

Resident Handbook



Welcome to your new home

This handbook has information that you need to know about living in your home and managing your tenancy.

It's important to read through the handbook and keep it handy so you can refer to it when you need to. Please note the information in this handbook may be subject to change.

Tenancy Officer:

Your local office:

Office phone number:

Your reference number:

(use this number when paying rent or bills)

Keeping in touch



Maintenance Hotline:
1800 203 383



Facebook:
facebook.com/HChoicesWA



Maintenance email:
maintenance-wa@hcau.org.au



Website:
housingchoices.org.au



Office email:
info-wa@hcau.org.au

If you need an interpreter

If you need an interpreter, please call **TIS National** on **131 450** and ask them to call Housing Choices WA on the local office number listed above.

You can also visit the TIS National website for translated information about the service TIS National provides. Visit: **www.tisnational.gov.au**



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we operate, the Whadjuk, Bingareb and Wardandi people of the Noongar nation. We pay our respects to them, their cultures and to Elders past, present and emerging, in the spirit of reconciliation.

About Housing Choices WA

Housing Choices WA is part of a national not-for-profit community housing organisation providing affordable housing to people on low and moderate incomes.

We manage more than 1,800 properties across the Perth Metropolitan, Peel and Southwest regions with offices in Rivervale, Mandurah, and Bunbury.

As an organisation we believe everyone should have the opportunity to live in a safe and secure home, in a community they feel they belong to. We are also committed to providing inclusive spaces for all backgrounds, cultures, genders, sexuality, and ability.



Our teams

As a tenant it is important to know what services we offer and who to contact regarding your tenancy and property.

Tenancy Services

Our Tenancy Officers and Tenancy Assistants are responsible for managing your tenancy and can help if you have any issues or questions about rent, bills, pets, alterations to your home or neighbour issues. Your Tenancy Officer will also visit your home a few times a year for routine property inspections.

TIP!

On average our Tenancy Officers manage 170 properties each and carry out inspections at least one day a week so may not be available to answer your queries immediately. If they are unavailable our Tenancy Assistants may be able to help.

Rent Review

Our Rent Review Team checks each year to make sure you are within our income limits for housing and are paying the right rent based on your income.

Please let your Tenancy Officer or the Rent Review team know any time your income changes and any time someone moves in or out of your home.

The team can help you with rent review forms, answer questions about income limits and explain how your rent is calculated.

Property Services

We have a dedicated Maintenance Hotline where tenants can report repairs. Our staff coordinate work orders, and we outsource contractors to undertake the work.

We also visit properties every few years to assess long-term property upgrades.

Tenant Engagement

Our Tenant Engagement Team plans events and activities to help you meet people in your community and support your wellbeing.

We run groups to help you understand our services and your responsibilities as a tenant.

The team also makes sure you have opportunities to have a say in what we do and how we deliver our services.

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SECTION

1

Moving In



Anna and Ted, winners of our Spring Gardening Competition.

Your Tenancy Agreement

Your Tenancy Agreement is a legal contract where you agree to take on responsibilities as a tenant and Housing Choices WA takes on responsibilities as a landlord.

The below table highlights some of these key responsibilities.



Your responsibilities as a tenant

- ✓ Pay the correct amount of rent on time (two weeks in advance).
- ✓ Keep your home and garden areas clean and tidy and in a similar condition as when you moved in.
- ✓ Report maintenance to us as soon as any repairs are needed.
- ✓ Get approval from Housing Choices WA before making any changes to the property.
- ✓ Let us into your home should we need to complete an inspection or repairs.
- ✓ Tell us if someone is moving in or out of your home or if anyone in the household has had a change in income.
- ✓ Get approval from Housing Choices WA before getting a pet.
- ✓ Respect the peace and privacy of your neighbours and follow building rules and strata by-laws (if they apply).
- ✓ Let us know when your contact information changes.
- ✓ Let us know if you are going to be away from your property for more than four weeks.

Our responsibilities as a landlord

- ✓ Make sure your property is in good condition and meets security and safety standards.
- ✓ Provide the required notice period when we plan to enter your home for inspections and maintenance works.
- ✓ Carry out necessary maintenance works in line with our response timeframes.
- ✓ Keep your property in a reasonable state of repair during the tenancy that complies with building, health, and safety laws.
- ✓ Respect and maintain your privacy and confidentiality.
- ✓ Investigate complaints and appeals fairly and non-judgementally.
- ✓ Review your rent each year and/or when your circumstances change.
- ✓ Give you the required notice for any increases and variations to your rent.

Moving in checklist

Complete the checklist below as soon as you can to ensure you settle into your new home as quickly as possible.



Apply for Commonwealth Rent Assistance

You may be eligible to claim Rent Assistance payments from Centrelink to help pay your rent. The amount of Rent Assistance you're entitled to is based on your situation and the amount of rent you pay.

Your rent calculation will include any rent assistance you are eligible for, so it is very important that you receive the amount you are entitled to.

Please apply for Rent Assistance as soon as possible.

How to apply?

You can apply for Rent Assistance by contacting Centrelink over the phone, visiting a service centre, using the **Express Plus** Centrelink mobile app or online via **My Gov**.

To download the app, scan the QR codes below.



Apple phone



Android phone

If you receive payments from the Department of Veterans' Affairs, please contact them directly to apply for Rent Assistance.



Set up your rental payments

Your rent is due each fortnight and must be paid two weeks in advance. We will try to align your rent invoice to the day you get paid but that is not always possible.

It is your responsibility to set up regular rent payments.

You can pay rent by Centrepay, EFTPOS or direct debit. We do not accept cash payments.

See the **Your Rent** section of this handbook for more information.



Property Condition Report

You will be provided with two copies of a Property Condition Report (PCR). This records the condition of the property when you move in and will be used to assess any damages you are responsible for when you move out.

It is important that you check the condition of the property and compare it to the PCR and, if you disagree with the PCR, enter your comments on both forms.

Please make sure you sign and return one copy of the PCR to Housing Choices WA within 7 working days of signing your Tenancy Agreement.

If you do not return the PCR, it will be assumed that you agree that the report is an accurate record of the condition of the property.



Water

Your water will already be connected when you move in, but if you had water concessions applied to your account you will need to ring the supplier to reapply for a water discount for your new property.

Water Corporation:

1300 659 951

Aqwest (Bunbury tenants only):

9780 9500

Busselton Water:

9781 0500

We also recommend you record a water meter reading when you move in.

Water meter reading:

.....



Electricity

To transfer the electricity account into your name, contact your preferred electricity provider. You will need to provide them with your electricity meter number.

Your Electricity Meter Number is:

.....



Gas (if you have a gas supply)

To register the gas account in your name, contact your preferred gas supplier. You will need to provide them with your gas meter number.

Your Gas Meter Number is:

.....

If you do not know how to operate gas at your property, please contact our **Maintenance Hotline** on **1800 203 383**.



Check for any repairs needed

If you notice any necessary repairs when you move in, please ring our **Maintenance Hotline** on **1800 203 383** (free call from landlines).

See the Maintenance and Repairs section of this handbook for more information.



Landline Telephone

If you want to connect a landline telephone, you will need to transfer your account with your phone provider or set up a new account. You are responsible for the connection fee.

You should not have to pay for a telephone line to the property if one does not exist. You should only pay for the connection fee. If there is no telephone line into your new home, please contact your Tenancy Officer.



