

Housing Choices Eligibility Criteria for Housing Establishment Funds (HEF) Assistance – VIC ONLY

Housing Establishment Funds is a grant program to provide financial assistance that aims to address and prevent homelessness for eligible clients with a once off crisis payment to a maximum of once every 12 months.

The funding can only be accessed towards:

- Assistance to maintain/ establish private rental housing
- Access emergency/ short term accommodation
- Removalists and storage costs

HEF comes from the Department of Family, Fairness and Housing and is jointly funded by the Victorian and Federal governments under the National Affordable Housing Agreement.

To process any application for funding from Housing Choices Australia HEF program, the client must be in receipt of either a Disability Support Pension or Carers Payment (Carers Allowance is not included) through Centrelink and be under the DFFH income and asset limit. If the client meets these criteria to allocate the funding, we initially require copies of the following documents:

- Most recent Centrelink Income Statement
- Pension Card
- Secondary ID (driver's license, Medicare card, bank card, etc.)

In addition, the following criteria need to be met, and the additional documents required are:

For Rent in Advance Housing Choices assists with 2 weeks portion of rent to a maximum of \$750:

- The client's portion of rent must not exceed 55% of their income.
- Client must be residing in a private rental. Community and Public housing are not eligible as they receive subsidized rent.
- The client's actual lease start date must be after time of application or within one week of start date.
- Letter of offer OR Lease Agreement
- Bank details of the housing provider (real estate, landlord, rooming house etc.)
- Not be eligible and not having received funding through PRAP in the last 12 months
- If the property is a rooming house, they need to be registered on the Public Register of rooming houses list.
<https://registers.consumer.vic.gov.au/rhosearch>
- If the client is not leasing through a real estate, we also require a copy of the owners' current rates notice.

For Rent Arrears Housing Choices assists with 2 weeks portion of rent to a maximum of \$750:

- The client's portion of rent must not exceed 55% of their income.
- Client must be in private rental. Community and Public housing are not eligible as they receive subsidized rent.
- Client must be at least 14 days in arrears, been issued a notice to vacate and the arrears cannot exceed \$5000.
- Letter of arrears from real estate Rooming House provider or Private Landlord
- Notice to Vacate
- Bank details of the housing provider (real estate, landlord, rooming house etc.)
- Not be eligible and not having received funding through PRAP in the last 12 months
- If the property is a rooming house, they need to be registered on the Public Register of rooming houses list.
- If the client is not leasing through a real estate, we also require a copy of the owners' current rates notice and proof of lodgment of the Notice to Vacate

For Removalists Costs or Goods from Storage maximum is \$750 (inc gst):

- An invoice from the removalists/ storage company
- For removalists clients must be at risk of homelessness or currently homeless, this will be discussed with the HEF officer at time of application
- Please note we only pay via invoice and process payments once a week.

For Emergency Accommodation maximum of \$750 (inc gst):

- An invoice from the accommodation provider
- Please note we only pay via invoice and process payments once a week.

All eligibility criteria must be met to receive assistance, until all documents are provided, we will not confirm eligibility. All payments will be made to the service or housing provider directly not to the client.

If you have any questions, please contact Housing Choices on 1300 312 447 or email hef@hcau.org.au and ask for the HEF officer.