

# Eligibility and Allocation Policy (Victoria)

Housing Services Victoria

Document Owner

1

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## Purpose

This policy outlines the eligibility requirements and process to apply for social housing in Victoria, owned and managed by Housing Choices Australia Limited (HCAL).

The policy explains how HCAL make allocation decisions relating to all vacant properties in our social housing portfolio.

## Scope

This policy applies to the eligibility for applicants seeking social housing, owned or managed by HCAL. It also documents how HCAL makes allocation decisions relating to all vacant properties in our social housing portfolio.

This policy does not include eligibility or allocations for specialist disability accommodation.

## Scheduled Review

This document will be reviewed every three years or in response to legislative or regulatory changes. Feedback is welcomed from tenants and community stakeholders by contacting [info@hcau.org.au](mailto:info@hcau.org.au).

The General Manager, Victoria is responsible for the maintenance of this policy. Non-conformance should be reported to the Quality Assurance Manager.

## Policy Statement

### Guiding Principles

Housing Choices Australia Limited aims to:

1. Ensure that people seeking housing have access to the eligibility criteria, have been provided with guidance on how to apply for housing and, if required, are provided with (or referred to) appropriate supports to make an application for housing through the Victorian Housing Register.
2. Communicate clearly to applicants, support agencies and stakeholders about our eligibility criteria and allocations process.
3. Apply a human rights decision-making framework when making an allocation. This includes not to grant an allocation.
4. Fulfil our mission by ensuring that vacancies in social housing program are made available to people who are disadvantaged by housing markets and experiencing housing stress.

5. Ensure that an offer of housing matches the applicant's needs e.g property size, location, access to support services etc.
6. Offer and allocate vacancies in a timely and efficient manner that meets regulatory performance requirements.
7. Comply with all contractual, legal, financial and regulatory obligations.

## Victorian Housing Register (VHR)

The Victorian Government amended the Housing Act 1983 (Vic) in 2016, to establish the Victorian Housing Register (VHR). This is a single waiting list for public housing and long-term social housing owned and managed by participating community housing providers.

Under the Housing Act 1983 the purpose of the Victorian Housing Register is to facilitate the appropriate allocation of tenancies in social housing, having regard to:

- the relative housing needs of eligible applicants,
- the health safety and support needs of eligible applicants, and
- the availability of social housing.

HCAL is a participating agency of the VHR. This means that when a vacancy occurs in long term social housing, we will make the offer of housing from the VHR.

The VHR has two categories:

### Priority Access is for people:

- who are homeless and receiving support.
- are escaping or have escaped family violence.
- with a disability or significant support needs.
- with special housing needs.

### Register of Interest is for:

- for all eligible applicants to register their interest for social housing.
- Who may have low support needs.
- Who are on low to moderate income.

All allocations within HCAL long term social housing will be made to applicants on the VHR.

## Eligibility for social housing

To be eligible for social housing tenancy with HCAL, applicants are required to meet the eligibility criteria as determined by Homes Victoria. These guidelines are available here <https://www.housing.vic.gov.au/social-housing-eligibility>.

Applicants can apply directly to register an application on the Victorian Housing Register and details of how to apply are available here (<https://www.housing.vic.gov.au/apply-social-housing>).

Applicants, advocates and stakeholders can contact HCAL directly on 1300 312 447 and our team can provide assistance and referrals regarding applying for social housing.

The VHR Eligibility Policy Framework outlines: How the register works, eligibility requirements for housing, how to apply to the register, and what happens after applying.

The framework is supported by VHR Operational Guidelines. Further information regarding the framework can be found by clicking here: <https://fac.dhhs.vic.gov.au/eligibility-policy-framework-and-operational-guidelines>

## Eligibility for Short Term Social Housing

HCAL has social housing programs which are interim housing options for households whilst they are seeking access to long term housing. Applicants will be nominated by a support agency who has nomination rights to the property. Applicants nominated must meet the eligibility criteria for social housing as determined by Homes Victoria and documented above.

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Applicants must be willing to register for social housing via the Victorian Housing Register and have an application submitted within the first 6 weeks of the offer of short-term housing.

