



## Summer 2020

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## Letter from Our Senior Director of Operations



Happy Summer! It has been a tough few months of COVID-19 isolation. Finally, we are seeing some relaxation in government imposed restrictions. Even though some businesses are opening up, the threat of contracting COVID-19 still lingers. We still need to be cautious and follow our “NEW NORMAL”. The New Normal is to maintain social distance when you are out in public, wear your mask, wash your hands, and most importantly look out for each other. It is amazing to see how communities have come together and implemented safety measures to keep the public safe in general. This is what we can do especially during tough times – **Look Out for Each Other!**

The key to building and maintaining healthy and safe communities is to be a good and responsible neighbour. Offer your neighbour a helping hand if you see them struggling with a chore, keep the noise to a minimum, respect their privacy and a simple hello or even a smile on your face will go a long way. By indulging them in a short conversation you can show that you care. These acts are some of the simplest things which we can do to bring some cheer in peoples' lives. The resilience which our families have shown during these tough times is proof of our perseverance and willingness to adapt to change.

What brings joy to my day is to read appreciation notes from clients who are served by our amazing and hardworking team. We have been sharing some of those notes on our website (<https://www.metishousing.ca/contact/testimonials/>). Please keep them coming.

As we have started to emerge from the isolation due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are gradually relaunching our regular operations. Even though our offices are not yet open to visitors, please be assured that we are working around the clock to meet your requirements. Now, more than ever, it is important for us to maintain a frequent dialogue with all of our clients. This is one way for us to exhibit that we care and we want to make sure that none of our clients are feeling overwhelmed and lonely due to the current situation. We have been planning and developing a portal where we will be holding interactive sessions for one-on-one and group discussions. These sessions will allow us to understand your unique needs and provide available supports.

I also want to stress the importance of learning the use of available technology as we will be utilizing it to stay in touch with you. Please sign up for our newsletter on our website and GO PAPERLESS by registering your e-mail ID.

As always, on behalf of all of us at Métis Housing, we offer a sincere welcome to all the new families and extend our thanks to the families for keeping pride in their homes. Stay safe, healthy and wash your hands often!

- Bindu Bonneau, Senior Director of Operations



### FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!



## *From our Maintenance Department*

It's time for furnace & duct cleaning as well as eavestrough cleaning! Our team handles these tasks but there will be some preparation for you to do in order for this job to be done right.

### **Furnace Cleaning**

- ∞ Remove all items from around the furnace to allow contractors to work.
- ∞ Washer/Dryer area to be clean of all personal items to allow the contractors to access the dryer vent.
- ∞ Clear the bathroom including items on vanity to allow the contractors to access the bathroom vents.
- ∞ Clear all personal items in the way of getting to the basement safely.
- ∞ Move furniture/items away from all heat vents (contractors will not move furniture).
- ∞ During the furnace cleaning the unit may have dust particles in the air so, *if you have issues with breathing please make arrangements to be out of the unit during this time.*

### **Eavestrough Cleaning**

- ∞ Remove all personal items away from outside the home to allow contractors to clean the eavestroughs.
- ∞ Contractors will be using the water from the unit so please make sure the water to the outside tap is turned on.
- ∞ Make sure all downspouts are attached and directing water away from your home.

## *~ General tips and Summertime tips ~*

- ∞ Make sure to look after your lawn, trees and shrubs so they are getting enough water
- ∞ Cut grass and weeds.
- ∞ Downspouts are to remain attached and directed away from your home.
- ∞ Clear window wells of all debris and sucker trees/change furnace filters.
- ∞ We ask that there is no smoking in the unit of any kind when the contractors are on site.
- ∞ Remember to keep garbage away from your home and in receptacles to avoid mice.

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*Unsure if your maintenance issue is an emergency, just call and we will let you know. **1-877-458-8684 Ext 1100***

**To Apply for Housing go to [www.metishousing.ca](http://www.metishousing.ca)**

## Tenant Spotlight

*Karlene, a tenant with Métis Housing, is set to take possession of her first home, having secured funding from our Down Payment Assistance Program. She spoke with us a few weeks back about her experience with Métis Housing and becoming a new home owner.*

In 2007 I was working, had three children, and all of a sudden found myself as a single parent. I heard about Métis Urban housing at the time and they arranged to help me secure subsidized housing while I was going through the big transition.