Redirecting your mail

Remember to redirect all your mail to your new address. One of the most important things to update is your postal address for voting. Enrol to vote or update your details at **www.waec.wa.gov.au** or ring **13 63 06**.

SECTION

2

Your Rent



Resident artist Allira
and her son Jeremiah.

Paying your rent

Paying your rent on time and in full is an important part of maintaining your tenancy. Your rent is due each fortnight and needs to be paid two weeks in advance. The table below lists the ways you can make payments to us. Please note we do not accept cash payments.



Centrepay deductions	This allows your rent to be paid to us each fortnight directly from your Centrelink benefits. We can help you set this up at any time or you can call Centrepay on 1800 044 063 .
Direct Debit	You can set up a direct debit from your bank account to pay rent. Bank: Commonwealth Bank of Australia Account Name: Housing Choices WA BSB: 066-107 Account Number: 10661004 Important: Include your reference number on all payments to us, so we can match them to your account.
BPAY	Our Biller Code is: 102236 Your BPAY reference number: Remember to quote your unique BPAY reference number when making a payment. Please note the account name may show as Access Housing Australia Ltd.
EFTPOS	You can make payments using our EFTPOS machines at your local office. This may be suitable for making a one-off payment, but we do not recommend this method for ongoing payments.

What happens if I fall behind in rent?

If you are worried about falling behind with your payments, please contact your Tenancy Officer as soon as you can so we can work with you to make sure you stay on track.

The earlier you get in touch with us the better. If you do fall behind, we can set up a repayment plan to pay any money you owe at a reasonable rate.

We can also help link you to financial counselling services who can help with food relief, bills, budgeting and more.

While we will make every effort to work with you to sustain your tenancy, if you repeatedly get into serious debt and are not willing to work with us, your tenancy will be at risk.

Reminder



What do I need to remember?

- Include your Housing Choices WA reference number on **all** payments to us, so they go to the right account. You would have received a card with these details at sign up.
- If you are going to fall behind in your rent please let us know so we can work with you to get back on track.
- If you need help with food or bills call the Emergency Relief and Food Access Service on **1800 979 777**.

How we calculate your rent

Your rent is calculated in line with the Community Housing Rent Setting policy set by the Department of Communities.

We set rents based on your household income and assets to make sure your rent is affordable given what you earn. We also cap your rent, so it is always below the rent charged in the private market.



Household income

Your household income is the total income of all people over the age of 16 living in your home, after tax. Your rent is 'income related', so it may change if the people living in your home or the income of any household member changes.

The percentage of household income you pay depends on whether you meet the income criteria for Very Low or Low-Income Households.

Assessable household income as rent %	
Very Low-Income Households	pay 25%
Low-Income Households	pay 30%

Assessable income

Any income which is regular, ongoing and provided to meet the general costs of living is considered assessable income when calculating rent. Examples include wages, work allowances, pensions and benefits.

There are some types of income that are not included when we calculate your rent which is called non-assessable income. See the non-assessable income list on the next page.

Commonwealth Rent Assistance

As a Community Housing tenant, you may be eligible to claim Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) from Centrelink. 100% of your CRA entitlement will be added to your base rent. All Community Housing Providers are entitled to the full amount of rent assistance to help support the not-for-profit housing sector.

Please check that you are claiming the full amount of rent assistance your household is eligible for as this will be included in your rent calculation.

Market rent

We never charge you more than 74.99% of market rent. Market Rent is the amount of rent you would pay for a property of similar size and location if you were renting privately. This figure comes from sources such as, but not limited to, the Australian Tax Office, Real Estate Institute of WA and Landgate.

The rent you pay will either be 25% or 30% of your net assessable household income plus CRA or 74.99% of market rent plus CRA – whichever is the lower amount..

TIP!

Do you have a carer living with you?

If so, you may be eligible for a rent incentive for co-resident carers. Contact your local office to find out more.

Non-assessable income list

There are some sources of income that are excluded when we calculate your rent. These often include payments you receive for a specific purpose and we call them non-assessable incomes. Please note this list may be subject to change.

Income Source

- ✓ Abstudy Fares Allowance
- ✓ Abstudy Incidentals Allowance
- ✓ Abstudy Pensioner Education Supplement
- ✓ Abstudy School Fees Allowance
- ✓ Assistance for Isolated Children Scheme (AIC)
- ✓ Bereavement Payment
- ✓ Carer Adjustment Payment
- ✓ Carer Allowance
- ✓ Carer Supplement
- ✓ Child Disability Allowance
- ✓ Crisis Payment
- ✓ Dad and Partner Pay
- ✓ DVA Attendant Allowance
- ✓ DVA Clothing Allowance
- ✓ DVA Decoration Allowance
- ✓ DVA Disability Pension – Extreme Disability Adjustment*
- ✓ DVA Disability Pension – General Rate*
- ✓ DVA Disability Pension – Intermediate Rate*
- ✓ DVA Disability Pension – Special Rate (AKA Totally & Permanently Incapacitated Pension)*
- ✓ DVA Permanent Impairment Compensation Payment
- ✓ DVA Prisoner of War Recognition Supplement
- ✓ DVA Veterans Supplement
- ✓ Education Entry Payment
- ✓ Employment Entry Payment
- ✓ Energy Supplement
- ✓ Essential Medical Equipment Payment
- ✓ Fares Allowance
- ✓ Income Support Bonus – Centrelink
- ✓ Assistance for Isolated Children instead of 'Isolated Children's Allowance'
- ✓ Mobility Allowance
- ✓ Newborn Supplement
- ✓ Newborn Upfront Payment
- ✓ Pension Supplement
- ✓ Pensioner Education Supplement
- ✓ Pharmaceutical Allowance
- ✓ Recreation Transport Allowance (DVA)
- ✓ Reimbursements
- ✓ Single Income Family Supplement
- ✓ Stillborn Baby Payment
- ✓ Student Start up Loan
- ✓ Telephone Allowance
- ✓ Utilities Allowance

*DVA Disability Pensions

In the event that a tenant's sole income source is a non-assessable DVA Disability Pension, the rent will be assessed using the full Centrelink benefit at the appropriate single or partnered rate to which the tenant would otherwise be entitled.

In the event that a tenant's non-assessable DVA Disability Pension is paid in conjunction with any other Centrelink benefit, the rent will be assessed using the full Centrelink benefit at the appropriate single or partnered rate to which the tenant would otherwise be entitled.

How we review your rent



We will review your rent annually and any time you advise us your household income has changed. This is so we can make sure you are within the income limits for housing with us and are paying the correct rent according to your income.

If someone moves in or out of your home or your income has changed please let us know within two weeks so we can do a rent review.

If you don't let us know about changes to your household income, you could be paying more or less rent than you should. If you are paying less rent than you should you may be charged backdated rent at your next rent review.

What does a rent review involve?

When your rent review is due we will ask you to complete and return an Eligibility and Rent Assessment form and provide proof of income for everyone over the age of 16 living in your property.

TIP!

If you receive Centrelink payments, we can obtain proof of income for you and your household from Centrelink. This service makes rent reviews easier for you. **Contact your local office to sign up for this service.**

Need some help with forms?

We know it can be overwhelming to complete forms and provide proof of income. Please know we are here to help. If you have any issues with the paperwork or need more time to complete the forms please don't hesitate to contact your local office or email rentreview-wa@hcau.org.au.

