



Peel Living

Community Partnership Framework



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1

Background

Peel Living

Peel Housing Corporation, operating as Peel Living (PL), is a community housing provider wholly owned by the Region of Peel. One of its core functions is to support tenants and to do so, Peel Living works with community partners so its tenants and communities have access to programs and services they need to succeed in their tenancies and lives. These partnerships are vital as Peel Living has neither the mandate, expertise, nor resources to meet the many needs and aspirations of its tenants alone.

Vision

A housing provider that contributes to healthy communities in Peel and fosters a sense of pride for those who live and work there.

Mission

Provide housing options that are affordable, sustainable, resilient, and well-maintained, as well as access to wrap-around supports and services within the community.

Landlord & Tenant Promise

In 2021, PL created its Landlord & Tenant Promise (see Appendix A). It is a reminder of the obligations that both landlord and tenant are accountable for and is used as a tool to aide in discussions as to how Peel Living and tenants can exemplify its values.



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The Community Partnership Framework

Partnerships are necessary to help tenants overcome multiple barriers (including structural issues rooted in poverty, racism, and marginalization) to realize their potential and fully participate in the broader society. By attracting and supporting community partners with the mandates, expertise, and resources, tenants and community members can access the individual and community programs and services they need to be successful.

Creation of this Partnership Framework guides Peel Living in its partnership work at all levels. It outlines the areas of focus, a tenant-centred approach, and the management of community partnerships to help Peel Living staff manage partner relationships.

Goal & Objectives

The goal of the Framework is to provide Peel Living with a guide on how to help define goals, roles, expectations, and outcomes for community partnership development. Peel Living recognizes the need to maintain partnerships through a formalized framework. The objectives of the Framework include:

- Assisting Peel Living in determining which partnerships to enter and how to enhance existing partnerships.

- Supporting Peel Living and its partners in defining and articulating their respective expectations. This includes clarifying internal responsibilities around partnership work.
- Demonstrating to Peel Living staff how partnerships can be managed and supported effectively.
- Providing tools to support staff in developing and maintaining partnerships.
- Creating standards for assessing the performance and impact of programming and services provided by partners out of Peel Living sites.

Principles of the Framework

The design of this framework is based upon a set of principles that ensure alignment with Peel Living’s Vision, Mission Statement, and Landlord & Tenant Promise.

- **Tenant engagement:** It is critical to provide tenants regular opportunities to provide input and actively participate in programming and services provided by partners.
- **Mutually beneficial and respectful partnerships:** Peel Living supports the partner and the partner supports tenants so supported tenants can enrich the Peel Living community.
- **Proactive management of partnerships:** To meet the evolving and changing needs of Peel Living tenants, partnership planning needs to shift from a reactive to a proactive approach.
- **Intentional programming:** Programs and service provision must be intentional to remove barriers and support tenants’ unique needs.
- **Evaluation and measurement:** Building in regular evaluations will allow Peel Living and its partners to reflect on the partnerships and their impact on Peel Living tenants. Having data from evaluation will help Peel Living and its partners evolve to meet the needs of its mutual clients.

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Community Consultation Findings

Consultations were held in 2022-2023 with Peel Living staff, community and municipal partners, and tenants from both family and senior buildings across all three municipalities of Brampton, Caledon, and Mississauga. The consultation efforts were to learn about views on Peel Living as a partner, how to improve partnerships, what tenants need and how best to engage with them. Overall, consultations were conducted with:

- **106** Peel Living staff members
- **64** Peel Regional staff
- **74** Partners staff
- **377** tenants from **16** sites.

Programming Areas of Focus

As a result of these consultations, three key areas of focus were identified:

1. Mental health

Mental health is a significant individual and societal issue. For Peel Living tenants, issues of hoarding, loneliness, and social isolation (especially amongst senior tenants) was a common theme. Engaging with partners that can support tenants with mental health, hoarding, and isolation will be key in supporting them towards successful tenancies.

2. Seniors aging in place

Seniors make up a large portion of Peel Living tenants. This includes those living in seniors-only as well as family sites. Proactive planning is needed to bring in partners that can help seniors thrive and live independently in place for as long as possible and address their needs as seniors' capabilities change over time.

3. Children/youth thriving

Children/youth and their families have varying levels of access to programming and services to help them grow in and around Peel Living sites. Working with partners that can offer children/youth educational and social programming opportunities will enhance their growth, as well support caregivers by giving them additional options. By identifying these focus areas, staff resources can focus, prioritize, and proactively create plans to address them. As new issues emerge, Peel Living will be able to take the blueprints of these theme-specific plans to address future areas of focus.

