or their housing situation, as it relates to the NHA. Any update request must be made on the form found in Appendix C, of these guidelines.

¹ This includes periods of eligibility, even if the applicant no longer resides at those premises.

5. Contribution

Through the NHA, eligible recipients can receive a total of \$400 per month, per household. The contribution is payable only through GN payroll, and is a taxable benefit.

6. Eligibility Requirements

- Applicants must be indeterminate or term employees with the GN or the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut.
- Applicants must not be receiving any form of housing subsidy, including subsidized GN or federal staff housing, public housing, or any other housing allowance.
- Applicants must own a home or rent a home at or above the rental rate threshold in Nunavut.
- Applicants must occupy the home or rental unit in Nunavut as their principal residence.
- There may be circumstances that allow for eligibility to the program outside of the requirements set above. For clarity on eligibility, please contact the Department of Finance.

7. Co-Applicants

Two applicants that are sharing a private accommodation, and both meet the required eligibility criteria, may request to have the household allowance evenly split (50/50) between them.

To be eligible for the allowance split, applicants must apply for the program as co-applicants. Existing recipients of the NHA may also apply to add a co-applicant to their account.

For clarity, one household allowance is available for each physical address; for example a room within an existing house or apartment does not become a separate dwelling for the purpose of the NHA.

8. Current Recipients

8.1 Current Recipients on Leave

If an NHA recipient is on approved leave from their employing department and in receipt of regular pay, they will continue to receive the NHA as long as they continue to meet the eligibility for the NHA; for example, their home remains their principal residence, and is not leased or rented out during the period of leave.

For clarity, those NHA recipients who are NOT in receipt of regular pay, such as those in receipt of Education Allowance in Lieu of Salary, those on Maternity Leave, Parental Leave, Deferred Leave, Leave without Pay, Long Term Disability, etc. will have their allowance stopped. Upon return to work, recipients must re-apply for the NHA, and their eligibility will be re-assessed. Please see *Re-application for NHA and Retroactive Payments for NHA*.

Teachers or school staff employed indeterminately, and receiving the NHA, who leave their principal residence at the end of the school year and return at the beginning of the following school year will have no break in their allowance. Any sublet of the principal residence would mean an end of the employee's eligibility of the NHA, and recovery of any amounts paid.

Teachers or school staff receiving the NHA who are employed on a term basis must re-apply for the NHA if they return for another term. Multiyear terms will remain in place with no break in allowance.

Employees or schools staff who are in receipt of Education Allowance in Lieu of Salary, but attend an educational institution within Nunavut and maintain their eligibility for the NHA, will continue to receive it.

8.2 *Re-application for NHA*

Upon return to work, recipients must re-apply for the NHA, and their eligibility will be re-assessed. NHA, retro payments may be made to those employees who;

- a) Did not change their principal residence while on leave,
- b) Did not lease or rent out their home or rental unit while on leave; and
- c) Experienced no break in service with the GN or Legislative Assembly.

8.3 *Retroactive Payments for NHA*

To be considered for retroactive payments, applicants must submit a Retroactive Payment form, including a statutory declaration.

Retroactive payment amounts will vary based on the type of leave. Retroactive payments will be available for the following periods:

- *Maternity/Parental Leave: Full leave retro payment.*
- *Sick/Disability Leave: Full leave retro payment (with some exceptions).*
- *Retro payments for other types of leave may be considered. Please contact your Compensation and Benefits Officers to provide the details of your situation.*

9. Retroactive Pay for New Applicants

For all eligible new applicants, if eligibility can be proven for any period before the application date, retro payments may be made for up to six (6) months before the complete application is received.

10. Appeals

Any applicant or recipient wishing to appeal a decision regarding the NHA, may make their appeal in the form of a formal letter to the Deputy Minister of Finance. In making a decision, the Deputy Minister of Finance may consult with other Deputy Ministers, where appropriate. The decision of the Deputy Minister will be considered final.

11. Applications and Updates

New Applicants

The NHA is **not** an automatic benefit. Employees must apply to receive the allowance and must demonstrate that they meet all program eligibility requirements.

To apply for the NHA, applicants must complete the NHA Application Form, and the NHA Verification Form, found in Appendices A and B, and submit them to the Department of Finance, Payroll Division. If an applicant is returning from leave, and applying for retro payments, they must also complete and submit the retro payment form and statutory declaration found in Appendix D.

Required forms can be downloaded at www.gov.nu.ca/finance/information/household-allowance and submitted by:

Mail

Attn: Employee Household Allowance
Payroll Division
Department of Finance, Government of Nunavut
Box 1000 Stn. 360
Iqaluit, Nunavut X0A 0H0

Email

householdallowance@gov.nu.ca

In Person

Second Floor Brown Building, Iqaluit

Application Updating

Once an employee becomes a recipient of the NHA, they are responsible for reporting any changes in their housing situation to the Department of Finance, Taxation and Insurance Division. Changes can be submitted using the Nunavut Household Allowance Update Form, found in Appendix C, and downloadable at www.gov.nu.ca/finance/information/household-allowance.

Failure to submit required updates may result in termination of the allowance, potential claw back of payments through payroll deductions, and possible future applications being declined.

A reminder and Update Form will be sent to all current NHA recipients annually.

If a recipient's housing situation or contact information has not changed, no update action is required.

Appendix A – Current Rental Rate Thresholds

Rental Rate Thresholds are defined as the minimum amount an applicant must be paying in rent each month to be eligible to receive the Nunavut Household Allowance.

The threshold is calculated using a portion (80%) of the average rates at which the Nunavut Housing Corporation leases private units for the GN staff housing program.

The rates are subject to change and will be updated periodically.

NHA Rental Rate Threshold

Bachelor	1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3 Bedroom	4 Bedroom
\$1,200	\$1,700	\$2,000	\$2,300	\$2,600

**This also includes the rental rate threshold for those renting a room within an existing dwelling; all other provisions of the NHA apply.*