IMPORTANT

Completing rent review paperwork is important to sustaining your tenancy. If we don't have the right information, you may be charged maximum rent for your property, and we may be unable to confirm your eligibility to be housed with us.

What happens after the rent review?

We will send you a letter to let you know if your rent has changed. The letter will explain your rent calculation formula, your new rent amount and the date your new rent starts.

Reminder

What do I need to remember?

- It is your responsibility to let us know if your household income changes – this includes any changes in Centrelink benefits or people moving in or out of your home.
- We are approved by Centrelink to use services that make rent reviews easier. Ask a member of our team how you can access these services.
- If you have any issues completing forms or providing proof of income, please contact us. We are here to help.

SECTION

3

Repairs and maintenance



Reporting a repair

As your landlord, we arrange and pay for the repair of fittings and fixtures in your home as they deteriorate over time with normal use.

Whether it is a small repair like a leaking tap or large repair like fixing a burst water pipe, we are here to help.



Process of reporting a repair



How to report a repair



Call our Maintenance Hotline on **1800 203 383**



Email the team via **maintenance-wa@hcau.org.au**

Please don't wait until your next inspection to report a repair as the issue may get worse over time and you could be liable for additional damage caused by the delay in reporting.

If you are experiencing an emergency outside of office hours, you can still call **1800 203 383** and be diverted to our emergency after-hours maintenance line.

QUICK TIPS!

Contractor appointments:





- Make sure you are home for scheduled contractor appointments as you may be charged a call out fee if they can't enter the property.
- If you can no longer make an appointment, please call our Maintenance Hotline or the contractor directly to reschedule.
- If a contractor does not get in touch with you within the expected timeframe of your repair, please let us know so we can follow up.

Repair timeframes



When you report a repair, our team will let you know when you can expect the maintenance work to be completed – this is known as our repair timeframes.

We prioritise repairs based on their risk to the health and safety of tenants and whether the issue could lead to further damage to the property. With more than 1,800 properties to maintain we need to prioritise to ensure we are dealing with the most urgent issues first.

Category	Description	Timeframe	Examples
Emergency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affects your immediate health or safety. Affects the structural integrity of your home. 	6 hours	Gas leak, burst water pipe, dangerous electrical fault. 
Urgent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May damage your home or impact your health and safety if not fixed soon. 	24 hours	No hot water, faulty smoke detectors. 
Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not affect your health or safety but may get worse over time. 	7 working days	Slow leaking tap, damaged fences. 
Routine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are inconvenient but does not affect your health or other areas of the home. 	21 working days	Gutter cleaning, blinds replacement, replace cupboard handles. 

After Hours Emergency Maintenance



Our Maintenance Hotline is available after office hours for emergencies only. If you call **1800 203 383** on the weekend or after 4pm on weekdays, you will be diverted to our after-hours team.

Please only call our maintenance line outside of office hours if you are experiencing an emergency. If your issue is not an emergency you may be charged the cost of the emergency call out fee.

Please note, emergency maintenance issues may be temporarily made good until a permanent repair can be made during normal working hours. For example, a broken window may be boarded and re-glazed the following day.

If you are not sure if your issue is an emergency, please explain the problem and our staff will advise you the best they can. Please also use the above emergency examples as a guide.

Tenant liability

Housing Choices WA pays for the replacement of fixtures and fittings in your home that deteriorate over time with normal use. Examples include worn carpet from high traffic use or leaking taps caused by worn washers.

Tenants may be charged for damage caused deliberately or accidentally by you, members of your household or visitors including damage caused by neglect. This is called tenant liability. Please report all damages to our Maintenance Hotline as soon as possible, even if the damage was caused by you or a household member as we need to make sure the issue doesn't get worse, and the property remains safe.

What kinds of damage could you be charged for?

Examples of damage that can result in tenant liability can include but are not limited to:

- holes in doors and walls and broken windows
- blocked toilets due to flushing sanitary products or nappies
- burns or other damage to floor coverings and surfaces
- nicotine staining on surfaces caused by smoking inside
- torn fly wire caused by pets
- replacing or changing locks without approval

When you report an issue, where possible, we will advise you if you are likely to be charged tenant liability for the repair. You will then receive an invoice telling you what work was done, how much it was and how much you need to pay.

QUICK TIPS!



Repayment plans are available

If you are charged tenant liability and can't pay the amount in full, you can set up a repayment plan to pay the bill back in instalments you can manage.



Damage caused by others

If someone has broken into your home or caused damage to your property, you may not be responsible. If this is the case, you need to report it to the police and get a Police Report Number (PRN) within 24 hours to help avoid tenant liability charges.



Your right to appeal decisions

If you are charged tenant liability and don't agree with the decision, please contact us so we can make sure we have all the relevant information we need. You can also lodge an appeal to have the decision formally reviewed.

Safety in your home

To make sure you stay safe in your home please read the following information that describes some of the safety features in your property. If you have any questions about the information or any safety concerns, please call our Maintenance Hotline on **1800 203 383**.

Smoke Alarms

By law, you must have a working smoke alarm in your home. We will test your smoke alarm during your routine property inspections, but it is also recommended that you test your smoke alarm/s monthly.



TIP!

How to test your smoke alarm

1. Press and hold the test button (if you can't reach, use a broom/mop handle) until you hear the alert beeping tone.
2. The alarm should stop the test alert after a few seconds. If it doesn't, press the test button again.
3. If your alarm doesn't beep, please ring the Maintenance Hotline so we can investigate a fault.



What else do I need to know?

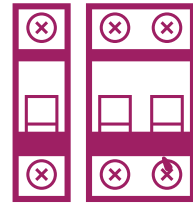
- Please don't tamper with your smoke alarm. If we need to fix an alarm that has been modified or damaged, you may be charged for its repair.
- Smoke alarms have a rechargeable battery that can't be removed and don't need replacing, instead we will replace the smoke alarm entirely every 10 years.

Below: Lilli and Kandi at our resident group about maintenance.



Residual Currency Devices

A Residual Current Device (RCD) is a safety device that prevents electrical shock by automatically cutting off the power. At least once a year, we will test your RCDs to make sure they are working. You can also check your RCDs yourself.



TIP!



Testing your RCD's

1. Turn off your electronic equipment (computers, TV's etc.)
2. Find your RCDs, this is usually located in the outside meter box or in the switch board inside. All the RCDs should be in the ON position.
3. Press the TEST (T) button on each RCD and release. You should hear a click.
4. Each of the RCD levers should flip to the OFF position. This means the RCDs are working.
5. If any of the RCD levers don't flip to the off position, there is a fault. Immediately report it to the Maintenance Hotline on **1800 203 383**.
6. When finished, flip the levers upwards to ON.



What else do I need to know:

- Faulty electrical appliances can often cause a power cut and can turn the RCD to the OFF position. Always check your RCD before calling our Maintenance Hotline.
- Avoid overloading electrical outlets and always report faulty, cracked and broken power points to our Maintenance Hotline.
- If you experience a loss of power call Western Power or visit their website to see if there is an outage in your area before calling our Maintenance Hotline.

Do you know who to call?

While it is important to keep us informed of what is happening in your property – we may not always be the first number you should call to address safety issues in your home. Keep these numbers handy in case you experience any of the issues listed below.



State Emergency Services

132 500

Call for storm and flood assistance.



Western Power

13 13 51

Report electric shocks or tingles, serious power faults and to check for power outage.



ATCO Gas

13 13 52

If you smell rotten eggs, it could be a sign of a gas leak. Call ATCO to report gas faults and leaks.