Community Partnership Development and Approach

The 2022-2023 engagement efforts with Peel Living's existing partners revealed that they were pleased with their partnership with Peel Living, with how collaborative and flexible of a partner Peel Living is. However, opportunities for improvement were cited including:

- The need for more formal partnerships.
- Clarity of roles, responsibilities, and mandates.
- Understanding of how resources are determined and allocated.
- Difficulty with coordination and communication.
- Proactive forecasting and planning.
- Formal measurement methods and standardized methods of data collection.



Identifying Peel Living's Partnership Types

Peel Living currently has two types of partnership collaborations:

1. Head-Lease partnerships:

Partners with Head-Lease Agreements that provide in-unit supports for tenants, or the unit is an office for the agency.

2. Collaborations:

- Time-limited partnerships for events or seasonal programs.
- Partnerships that use Peel Living common spaces to provide programming regularly.
- Innovative first-time collaborations to pilot new initiatives.

Many of these types of partnerships were initiated by front-line staff or by request from internal Region of Peel partners or external agencies.

Partnership Challenges

Peel Living's partnerships have been facing challenges stemming from several issues. These challenges include:

- A historical mix of formal and informal arrangements has resulted in a patchwork of partner activities across Peel Living sites.
- The lack of a formal process to review the ongoing value of the relationships for Peel Living's tenants.
- Role clarity needed between Peel Living and its partners in the delivery of services and programming at its sites.

Over time, the partnership environment has become increasingly complex as tenants and community needs have become more acute making the governing of these relationships more difficult to do in a clear, transparent, and fair manner.

This partnership framework addresses these areas for improvement, programming areas of focus and partnership challenges to help tenants live independently and make community connections to thrive.

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Approach to Community Partnerships

Tenant-Centred Approach

Tenants' Role in Community Development

A Tenant-Centred Approach means Peel Living sees tenants as their clients. This means that hearing the tenant's "voice" is the most important aspect of partnership building. As Peel Living looks to build and develop community partnerships in a more proactive manner, tenant input has and will continue to be sought on the types of partners and services needed. Tenants can play many roles within the Peel Living community including:

- **Participant:** Attend and actively participate in programs, events, and activities available at their sites.
- **Respondent and/or advocate:** Provide input via surveys and comment cards, on behalf of fellow tenants, to Peel Living on topics such as community development, tenant needs, community partnership selection and more.
- **Volunteer:** Use available free time to actively participate in work for the betterment of their site's community.
- **Organizer:** Identify needs within sites and work with other tenants to organize tenant-led initiatives.

Tenant Engagement

Tenant Engagement within the Community Partnership Framework is the process by which tenants become involved in activities and influence the decisions that affect them at their Peel Living site. This includes preparing and equipping tenants and staff with opportunities to participate in identifying gaps, involving tenants in monitoring, and evaluating the quality of the supports.

Two-Way Communication

The goal is to put mechanisms in place to provide tenants with opportunities to provide direct input into the identification, development, and maintenance of partnership opportunities.

Leveraging existing vehicles and mechanisms such as the Tenant Advisory Group (TAG) and Tenant Satisfaction Survey will be beneficial to gather input and validation for process changes or before introducing new programming. Also, opportunities may exist in gathering tenant feedback on events and programming from partners that run them.

Tenant-Led Initiatives

Throughout the consultations conducted in 2022-2023, tenants expressed positive feedback about existing partners provided programming and services at their sites. Some tenants expressed a desire for opportunities for tenant-initiated activities and events as well as for more informal opportunities and a space to do that in. This would include potentially making the common room spaces available and supporting tenants to organize activities and events. To take a tenant-centred approach where the tenant is the expert in understanding their needs, Peel Living supports tenant-led initiatives.

Supporting Tenant-Led Initiatives

Peel Living will support tenant-led initiatives through the following:

Funding: Through an application process, Peel Living will accept, evaluate, and approve funding to support tenant-led initiatives/events.

Volunteer opportunities: Peel Living will provide formal opportunities for voluntarism amongst tenants to support programs, events, and initiatives at their sites.

Organization and coordination: Peel Living will work to create standardized procedures, guidelines, and forms to streamline how tenants can get involved to minimize the administrative burden on tenants and set them up for success.

Targeted approach: Unequal distribution of partnership programming and services exists across the portfolio. Tenants at those underserved sites can be prioritized to support more tenant-led initiatives.

Measurement and outcomes: Peel Living will collect regular data and feedback to track effectiveness and impact of the initiatives. This will support future planning and required adjustments as needed.