I separated from my husband and found myself at an entry level job, just above minimum wage and wondering what to do. So I was fortunate enough to get in to Métis Housing and we started off in Edmonton’s Londonderry area in a three bedroom bungalow and we were there for about a year or two.

Then we moved [with Métis Urban Housing] to the west end and we were there a few years and by that time I was able to make a descent amount of money and I was able to switch over to “affordable housing” with Métis Capital Housing. So I was able to put some money aside, just saving up while living here.

I heard about the Down Payment Assistance Program on the internet on social media posts. My sister saw the posts and told me as well because she kind of looks out for me a little bit too (laughs).

So I applied right away and they accepted me and it was great! I’m kind of still in denial (laughs). I was hunting and hunting for the right place that spoke to me. I started looking last September and the market was kind of slow then and so I was just waiting for the spring market which is always great but that wasn’t the case this year.

The down payment is usually a big obstacle for home buyers, just coming up with that money to initially afford anything but I’m so thankful for that program, it’s great!!

Those internet posts are reaching people and [these programs] are meant to help people succeed.

My possession date is July 2<sup>nd</sup> and the kids are ecstatic, they are already packing and will be ready to go!



*Karlene’s family: (L to R) Ethan, Jeremy, Karlene, Summer and Bennett.*

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*If you want information on any of our programs and services like the Down Payment Assistance Program, Rental Supplements, Home Repairs etc. call **1-877-458-8684 Ext 1133 or 1108***

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## *Métis Students—Drayden Insurance Scholarship: UPDATE!*

Drayden Insurance has graciously created a sponsorship to better support Métis students in their academic careers.

To nominate a Métis student, fill in the nomination form (a fillable PDF) on our website: <https://www.metishousing.ca/news/>

“We truly feel that children are our future,” began Cindy, McGinnis, Branch Manager with Drayden, “... and the best way we can be a part of their success is to help provide them with the opportunity of a greater education.”

We are completely moved and honoured to be given this sponsorship to invest in two scholarship recipients, through both Métis Urban Housing and Métis Capital Housing.

If you have any questions about nominating a Métis student for the Drayden Scholarship: **1-877-458-8684 Ext 1133** or [comms@metishousing.ca](mailto:comms@metishousing.ca)

*~ Thank you Drayden Insurance for investing in our youth ~*



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## *MUHC/MCHC Creates new Position for Tenant Support*

Meet Kathy Rosero Suelt, our first Housing Resource Worker. Métis Housing created this new position to assist tenants with challenges and barriers that may be jeopardizing their tenancy. The position will see Kathy helping tenants identify where support is needed and then working through those challenges to secure a stronger, more resilient family home.

***Q. I know you haven't been here long but tell me about your position and some of the things you are doing right now.***

Right now I'm just learning the organisation and building my assessments and action plans and looking at tenant files. So I won't be doing anything with tenants [right away] because the position is brand new and we are still working on [designing the role].

The idea is to provide support for tenants to make sure they are successful in their housing. It's usually for those who are already in arrears and are getting closer to the eviction process. I would then take those clients and work with them so they don't get evicted and make sure they are successful.

***Q. What is your background?***

I trained as a social worker and for twelve years I worked in almost every field of social work but in the majority of family violence, worked with newcomers, and with seniors housing.

I developed work experience programs for newcomers who are learning to speak English and read and write as their first language. I use to work in the youth field, in a group home at Spirit of our Youth and I worked in the government for a little bit.

***Q. So, this is a new position and you are the first in this new position, where would you like to set your sites?***

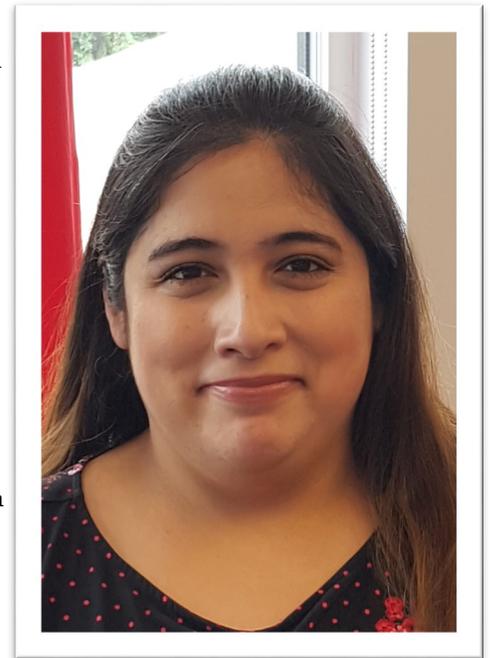
Oh the sky's the limit. I would like to get to the point where I am almost no longer needed because the tenants are becoming more self reliant and empowered and feel they don't have to give up [because] they can do it. So I would work myself out of a job. [One of the things] I want to do is hold workshops on things like healthy relationships, family violence, etc.).