Water Corporation

13 13 75

To report a fault or water quality issue.



Aqwest (for Bunbury residents)

9780 9500



Busselton Water

9781 0500

Safety tips



Affix furniture to prevent toppling

Free standing furniture can be a safety risk due to toppling. Permission will always be granted if you want to anchor furniture to walls to protect children and vulnerable adults. This can include freestanding wardrobes, chests of drawers, televisions, tables and benches.

Ask your Tenancy Officer for a Tenant Request to Affix Furniture Form. We may only refuse a request if attaching furniture will disturb asbestos or if it is against strata by-laws.

Pools, spas and water features

Please note that in the interest of child safety, pools, spas and water features will not be approved. This also includes the use of inflatable pools.

Think about contents insurance

Housing Choices WA building insurance covers your property but does not cover your possessions.

You may want to consider getting contents insurance to cover the financial cost of replacing personal possessions if unfortunate circumstances like a fire or burglary were to take place.

We recommend you do some research and talk to different insurance companies to discuss your needs and find a policy that is right for you and your budget.

Earth stakes



An earth stake protects you from electrocution if there is an overflow of electricity.

Your earth stake is usually located next to an outside water tap. If you are in an apartment complex or set of units there is no individual earth stake but one to cover the whole complex.

We advise that every now and then you check your earth stake is securely attached and not damaged or covered by outdoor furniture or plant pots.



Planned maintenance

As well as providing maintenance services when things break, we also undertake long-term planned maintenance known as refurbishments.

Refurbishment works include the scheduled replacement of items in your home which deteriorate over time including:

- renovating bathrooms or kitchens,
- replacing floor coverings,
- replacing hot water systems or stoves,
- internal or external painting.

Every three years we will do a Building Condition Assessment in your home to see when flooring, kitchen, painting, and other fixtures may need replacing.

Planned maintenance schedules look different for every property depending on the age of the property and how quickly things wear over time.



Resident Advisory Committee member Luul and her children.

Frequently asked questions



What if I have a maintenance emergency and the office is closed?

Call the same Maintenance Hotline number **(1800 203 383)** and you will be diverted to our emergency out of hours service.

Please keep in mind that if you request a repair out of hours and your repair is not an emergency, you may be charged a call out fee.

Can I make changes to the property?

WA tenancy law says you need written permission from your landlord before making any alterations to your home.

We will always approve alterations where we can, but we also need to make sure your home remains safe and in accordance with council regulations and relevant building codes.

Some common alterations we usually approve include the installation of air-conditioners, handrails, satellite dishes, shelves, picture hooks or shade cloth.

If you want to make changes to your property, please talk to your Tenancy Officer and ask for a Property Alterations Form.

Do I have to pay for changes to be made to the property?

If your property alteration request is approved, you will be responsible for the costs associated with the alterations and we ask that you make sure all work is completed to a professional standard or by a qualified tradesperson (depending on the work being done).

You also may need to remove the alterations at the end of your tenancy, but this will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

What happens if I lock myself out or lose my keys?

If you lock yourself out of your home during office hours, you can contact your local office to borrow our extra set of keys for your home - but you'll need to make sure you return them.

Outside of business hours, you can ring our Maintenance Hotline for an emergency call out, but you will be charged for the locksmith and after-hours call out fee.

The best way to avoid this situation is to think ahead and plan what you will do if you lock yourself out. This may be as simple as getting a spare key cut and giving it to someone you trust. There are also key lock boxes you can buy, but make sure you seek advice from a reliable source before making a purchase.

Please note that if you lose your keys, you are responsible for the cost of replacing them.



SECTION

4

Maintaining
your tenancy

Virginita, a winner of our Spring Gardening Competition.

When we visit your home



As a landlord we visit your home for routine property inspections, building condition assessments and to carry out necessary maintenance work.

There are also other circumstances we may need to enter your home like when there is an emergency or when we think the property has been abandoned.

Where possible, we will try and negotiate a time and date that suits you to visit your home and we will always provide appropriate notice according to the *Residential Tenancies Act WA (1987)*.

Routine property inspections

By law we can carry out up to four routine inspections per year. We will always give you between 7-14 days' written notice that we are coming to your home.

We know that inspections may cause anxiety or stress for some residents. We want to assure you that the purpose of an inspection is not to judge but to identify any maintenance issues and, make sure your property is safe and well looked after.

What happens during an inspection?

- We will take some photos to record the condition of the property.
- We will test the smoke alarms and other safety features in your home.
- We will check in with you and see if you have questions or need any assistance.



For more information about property inspections, see the Frequently asked questions section on page 33.

What happens after the inspection?

- We will send you a letter with the outcome of your inspection and details of any maintenance work we have arranged.
- If there are property standards issues identified during an inspection, we will notify you in writing and work with you to address these.
- Depending on the situation, we might create an action plan with you and organise a follow up visit to make sure any issues have been addressed.

Building Condition Assessments

Every three years we will visit your home to do a Building Condition Assessment (BCA). This visit is done by staff from our property services team.

A BCA is not a routine property inspection.

- The purpose of the visit is to assess the physical condition of specific items in the property to plan for future upgrades and long-term maintenance.
- Our technical services staff will assess the condition of your kitchen, bathrooms, laundry, flooring, and painting in and outside your home to see when they might need replacing.
- If you do need to have planned refurbishment work carried out in your home we will work with you to minimise disruption.

QUICK TIPS!



Need help looking after your property?

Please contact your Tenancy Officer as soon as possible. We may be able to offer advice around maintaining your home and refer you to other services that could help.

Looking after your home



As a resident it is your responsibility to keep your home well looked after and in similar condition to when you moved in.

While we understand that your home will experience wear and tear from daily use it is important to regularly clean your property and understand common do's and don'ts to avoid issues during your tenancy.

Smoking

Please note that it is a condition of your tenancy that you do not smoke inside your property. This also applies to any household members or visitors.

Smoking inside causes nicotine staining on walls and surfaces which is costly to repair, and these costs will be passed onto you. Smoking inside can also increase the risk of fire in the home.

Mould

Mould can grow in bathrooms, kitchens, storage areas, roof spaces and behind furniture. If left untreated, mould can cause damage to the property, your belongings and could impact your health.

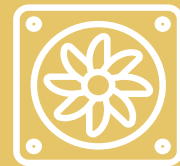
Your day-to-day activities can have an impact on whether mould is an issue in your home. The below tips can help avoid mould developing.

What to do if you notice mould in the home

1. If mould appears, treat it as soon as possible. You can buy household mould cleaners or spray it with white vinegar, leave for an hour then wipe clean with water and dry.

2. If you notice peeling paint, rotting wood or a damp smell in your home this could be a sign of mould caused by structural issues. If you notice this kind of damp in your home call our Maintenance Hotline on **1800 203 383**.
3. If you have ongoing issues with mould that you can't fix yourself, please call our Maintenance Hotline on **1800 203 383**.

QUICK TIPS!



Avoiding mould in the home

- Open windows as much as possible, especially when washing or drying clothes.
- Use your kitchen extraction fan when cooking.
- Wipe condensation off walls and windows to keep them dry.
- Use exhaust fans every time you shower but keep your bathroom door closed so the fan works more effectively.
- After you shower open the door and leave the exhaust fan on until condensation clears.
- Clean your exhaust fans regularly (if you struggle to reach ask a neighbour or family member to help).
- If possible, hang washing outside to dry rather than inside.