Communication guidance: Peel Living will provide guidelines and templates for tenants and staff to utilize to communicate with fellow tenants about tenant-led initiatives, including how to be inclusive with tenants from other cultures and who may speak a different language.

Peel Living and the Surrounding Communities

Program/Event Guidelines

Peel Living's partners enrich the lives of tenants and the surrounding community by providing space for programming to the community living at the Peel Living sites and those in the surrounding area. As Peel Living provides in-kind access to common room space for partners to benefit the community living at the site, the following guidelines should be utilized for program or event participation:

1. **Prioritizing Peel Living tenants for program participation:** Programs or events organized on Peel Living sites should be opened to site tenants first before being offered to the surrounding community. The goal is to have the majority of participants be Peel Living tenants.

2. **Tenants working with external participants:** This refers to programs that are targeting an external group with the involvement of site tenants. For example, an intergenerational program where seniors living at a senior's site teach young people how to cook. This benefits the seniors within the site by allowing them an opportunity to socialize and pass on knowledge to the next generation, while also benefiting the youth who are learning an important skill.
3. **100% external participants:** This includes programs where participants are 100% non-Peel Living tenants (e.g., children's play program on the lawn of a senior's site). They will need to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. To move forward with this type of programming, there must be buy-in and clear articulation of benefits for the site's tenants.

Site Access for Non-Tenants Participating in Programming

As Peel Living sites are private residences with keyed entry, non-tenants will not be able to enter the sites to access common rooms. For sites with common rooms with an exterior door, non-tenants are asked to use this as an entrance and exit, rather than walking through the site.



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Adopting a Partnership Collaborative Model

Various definitions have been proposed to adequately capture what collaboration means. Despite the variety, at its core, collaboration involves:

A mutually beneficial relationship between two or more parties to achieve common goals by sharing responsibility, authority, and accountability for achieving results.

The purpose of collaboration is to create a shared vision and joint strategies to accomplish objectives that collaborative partners are unable to bring about alone. Region of Peel partners validated this definition through a survey in 2022 where 90% either agreed or strongly agreed with its meaning.

Characteristics of Authentic Collaboration

There are a set of unique characteristics that distinguish authentic collaborations and set them apart from other coalitions and working groups. In authentic collaborations, partners:

- Have established a shared vision, mission, values, goals, and measurable outcomes.
- Are empowered by their organizations to achieve consensus with collaborative members so that decisions and solutions are focused on the best interests of the collective.

- Have unique and diverse voices present and acknowledged in genuine attempts to recognize power differentials between collaborative members.
- Have something significant to contribute to the collaboration despite acknowledging that different partners have different resources and capacities, each partner can contribute to the advancement of collective goals and objectives.
- Are prepared to share in the risks, responsibilities and rewards associated with the collaboration and work in a way that encourages mutual accountability.
- Are prepared to be open, transparent, and honest about their organization's expectations, issues that emerge amongst collaborative partners, and any personal concerns or conflicts of interest.

Successful collaborative efforts will enable partners to cultivate trust and communication among stakeholders, as well as leverage and mobilize the talents, resources and strategies of individuals and organizations within the community.

Adopting a Networked Collaboration Model

Peel Living is embracing a Networked Collaboration Model that is highlighted in the Community Partnership Division's document **Collaboration Framework for Engaging with Community Partners**. This model works to enhance partnerships and foster a more cohesive community support system. It connects organizations to share information, exchange ideas, and develop commitments to specific activities or outcomes, aligning with the overarching objectives of both governmental and non-profit sectors. By adopting this model, Peel Living aims to leverage shared principles for action, creating a collaborative environment that benefits tenants and the surrounding community.

The Networked Collaboration Model

Networked Collaborations connect organizations to share information, exchange ideas, develop commitments to specific activities and/or outcomes



and are viewed as a useful approach for organizations wanting to align with others to advance their own objectives. Governmental and non-profits that engage in networked collaborations do so through shared principles for action rather than specific or measurable goals.

How Peel Living Will Implement a Networked Collaboration Model

Peel Living is committed to playing the **Convener** role through the usage of a Peel Living Collaborative Network. When initiating a collaboration there is usually one organization that is responsible for bringing people together to address an issue, problem, or opportunity — the **Convener**. This role involves gathering representatives from Peel Living partners (government and non-profits).

This Network will provide the opportunity for Peel Living and partners to have a forum to share best practices and enhance program or service delivery in the best interest of Peel Living tenants and the surrounding communities. The Table will have representation from Peel Living's partners within the Region of Peel as well as community organizations external to Peel.

The following sections discuss the characteristics of the Networked Collaboration Model that Peel Living will follow.