***Q. As announced in this issue, we are going to be producing a lot of zoom and livestream content and are excited about your involvement with that. Is there anything you feel is a specialty skill you have that will help you and make you successful in your role?***

I'm very resourceful and speak two languages: Spanish and English. I'm learning Croatian but that's outside of here (laughs). Right now it's about learning about the tenants and seeing what needs there are and I'm building a resource binder for myself and the tenants and for staff. Also connecting [within the community] [to continue to build that resource list and network connections. I have lots of ideas but I'm trying to pace myself. Once I get more of a grasp we are going to be going on home visits, so I will be coming along with the Tenant Relations Officers to meet one on one with the tenants that I need to work with.

***Q. Anything else you wanted to share?***

I love learning about the culture and I'm open to the tenants teaching me.



*Housing Resource Worker  
Kathy Rosero Suelt*

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## *From our Finance Department: Budget's Can Be Great!*

Do you live paycheque to paycheque? One of the best ways to overcome that is by making the decision to start a budget and stick with it for ONE month, just to see if it works or if it needs tweaking. As you go through the month it may surprise you with the fact that you may have the money you need to make ends meet. I know each household situation is different and there certainly are families that do not have enough but budgeting is a way of prioritizing and balancing those needs the best way possible. After trying it for a few months you may find you cannot imagine working without it!

To begin there are a few simple steps to follow:

- ∞ Pick a period (usually one month) and track your spending (this will give you a better idea of your variable expenses).
- ∞ Find or create a budget template, there are plenty of templates online. Your balanced budget should include your **income** *less* your **savings** and **expenses**.
- ∞ Prepare a balanced budget.

***TIP: Manipulating your variable expense (snack groceries, clothing, entertainment etc.) is the easiest way to balance the budget.***

Check out the link below to help you get started with your own budget and take charge of your finances.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/financial-consumer-agency/services/make-budget.html>

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## *Simple Summer Refresher: Lemon Granita*



- 1 cup water
- 2/3 cup sugar
- 2/3 cup lemon juice
- Tablespoon grated lemon peel (zest)
- Fresh sprig of thyme or basil (optional)

In a saucepan bring water and sugar to near boil until sugar is dissolved. Remove from heat and stir in lemon juice and lemon zest. Cool to room temperature

Freeze for one hour, stir with a fork. Freeze 2-3 hours longer, stirring every 30 minutes. Stir Granita with a fork just before serving. *Healthy and delicious!*

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## *Métis Housing Announces Multi-level Direct Communications Initiative for Tenant Support*

**Edmonton: JULY, 2020**

We want every tenant and would-be tenant of Métis Housing to be set up for success; armed with knowledge and engaged on every level. We see our organisation as a resource for you and your family to become stronger, more empowered people.

Because of this, we will be directly and pro-actively connecting with you over the next number of months to clarify the rental and tenancy process and provide educational sessions. There will be opportunities for training, great contests and one-on-one zoom sessions by phone or by home computer.

We will let you know when important events, notifications or exclusive contests are happening! We will also be livestreaming special events that you won't want to miss.

Our **Métis Housing AB** Facebook page will be made exclusively for tenants where your Tenant Relations Officer, (TRO) can meet with you privately and conveniently.

This means we will be contacting you for updated email and phone numbers because we don't want to leave *anyone* out.

Another tenant support initiative is the creation of a *Housing Resource Worker*. You can learn more about this new tenant support role and about Kathy in the this edition of the Métis Housing Tenant Newsletter.

Kathy and other tenant relations officers will also assist us in delivering some of these virtual sessions. We will list session topics on our website and text you so you can sign up for any of these free sessions with ease.

At Métis Housing we believe providing opportunity to empower tenants with knowledge and skills is the best way forward in our goal of *Helping House our People*.

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If you have any questions about this new initiative:

call **1-877-458-8684 Ext 1133** / email: **comms@metishousing.ca**

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