Pests

Common household pests include flies, cockroaches, spiders, ants, mice or rats. A pest infestation can start small but quickly become out of control, so it is important to know how to prevent it.

Tips to avoid pests in the home

- Store food in airtight containers.
- Use sprays or baits often.
- Empty your bins regularly, use bin liners and wash bins with soapy water.
- Declutter your home to reduce spaces for pests to live.
- Regularly wipe down countertops.
- Vacuum and mop any spills when they occur.
- To avoid pests like mice in your garden trim overgrown bushes and mow lawns regularly.
- Avoid leaving pet food out for long periods of time – if your pet eats slowly feed them multiple times a day instead.

If an infestation happens





In the event of an infestation, your local supermarket or hardware store is likely to have a solution. Sprays, baits, and treatments are available for flies, cockroaches, spiders, ants, mice, and rats.

Be careful when using bait around children or animals and be sure to follow the instructions on the packaging.

If the issues continue, please contact our Maintenance Hotline **1800 203 383**.



Quick Guide: Responsibilities in the home







Issue	Landlord Responsibility	Tenant Responsibility
Gardens 	Major garden maintenance including tree lopping, gutter cleaning, reticulation (where provided) and fire break maintenance.	General garden upkeep like hand watering, mowing, weeding, and light pruning.
Lighting 	Maintaining exterior main entry lights and lights that require special equipment to replace such as fluorescent and LED lights.	Replacing light globes in the home. If you are not able to physically replace globes we suggest reaching out to neighbours, family, or friends.
Pests 	Pest and vermin control that requires professional services such as mice, termites and ants.	Basic pest prevention, such as proper food storage and using sprays/baits. If infestations are caused by your actions, you may be charged for pest control.
Mould 	Addressing mould caused by structural issues like roof leaks or faulty pipes.	Ventilating your property to prevent mould. You may be responsible for treating mould caused by insufficient ventilation.

Avoiding blocked drains

Blocked drains are a common cause of tenant debt called tenant liability as residents may not be aware of what should or should not go down toilets or kitchen and bathroom drains.

Housing Choices is responsible for repairing burst pipes or naturally blocked drains. However, if we find that the blockage is directly caused by your actions, you may be charged for the repair.

5 things that can't go down drains 	1. 	1. Grease or cooking fat
	2. 	2. Food or food scraps (including eggshells)
	3. 	3. Cleaning products
	4. 	4. Stickers from fresh fruit and vegetables
	5. 	5. Medication

5 things that can't go down toilets 	1. 	1. Wipes or products advertised as flushable
	2. 	2. Sanitary/hygiene products
	3. 	3. Tissues or paper towel
	4. 	4. Cotton buds
	5. 	5. Too much toilet paper at one time

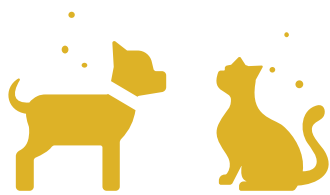
QUICK TIPS!

Avoiding blocked drains

- Drain covers can help prevent hair going down shower drains and can catch food debris in your kitchen sink.
- A slow or weak toilet flush often indicates that a clog is forming in your toilet drain. Use a plunger to try and release clogs or small blockages before they become a more serious issue.
- Regularly clean your drains to dislodge any build up that may occur. Pour 1 cup of bicarbonate soda, 1 cup of warm water and 1 cup vinegar in and around the drain and leave for 20 minutes then pour warm water down and around the drain.
- Don't forget about your outdoor drains. Keep outdoor drain covers in place to prevent drains becoming blocked with debris, rubbish or toys.



Pets



Thinking of getting a pet? Please ask us first.

In WA, tenants need to ask a landlord for permission to keep a pet. At Housing Choices, we understand the joy and companionship household pets can bring to our lives, and we will always approve pets where we can.

We will be guided by local government regulations and strata by-laws when granting approval for a pet. We will also consider the type and size of the property and the impact that having a pet could have on your neighbours.

If you're considering getting a pet or pet sitting for someone please contact your Tenancy Officer.

Please wait until you get approval in writing before getting your pet.

Pet Bond

If you are getting a pet that can carry parasites that affect humans (such as fleas and ticks) you will need to pay a \$260 pet bond. The pet bond will be used specifically for fumigation of the property when you move out and therefore is non-refundable.

Please note trained guide dogs and hearing dogs do not require a pet bond.

Things to remember once you get a pet:

Check and follow your local council requirements regarding registering, de-sexing and microchipping your pet.

Make sure that your pet doesn't cause a nuisance to your neighbours, like continuous barking or damaging neighbours' property.

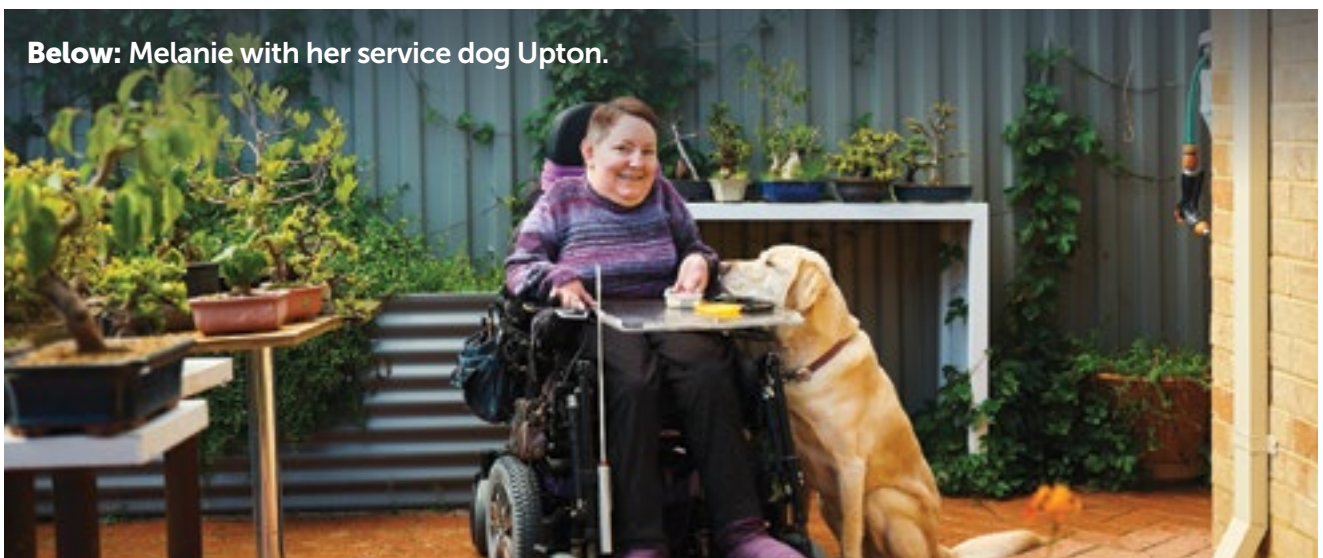
For safety reasons, please ensure your pet is supervised at all times in shared spaces like driveways and common areas.

You are responsible for the behaviour of your pet this includes any property damage caused by your pet like torn fly wire.

QUICK TIPS!

- We still need you to complete a Pet Request Form even if you have already received permission for existing pets.
- Only one pet bond is needed regardless of how many pets you have permission to keep.

Below: Melanie with her service dog Upton.