Table 1: The Mechanics of Networked Collaboration

Area	Characteristic(s)
Governance	Loose and networked structure, not very hierarchical.
	Decision-making can take time but does not always require consensus.
Communications	Multiple voices, may not be aligned internally but have broad reach to external audiences.
Evaluation and learning	Learning from members, information sharing, insights and practice are a priority.
	Evaluation of progress can be difficult as contribution, expectations and responsibilities may vary between members.
Resources	Shared between members, likely to rely on a strong online operating model and presence.

Table 2: The Make-up of Networked Collaboration

Area	Characteristic(s)
Closed or open membership	Open membership that evolves over time.
Bottom-up, top-down, combination	Depends upon context of the collaboration but usually open to a range of actors across varying levels since a strict commitment is not required.
Sector diversity/representation	Multi-sector/cross-sectoral membership.
	Broad membership so networks may have a range of assets and strengths that could lead to mini-collaborations being developed.

Stages of Peel Living's Partnership Development and Maintenance

For Peel Living staff involved in partnership development, the below is a high-level summary of the steps to effectively engage and collaborate with partners. This will help ensure holistic support and enrichment of tenants, Peel Living sites and the broader Peel Living community. This structured approach to partnership development at Peel Living encompasses six key stages. Each stage represents a crucial step in fostering effective collaborations with external partners. From identifying tenant needs to partnership measurement and evaluation, this guide provides a roadmap for staff involved in partnership development and maintenance at Peel Living.

Stage 1: Identifying tenant needs

Purpose: To determine the specific needs of tenants, Peel Living sites and/or community, to ensure partnerships provide the necessary support and enrichment.

Steps: Leverage existing data, cross-reference service gaps, and define specific needs.

Stage 2: Assessing current partnerships and identifying potential new partners

Purpose: To evaluate existing partnerships and identify new potential partners that align with tenant needs.

Steps: Assess current partnerships, research relevant agencies, leverage partner networks, and consult with stakeholders.

Stage 3: Partner shortlisting and suitability assessment

Purpose: To ensure selected partners are a good fit and capable of addressing identified needs.

Steps: Share shortlisted partners with management, conduct initial outreach, set up meetings, gather information, complete suitability checklist, and seek management approval.

Stage 4: Partnership documentation

Purpose: To formalize the partnership through documentation and agreements. This process will vary if the partner is invited by Peel Living to address a specific community need (e.g., Police workshops, Safety Partners Open House, Alzheimer’s workshop, Health Lobby sit, etc.).

Steps: Inform the partner of approval, assist with form completion, review, and summarize forms, prepare and send Facilities Use Agreement, receive signed agreement and insurance form, obtain General Manager’s approval, launch the partnership including appropriate promotional materials to inform staff and tenants.

Stage 5: Partnership maintenance

Purpose: To maintain strong and effective partnerships through ongoing communication and evaluation.

Steps: Establish regular communication, conduct scheduled check-ins, provide ongoing updates, monitor program implementation, conduct site visits, address issues, adapt and evolve, encourage continuous improvement, maintain documentation and reporting, celebrate successes.

Stage 6: Measurement and evaluation

Purpose: To assess the effectiveness and outcomes of partnerships in meeting tenant needs and program goals.

Steps: Collect participation data using the standard reporting template, measure engagement by comparing the number of unique participants to sessions delivered, conduct surveys or feedback assessments to capture tenant satisfaction, document successes and challenges in quarterly reports, submit reports for management review, and adjust partnerships as needed to enhance effectiveness.

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Roles & Responsibilities

Peel Living's Commitment to Its Partners

Peel Living is dedicated to strengthening partnerships with various organizations to foster a vibrant and collaborative community. Our commitment to our partners is rooted in the belief that collaboration enhances the quality of life for our tenants and the surrounding community.

We aim to create an environment where all partners can work together effectively, share resources, and innovate to meet the needs of our tenants.

To achieve this, we are implementing several key initiatives and maintaining a flexible, open approach to feedback and new methods that benefit our community. Below are specific actions and commitments that Peel Living will undertake to support and enhance these partnerships.

- Creation of a community of partners that serve our tenants and surrounding community.
- Actively introduce partners to each other as opportunities arise for cross agency collaborations. Tenants are best served when all partners work together.
- Host regular (annual or bi-annual) virtual events for all partners to hear from Peel Living and its partners.

- Make Peel Living common room space available to the partner's organizational business (e.g., agency team meetings). Requests will be reviewed case-to-case and will depend on availability and appropriateness of usage as the basis for approval.
- Be flexible and open to feedback and new approaches if they serve tenants.
- Commitment to building community at and around Peel Living sites.
- Convene a Peel Living Collaborative Network to provide a formal and regular collaborative space in the interest of tenants and surrounding community.