## Specific Eligibility Criteria

Some properties have additional eligibility criteria. This may include:

- Households on the Priority Access or Register of Interest.
- Target groups such as, but not limited to, people with a disability, veterans, people over 55, victim survivors of family violence etc.
- Applicants who are receiving support from a specific support agency who have nomination rights to the vacant property.
- Applicants who meet other eligibility requirements as set by the National Rental Affordability Scheme.

## Former Tenant Debt

Having a former tenant debt with HCAL does not impact on eligibility. If an applicant with a former tenant debt is being considered for housing, HCAL will arrange a repayment plan with the applicant at the time of offer of housing.

## Allocating Vacant Properties

When a vacancy notification has been received, HCAL will document the vacancy and consider eligibility criteria for the property.

For a reasonable offer to be made, we make sure the allocation:

- meets any specific eligibility criteria;
- is the right size for the applicant's household;
- makes the best use of the housing stock managed by HCAL;
- encourages a sustainable tenancy.

## Minimum Bedroom Size

This table shows the minimum bedroom entitlement per household. Please note HCAL has only a small number of properties within our portfolio of 4 or more bedrooms.

HOUSEHOLD GROUPS	MINIMUM BEDROOMS
Single person or couple	1 bedroom
Single person or couple with one other household member	2 bedrooms
Single or couple with two other household members	2 bedrooms
Single or couple with three other household member	3 bedrooms
Single or couple with four other household members	3 bedrooms
Single or Couple with 5 household members	4 bedrooms

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## Housing Needs Assessment

Before an offer of housing is made, HCAL will meet with applicants to:

- check that the applicant/s is still eligible for social housing;
- ask the applicant/s to provide reasonable evidence to substantiate any requirements that are not contained in the VHR application, if required;
- better understand the applicants housing need and support requirements contacting support services listed on the application with the applicant's consent
- provide the applicant/s with information about HCAL, the property, rights and responsibilities of Residents and HCAL and bond requirements.

allow the applicant an opportunity to view the property before making a formal offer.

## When an offer of housing has been made

An offer of housing is the formal process that, if accepted, will result in the signing of a tenancy agreement for a household. A formal offer of housing will be made in writing to the applicant.

The applicant will have **4 business days** to respond to the offer of housing. If the applicant requires more than 4 days to consider the offer, they must contact HCAL to seek an extension.

HCAL will seek to understand the reason that the extension is required, and this consent will be considered reasonably. Applicants are required to commence their tenancy within an agreed timeframe which is usually 7 business days of accepting an offer of housing.

- If an applicant accepts the offer of housing HCAL are required to file note the outcome on the Victorian Housing Register.
- If the applicant refuses the offer of housing, HCAL are required to file note the outcome on the Victorian Housing Register (VHR).

## Sustainable Tenancies

At HCAL, we are committed across all aspects of our organisation to support our residents to sustain their tenancy over its duration. Residents are provided with information about the property and their rights and responsibilities.

HCAL has a range of services that are designed to help residents to sustain their tenancies. These include a range of support agencies who work in partnership with us to sustain tenancies. HCAL will also make referrals to support services that can help residents with managing debt and money matters, family violence, family services and health and well-being. We are committed to working in partnership with applicants and support providers to ensure applicants have support needs in place before moving into a new home.

We also deliver community development activities, placemaking programs and provide opportunities for residents to participate in service design, delivery and review.

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## Complaints and Appeals

The first step is to request that the complaint be reviewed, or that the decision be reconsidered by HCAL under the Complaints and Appeals Policy.

If an applicant wishes to:

- Make a complaint about the way in which HCAL has provided a service to them in making an application.
- Appeal a decision made by HCAL in relation to the person's application for social housing.
- Applicants who wish to make a complaint regarding their application status on the Victorian Housing Register can make a complaint directly to Homes Victoria.

## Collection Statement

All personal information HCAL collects will be done in accordance with our Privacy Policy and Collection Statement for Residents.

## References:

LEGISLATION	STANDARDS, POLICIES AND GUIDELINES
Housing Act 1983 (VIC) 1983	Performance Outcome 1 (Tenant and housing services)
Residential Tenancies Act (VIC) 1997	Homes Victoria - Victorian Housing Register Policy Framework and operational guidelines
Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities (Vic) 2006	
Residential Tenancies Amendment Act (Vic) 2018	Related Documents <a href="#">Complaints and Appeals Policy</a> <a href="#">Privacy Policy</a> <a href="#">Collection Statement for residents</a>



#### English:

If you need an interpreter, please call TIS National on 131 450 and ask them to call **Housing Choices Australia** on **1300 312 447**. Our business hours are **9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday**.