Being a good neighbour



Housing Choices WA expects tenants to be considerate neighbours and respect the right of everyone to enjoy the peace and privacy of their own home.

As a tenant you are responsible not only for your own behaviour, but also the behaviour of your household members and visitors.

Showing consideration towards your neighbours can prevent problems occurring.

Being mindful of your behaviour

- When you play music inside and outside the house, please keep it at an acceptable volume.
- Park considerately and be aware of blocking in neighbours' cars or blocking exits.
- Avoid using loud indoor appliances or outdoor tools early in the morning or late at night.
- Check that dogs left at home during the day are not barking constantly or toileting on neighbours properties.
- Make sure that children avoid playing games on roads and other residents' driveways.

Being tolerant of others

An important part of being a good neighbour is being tolerant of others. In any community, there needs to be a level of tolerance between neighbours.

We house a wide variety of people, and it is important to recognise that some noises and differences in lifestyle are normal.

You should expect and accept that you will hear dogs barking at times, smell cooking and hear music or children playing. This is no different to living in any street in any neighbourhood across WA.

Managing neighbourhood issues

While we do encourage tolerance and understanding between neighbours, we recognise that issues with neighbours can sometimes occur.

We will always try to help you resolve neighbour issues whether it is to give advice on how to manage the issue, inform you of who you should report to or investigate serious claims of anti-social behaviour.

How we can assist you will depend on the neighbour issue you are experiencing. As your landlord the ways in which we can help are limited if:

- The issue is not a breach of the Residential Tenancies ACT (WA) 1987.
- The issue is a police or council matter.
- The people involved are not Housing Choices WA residents.
- There is insufficient evidence of anti-social behaviour.
- All parties are at fault or there is evidence of retaliation.

Below: Residents at our Rockingham end of year lunch.



Steps you can take to resolve neighbour issues

We always ask tenants to be tolerant of one-off or minor annoyances - but if you are experiencing a neighbour issue, please follow the appropriate steps for your situation.



Talk with your neighbour first

Depending on the issue and if safe to do so, talk to your neighbour first. Some issues such as noise from a late-night BBQ, or inconsiderate parking can usually be resolved quickly by chatting to your neighbour.



Consider mediation services

If talking to your neighbour isn't successful, Housing Choices WA can help fund mediation between residents to resolve neighbour issues. All parties need to be willing to participate for mediation to be a successful option. Offering to participate in mediation can sometimes reduce conflict even if the session does not occur because it shows your willingness to resolve the issue.



Report the issue where appropriate

As a landlord we have limited powers over some issues, and it is important that in the first instance you report the issue to the authorities that can act.

- In an emergency or life-threatening situation call **000** immediately.
- For non-emergency matters that need police attendance call **131 444**.
- To report criminal activity or suspicious behaviour anonymously call Crimestoppers on **1800 333 000**.
- If the issue is pet or noise related you can report your concerns to your local council.



Keep written records

For Housing Choices WA to be able to assist with neighbour issues it is important to keep records of incidents.

- Write down each incident when it occurs and stick to the facts when describing the event, include where, when, and who was involved at the time.
- Note how it affected you and what actions you took in response e.g., reported incident to council or police.



Make a complaint to Housing Choices WA

Contact your Tenancy Officer with the evidence of the issue (police or council report number and incident diaries), and we can investigate whether the issue is a breach of tenancy and advise you on how we can assist.



Need more information?

- 1.** If you have any questions about our mediation services or about handling neighbour issues in general, please speak to a member of staff for more information.
- 2.** Visit your local government/council website for more information on how they can help.

Resident artist Hodette and her daughter Cara.



Above: Davina, resident and owner of a candle business.



Leaving your property

Being away from your home

We recognise that on occasion you may need or wish to be away from your home for an extended period of time.

If you plan to leave for more than 4 weeks, it's important to let your Tenancy Officer know.

It is important for us to know you are going away so we can check that arrangements have been made to pay rent while you are gone, and we know who to contact about any property issues when you are away.

Transfers to another property

If your circumstances change and you need to move, you may be eligible for a transfer. As there are limited properties available, priority is given to people with medical needs or other urgent requirements.

When applying for a transfer we encourage you to be flexible about the type and location of property you wish to move to as this will increase your chances of being transferred.

Unfortunately, we can't advise how long it will take to be transferred as this depends on properties becoming available.

Ending your tenancy

If you are on a periodic tenancy you will need to give Housing Choices WA at least 21 days written notice of your intention to end your tenancy. If you are on a fixed term tenancy you need to provide notice at least 30 days prior to the end of your lease.

- You can give notice in writing or by completing an End of Tenancy Form.
- Once we have received your notice, we will contact you to discuss the moving out process and provide you with information and checklists to make this easier.

TIP!

Please be aware that if you give us less than 21 days' notice for periodic tenancies, you will still be charged rent and be responsible for the property for the minimum notice period.

Frequently asked questions



Will inspections be scheduled at a time that suits me?

When scheduling times to carry out inspections we will try to fit with your preferred days and times. However with more than 1,800 properties and preferences to take on board we might not always be able to arrange your inspection at a time that is most convenient.

Please keep in mind that it's important for us to maintain our inspection schedules as much as possible so we can check on the condition of the property and test the safety devices in your home like smoke alarms.

Do I need to be home for inspections?

Where possible we encourage residents, carers and/or support providers to attend inspections so we can discuss any issues and answer your questions.

If you are not able to be home for the inspection or prefer not to be home, we will use our set of office keys to carry out the inspection at the scheduled day and time. If this happens, we will leave a note to say we have visited, and you can call us with any questions about the inspections.

Can I have visitors at my property?

Yes, you can have visitors at your property but please keep in mind you are responsible for the behaviour of your household members and visitors.

What happens if I want someone to move into the property?

Please contact your Tenancy Officer to seek approval before the person(s) moves in as we need to check you are not exceeding the number of people that can live in a property of your size.

We will also need their proof of income and assets to make sure you are paying the correct amount of rent and remain eligible for housing.

What happens if someone moves out?




Please let your Tenancy Officer know as soon as possible. As your rent is determined by the income of your household members, if someone moves out, we may need to do a rent review to make sure you aren't paying too much rent.

Can I run a business from the property?

This depends on the type of business you want to run and the impact it may have on your property and neighbours. Please contact your Tenancy Officer and ask for a Home Business Application Form.



Keeping my home matrix

MY TENANCY	 MY PAYMENTS	 MY HOME AND YARD	 MY BEHAVIOUR AND MY VISITOR'S BEHAVIOUR
All good	I make my payments for rent, water and tenant liability on time.	I keep a clean and safe home, report issues to Housing Choices and allow contractors in to do repairs.	I have had no complaints about my behaviour or my visitor's behaviour.
Can be fixed	I have fallen behind with my payments. I should contact my Tenancy Officer to make a plan to get back on track.	I have a follow up inspection because my home is not clean or safe. I need to tidy my home before my re-inspection to be all good.	I have complaints about my or my visitors' behaviour. I should stop the behaviours to make it all good.
I need to take urgent action	I have been breached because I am getting further behind. I need to make and keep to my payment plan.	I have been breached because my home needs cleaning, or I haven't let people in to fix things. I need to change things to make it all good.	I have been breached because my or my visitors' behaviour is breaching my Tenancy Agreement. I must stop the issues to make it all good.
My tenancy will end	I got a Notice of Termination because I did not fix the issues I was breached for. I will have lost my home, I may have debts to pay and I need to find somewhere else to live.		