Roles & Responsibilities

Roles and responsibilities within the Community Partnership Framework are as follows:

Peel Living leadership team

- Provide strategic direction and guidance for the types of partnerships Peel Living develops and maintains.
- Responsible for authorizing and approving new partnership agreements.
- Ensure a safe and welcoming culture and physical space for partners to work in.
- Accountable for a positive tenant experience and successful tenancy.

Community partnership team

- Liaise between Peel Living and Peel Living's partners.
- Responsible for new partnership development and existing partnership maintenance.
- Work with partners to ensure Agreements are up to date.
- Responsible for Peel Living events highlighting partners, where assigned.

Site staff (front-line operational liaison for site specific space)

- Property Managers (PM)/Property Management Officers (PMO):
 - Review requests for space and provide input.
 - Identify community development needs at the site and work closely with the Peel Living Partnership team to bring in supports to meet the needs.

- Tenant Support Agents (TSA):
 - Engage with and support tenants on administrative items related to their tenancy.
 - Identify community development needs at the site based on interactions with tenants and work closely with the Peel Living Partnership team to bring in supports to meet the needs.
 - Attend tenant and community engagement events at sites, as relevant.
- Superintendents:
 - Provide access to the site and common space.
 - Provide tables and chairs (where available) for the allotted time that the space is booked.
 - Provide a safe and hazard-free environment in common room space.

Community and governmental partners

- Organization's Leadership
 - Responsible for contract requirements as set by Peel Living (e.g., insurance, use of space, reporting).
 - Oversee organizational staff.
 - Active participation in the service provider network, if required.
 - Dispute resolution.
 - Exit considerations (notification time to avoid gaps in programs/services).
 - Submit tenant participation data/measures to Peel Living as requested.
- Frontline Staff Delivering Programming & Services
 - Day-to-day operations.
 - Adherence to contract agreements (safety, noise, and damage control).
 - Fostering a safe, respectful, inclusive, and equitable environment for tenants.
 - Collect requested measures resulting from the programs/services.
 - Duty to report.

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Conclusion

With support and input from the community and Region of Peel partners as well as Peel Living front-line staff, the Corporation is now well-positioned through this Framework to foster existing and new partnerships to cater to tenant and community needs. The successful implementation of this Framework will give tenants the opportunity to live independently, make community connections and thrive in their day-to-day lives.

Appendix



WE C.A.R.E.

The Peel Living Landlord and Tenant Promise

The cornerstones of **Communication, Accountability, Respect and Equity** are the keys to our successful partnership.

Communication	Accountability	Respect	Equity
<p>The landlord will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep you informed of when repairs and/or maintenance are happening in your unit or within the entire building Respond to your inquiries and complete repairs in a timely manner Provide 24 hours' notice before entering your unit, unless there are special circumstances (ie: an emergency) <p>The tenant will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform the landlord of changes to your living situation, including family composition and parking information for all tenants or a change in income for those who received Rent Geared to Income subsidy. Provide 60 days' notice if you plan to move out <p>Together we will:</p> <p>Communicate with each other clearly, courteously, respectfully and in a timely manner. Mistakes are acknowledged and solutions are found by working together and learning from the experience.</p>	<p>The landlord will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be accountable for providing safe affordable, well-maintained homes <p>The tenant will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pay your rent on time each month Maintain tenant insurance <p>Together we will:</p> <p>Positively contribute to the Peel Living community safety commitment by following Peel Living policies and applicable by-laws.</p>	<p>The landlord will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respect you and work with you to support your successful tenancy Show pride of place by providing tenants with clean, safe and affordable housing <p>The tenant will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respect Peel Living staff, including Superintendents, Tenancy Support Agents, Property Managers and other agents of the Landlord Show pride of place by reporting maintenance repairs or problems to Peel Living Keep the rented unit clean, maintained and in good condition including appliances and other areas or facilities Be a good neighbour, by not interfering with the reasonable enjoyment of the building by other tenants and landlord <p>Together we will:</p> <p>Take pride in our physical surroundings by maintaining a state of good repair in the building.</p>	<p>The landlord will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operate with integrity and transparency to provide service in an unbiased, equitable manner Ensure that all members of the community have access to the supports and services that enable them to successfully maintain their tenancy, including providing materials in multiple languages and accessible formats when requested <p>The tenant will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take responsibility for their actions and the actions of other members of their household, visitors and pets <p>Together we will:</p> <p>Find solutions that support the Peel Living tenant and landlord relationship, including connecting with community support partners if additional help is needed.</p>