You can also visit the TIS National website for translated information about the service TIS National provides. Visit: [www.tisnational.gov.au](http://www.tisnational.gov.au)

#### Arabic:

إذا كنت بحاجة إلى مترجم، يرجى الاتصال بـ TIS الوطنية على الرقم 131 450 وأطلب منهم الاتصال بنا على هاتف رقم **1300 312 447** Housing Choices Australia. ساعات العمل الخاصة بنا **9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday**.

يمكنك أيضا زيارة موقع TIS الوطنية للحصول على معلومات حول الخدمات التي تقدمها TIS الوطنية. قم بزيارة: [www.tisnational.gov.au](http://www.tisnational.gov.au)

#### Farsi (alt Persian):

اگر به مترجم نیاز دارید، لطفاً با شماره تلفن تیس نشنال 131 450 تماس بگیرید و از آنها بخواهید با **Housing Choices Australia** به شماره **1300 312 447** تماس بگیرید. ساعات کاری ما **9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday** است.

www.tisnational.gov.au شما همچنین می توانید به وب سایت تیس نشنال برای اطلاعات در مورد خدماتی که تیس نشنال فراهم می کند مراجعه کنید. به

#### Vietnamese:

Nếu quý vị cần thông dịch viên, xin hãy gọi cho Dịch vụ Thông Phiên dịch Quốc gia (TIS Quốc gia) theo số 131 450 và yêu cầu họ gọi cho **Housing Choices Australia** theo số **1300 312 447**. Giờ làm việc của chúng tôi là **9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday**. Quý vị cũng có thể vào thăm trang mạng của TIS Quốc gia để có thông tin về các dịch vụ mà TIS Quốc gia cung cấp. Hãy vào thăm [www.tisnational.gov.au](http://www.tisnational.gov.au)

#### Somali:

Haddii aad u baahan tahay turjumaan, fadlan ka wac TIS National taleefanka 131 450 waxaad ka codsataa inay kuu wacaan **Housing Choices Australia** iyo **1300 312 447**. Saacadaha Shaqadu waa **9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday**.

Waxaad kaloo booqan kartaa website-ka TIS National ee macluumaadka turjuman oo ku saabsan adeegga TIS National ay bixiso. Ka eeg: [www.tisnational.gov.au](http://www.tisnational.gov.au)

#### Simplified Chinese:

如果您需要口译员，请拨打TIS National 的电话131 450，请他们打电话给**Housing Choices Australia**，电话号码：**1300 312 447**。我们的营业时间是**9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday**。

你也可以访问TIS National 的网站，了解TIS National提供的服务。网址：[www.tisnational.gov.au](http://www.tisnational.gov.au)

#### Traditional Chinese:

若你需要口譯員，請撥打TIS National電話131 450並請他們轉接**Housing Choices Australia**的電話**1300 312 447**。我們的工作時間是**9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday**。

你也可以瀏覽TIS National 網站瞭解TIS National 的服務資訊，網址：[www.tisnational.gov.au](http://www.tisnational.gov.au)

#### Spanish:

Si necesita un intérprete, por favor llame a TIS National en el 131 450 y pida que lo comuniquen con **Housing Choices Australia** en el **1300 312 447**. Nuestro horario de oficina es **9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday**.

También puede visitar el sitio web de TIS National para obtener información acerca de los servicios que provee TIS National. Visite [www.tisnational.gov.au](http://www.tisnational.gov.au)

#### Italian:

Se hai bisogno di un interprete, telefona a TIS National al numero 131 450 e chiedi di chiamare **Housing Choices Australia** al **1300 312 447**. I nostri orari d'ufficio sono **9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday**.

Puoi visitare anche il sito web TIS National per informazioni tradotte sul servizio che TIS National fornisce. Visita il sito: [www.tisnational.gov.au](http://www.tisnational.gov.au)

**For other languages, access to an interpreter is available by contacting Housing Choices Australia on 1300 312 447.**