SECTION

5

Useful
information

Resident David and Housing Choices staff member Alex at our end of year lunch.

Complaints, appeals and feedback



Complaints

You have the right to make a complaint about staff, contractors, or our services. We aim to acknowledge all complaints within two business days.

We will treat anyone making a complaint with respect and deal with complaints in a fair and non-judgemental way. You have the right to make a complaint anonymously and all information received will be treated as confidential, but please note that this may impact our ability to investigate and follow up with you regarding the complaint.

What is the process for making a complaint?

1. You can make a complaint via letter, email, website, phone or in person.
2. We will send you an acknowledgement letter or email with your unique complaint ID which you can reference when seeking updates on the progress of your complaint.
3. Please note we may contact you or your advocate (if you have one) for more information during the investigation.
4. Once the investigation is completed, we will advise you of the outcome of your complaint and let you know what actions we are taking.

TIP!

When you make a complaint, tell us as much information about the issue as you can including what happened and who was involved as this will help us with our investigation.

Appeals

If you are unhappy or concerned about a decision we have made, you may be able to lodge an appeal to have that decision formally reviewed.

For example, you may feel that we haven't considered all the information you provided, we haven't been fair, or we have been influenced by irrelevant information. Types of decisions you can appeal include being declined a transfer or being charged for damage you don't feel you are responsible for.

TIP!

If you feel comfortable doing so, we always recommend talking to the staff member that made the decision, to talk about why the decision was made.

If you are still concerned or don't feel comfortable talking to staff, you can request an Appeals Form and lodge an appeal to have the decision formally reviewed by an independent panel of staff and management.

Have feedback you would like to provide?

We welcome feedback about our services at any time.

Your compliments, feedback and suggestions help us to better understand what we do well and how we can continue to improve our services.

You can provide feedback at any time by letter, phone, email, via our website or by completing a Feedback Form. You can also give more detailed feedback through tenant groups, our Annual Tenant Survey or via our Advisory Committee of Tenants (ACT).

Your privacy



When you are housed with us and consent to receive our services you are also consenting to us collecting and using your personal information.

Your privacy is important to us, and we want to reassure you that the personal information we collect from you will be handled in accordance with the Australian Privacy Principles under the Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth) and other applicable privacy related laws.

You can find a copy of the Housing Choices Privacy Policy on our website www.housingchoices.org.au

What type of information do we collect?

We only ask for information we actually need. The types of personal information we collect may include (but is not limited to) contact details, where you work (if relevant) your cultural background and details of your rental history. It may also include sensitive information, such as health information, which relates directly to your housing needs.

How do we use your personal information?

The information we collect enables us to provide you with efficient and high-quality services. We use your information to contact you about any enquiries you make, and work with partners, and contractors providing you with housing services (utilities and government). Your information is used to assess your eligibility for housing, contact you about repairs, calculate your rent, or to assist any person who has legal powers to act for you, such as powers of attorney. We may also use your information to help us with planning and evaluation of our services. We do not share your information with anyone without your permission, unless it is legally required or required to provide the services.

How do we collect your personal information?

We collect information directly from you, either verbally or in writing. In some cases, it may be collected from other organisations. It is important to us that the information we have about you is up to date.

You can find more information in our Collection Statement on our website.

How can you access and correct the information we keep about you?

You have a legal right to access the information we keep about you. If you find that the information we have is not up to date or is inaccurate, please let us know and we will update it. We will also confirm with you when the updates have been made to our records.

We may decline to provide this information if we reasonably believe that it may impact the privacy or health and safety of others, or if giving access to the information is unlawful.

How long do we keep your information for?

Your information will be kept only for as long as needed, or for as long as needed to provide you services or as required by government legislation.

Once your information is no longer required, we will archive and securely destroy or de-identify your information.

How do we keep your personal information safe?

We store your information securely either electronically or in paper form.

Your data is kept secure via website protection measures, access restrictions to our computer systems and restricted access to our office premises. Our staff are trained in managing your privacy.

If you would like a copy of our Privacy Statement or have any questions about how we manage your privacy, please contact your local office.

Get involved at Housing Choices WA

Our Tenant Engagement Team runs a range of programs, groups and events that focus on empowering tenants, building inclusive neighbourhoods, and ensuring tenants can have a say about what we do and how we deliver our services.

The activities and events we run are based on your feedback to make sure we are providing services that best suit your needs.

Resident Groups

We hold a range of place-based groups for residents such as our financial wellbeing workshops and information sessions about rent setting, maintenance and more.

You can also give us feedback about our services at consultations we run in your area. These groups provide a way for you to share your ideas and give our staff feedback about our services.

Social and Wellbeing Activities

We run social and wellbeing events including our annual Art Showcase, End of Year Lunches, family BBQs and more.

Resident Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee of Tenants (ACT) is a resident-led group that meets every two months to discuss issues important to tenants. The ACT guides decision-making on how we communicate with tenants and gives feedback about our policies, strategy and service delivery.

Joining the committee can help you to have your voice and ideas heard, develop new skills and confidence, get to know other tenants and make a difference to the lives of people we house.

Any Housing Choices resident, carer or lodge resident can apply to join the committee. Applications are accepted year-round, and all tenants will receive some training to make sure they feel comfortable and confident in their roles on the committee.

Opportunities Fund

Take steps towards achieving your education, health and wellbeing goals with financial assistance and support through our Opportunities Fund. Each year we support up to 24 tenants from a range of backgrounds to achieve their goals.

Small Sparks Fund

Want to start a group or activity with tenants in your area? Our Small Sparks Fund provides financial support for tenants to run activities with tenants and others in their community.

Competitions

Each year we run several competitions that you can take part in from the comfort of your home, including our Spring Gardening Competition, resident newsletter puzzles, Facebook competitions and more.



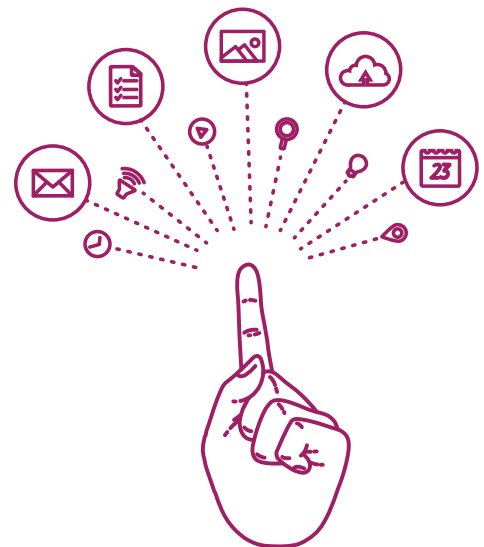


Above: Members of our Advisory Committee of Tenants.

Keep up to date with us

Make sure you know how to get the latest information about tenancy matters, maintenance and repairs, health and safety tips, community events, tenant stories and more.

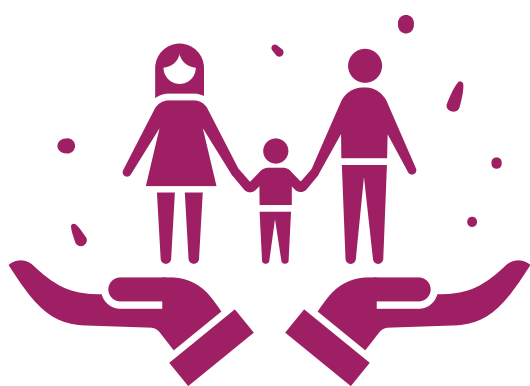
- Read our tenant newsletter ***Home Stories*** which is sent out every three months to your mailbox.
- Like and follow our Facebook page to get the latest information and join our online tenant community. Visit www.facebook.com/HChoicesWA on your browser or search for Housing Choices Western Australia on your Facebook App.
- Visit our website www.housingchoices.org.au to see copies of our policies, provide feedback and report a repair online.



Want to get involved in any of our activities, funds or events?

Contact your local office and ask to speak to a member of our Tenant Engagement Team.

Information for carers



Being a carer

Do you provide unpaid care, support and assistance to a person with a disability, mental health challenge, chronic condition, alcohol and or drug issue or someone who is elderly?

If so, you are considered a carer under the *WA Carers Recognition Act 2004*. You are recognised as a carer regardless of whether you live with the person you care for or not.

If you are a carer for a Housing Choices WA resident, you have the right to be informed and/or involved in the decisions we make that affect the person you care for.

To share tenancy information with you, we need the written consent of the tenant you care for. We will ask them to sign a Release of Information form so we can talk to you about tenancy matters relating to them.

TIP!

If you live with the tenant you care for, you may be eligible for a rent incentive for co-resident carers. Contact our Rent Review team to find out more.

Knowing your rights

As a carer, it is important that you understand your rights. There are state and federal laws that recognise the role of carers in the community. The *WA Carers Recognition Act 2004* includes a Carers Charter. This Charter describes how carers should be involved in decisions that affect them.

The Western Australian Carers Charter

1. Carers must be treated with respect and dignity.
2. The role of carers must be recognised by including carers in the assessment, planning, delivery and review of services that impact on them and the role of carers.
3. The views and needs of carers must be considered along with the views, needs and best interests of people receiving care when decisions are made that impact on carers and the role of carers.
4. Complaints made by carers in relation to services that impact on them, and the role of carers must be given due attention and consideration.

Be involved

As a carer of a Housing Choices WA resident, you have the right to be involved in the planning, delivery and review of services that affect you and the tenant you care for.

You have the right to give feedback, make complaints and appeal decisions and be involved in our engagement activities.

Are you a carer or do you have a carer? Please let us know!

Community resources

Looking for a service near you?

WA Connect is a free online directory of community service providers. Use their website to search for the kind of service you need, enter how far you are willing to travel and get a list of services tailored to your area.



Go to www.waconnect.org.au

Your local council

Knowing what local council / local government area you live in will help you get connected to your neighbourhood.

We recommend you visit your local library and local government website to see what events, activities and services are available to you.

Your local government area is:



Your bin days

You are responsible for making sure your waste and recycling bins are kept clean and are looked after. Some councils will charge you to replace a bin that is lost or damaged if left out too long.

Visit your local government website to find the waste, greens and recycling days in your area. Your local government website will also tell you when bulk rubbish collection is happening in your suburb.



Your watering days

Please note this information is subject to change by the Water Corporation, Aqwest and Busselton Water.

It is also your responsibility to follow sprinkler bans and watering days. The Water Corporation may fine you for not following bans or watering outside of your allocated days.



Last digit of street # or lot number	Watering Days
1	Wednesday & Saturday
2	Sunday & Thursday
3	Monday & Friday
4	Tuesday & Saturday
5	Sunday & Wednesday
6	Monday & Thursday
7	Tuesday & Friday
8	Wednesday & Saturday
9	Sunday & Thursday
0	Monday & Friday

Useful Contacts

Safety Contacts

Emergency

000

To contact Police, Fire or Ambulance in an emergency.

WA Police Assistance Line

131 444

For non-emergencies.

Crimestoppers

1800 333 000

To report a crime or suspicious activity anonymously.

Financial help & legal services

Emergency Relief and Food Access Service

1800 979 777

Can provide local food vouchers, bill payment help and more.

National Debt Helpline

1800 007 007

Speak to a financial counsellor who will give you free and confidential financial advice.

Circle Green Community Legal

6148 3636

Provides advice and advocacy on tenancy matters and human rights statewide.

Consumer Protection

1300 30 40 54

Get more information on your tenancy, consumer rights, scams and more.

Aboriginal Legal Service of Western Australia (ALS)

1800 019 900



Helplines

Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS)

131 450

National Relay Service (NRS) TTY users'

133 677

Speak and Listen users'

1300 555 727

Carers Gateway

1800 422 737

Provides free services and support for carers.

Mental Health Emergency Response Line (MHERL)

1300 555 788 (Metro)

1800 676 822 (Peel)

1800 552 002 (South-West)

13YARN

13 92 76

Crisis support line for Indigenous Australians.

HealthDirect

1800 022 222

Health professionals provide free 24-hour health advice.

Alcohol and Drug Support Line

1800 198 024

Women's Domestic Violence Helpline

1800 007 339

Men's Domestic Violence Helpline

1800 000 599



Family and domestic violence

This information explains how we can help if you are at risk of, or are experiencing, family and domestic violence.

You can talk to us

If safe to do so you can talk to us about your situation when we visit you for inspections. You can also call, email or arrange to meet our staff in the office or at an agreed safe place.

If you do not feel safe contacting us on your phone or computer, you can use computers at libraries, create a new email, Facebook and messaging accounts using an anonymous name or turn off the location feature on your mobile phone and Facebook page.

Referrals for support

We can give you information and refer you to agencies who can help with tenancy, legal and other matters. A support service can help you with safety planning, counselling, emergency accommodation, access to financial assistance or court support.

Your housing options

If you are a tenant who is affected by family violence there are laws to help you leave your tenancy quickly or stay more safely in your home.

Leaving your home

You can end your connection to your tenancy with as little as 7 days' notice using a Family Violence Termination Notice and a supporting document. If you have pets, the RSPCA has a free Pets in Crisis service to provide them with a temporary home.

Staying in your home

You can apply to court to get the perpetrator's name off the Tenancy Agreement. This means your tenancy will continue in your name only and the perpetrator has no rights as a tenant in your home.

Making your home more secure

If you are at risk of family violence, the law allows you to make security changes to your home without seeking our permission. You can change the locks without our permission, but you must give us a key within seven days. Other changes include installing security alarms and cameras, screens and shutters, exterior lights and locks on gates.

Reducing liability costs

If you end your tenancy using a Family Violence Termination Notice, you can apply to the court for an order that the person who committed the family violence must pay for rent arrears or damages to the property. This also includes any other security measures you have had to pay for.

Getting help

- **Circle Green** – free tenant advocate service **6148 3636**
- **1800 RESPECT** - phone counselling service for people affected by family violence **1800 737 732**
- **Crisis Care Helpline** – accommodation assistance, child safety **1800 199 008**
- **Centrelink** – you may be eligible for a crisis payment if you contact Services Australia within seven days of separation from the perpetrator.



Perth Metro Office


Level 7, 25 Rowe Avenue
Rivervale WA 6103
PO Box 105
Burswood WA 6100
P (08) 9430 0900

Peel Office

4 Stevenson Street
PO Box 1200
Mandurah WA 6210
P (08) 9534 0400


South West Office

1st Floor, 25 Victoria Street
PO Box 1539
Bunbury WA 6230
P (08) 9722 7200

 info-wa@hcau.org.au

Maintenance Hotline

 housingchoices.org.au

 1800 203 383

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