



Allocations

Overview

This policy explains how we will allocate properties across a range of housing products and in programs in line with contractual, legal, and regulatory requirements.

Scope

This policy applies to all applicants who will be allocated to properties managed by St George Community Housing Limited (SGCH) and its subsidiaries (we, our, and us) across social housing, supported housing and fee-for-service products. Affordable and key worker housing allocations are not covered by this policy. Affordable and key worker housing allocations can be found in our Affordable Housing and Key Worker Housing policies.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure that all eligible applicants have equal access to housing
- Maintain a fair, needs based allocations process and non-judgemental attitude to all applicants
- Ensure that applicants are not discriminated against
- Facilitate an open and transparent allocations process
- Meet our contractual and funding commitments, as well as legal and regulatory requirements for all housing programs
- Coordinate access to social housing through Housing Pathways
- Use resources effectively and efficiently
- Fulfil our aim of housing at least 2 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people per month.

Housing Allocations – General Social Housing

General social housing will be allocated to eligible people from the NSW Housing Register in accordance with the Housing Pathways [Eligibility for Social Housing Policy](#) and [Social Housing Eligibility and Allocations Policy Supplement](#). The register includes new applicants for social housing and tenants who have been approved for transfer from both Homes NSW and participating social housing providers. Generally, allocations will be made according to priority, date of application and the suitability of the property available. On occasions we may provide out of turn housing to a person for another purpose, such as:

- to a customer receiving either the Homes NSW [Private Rental Subsidy](#) or [Rent Choice Assist Subsidy](#); or
- a non-standard allocation.

Non-standard allocations

In some circumstances, we may make non-standard allocations to fill vacant properties or to meet the needs of the individuals and/or local communities we serve.

A non-standard allocation occurs when an applicant is selected from the NSW Housing Register that may not have the highest priority.



We may make non-standard allocations in the following situations:

- To meet the needs of someone who is at serious risk or in imminent danger
- For an urgent transfer approved for escalation, including tenants being relocated for management purposes
- When an applicant has specific needs e.g. if they need a specific location or property.
- To meet internal or contracted strategic objectives
- To support the outcomes of support partners
- When we have a property that is difficult to allocate.

We may also make a non-standard allocation to proactively improve access to social housing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and increase the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that we house. We will aim to house at least 2 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people a month.

Reasons for non-standard allocations must be supported by appropriate evidence and sufficiently documented.

Non-standard allocations can only be approved by a Head of Region or the Executive Director – Customers, Services. Once a non-standard allocation is approved, a Team Leader can approve the allocation to a specific property.

Housing Registerable Persons

We will comply with the [Social Housing Assistance Policy for Registerable Persons](#), which outlines our role in the provision of housing for registerable persons.

Supported housing programs and transitional housing

When a tenant is living in an SGCH managed property and they receive formal support from one or more services to help them sustain their tenancy and live independently, this is considered supported housing.

Transitional housing is a short-term tenancy, generally up to 18 months, where tenants do not have to be on the NSW Housing Register and are instead nominated by a support partner with nominations rights.

For supported housing and transitional tenancies, our support partners will nominate potential tenants who are linked with support and have an active application on the NSW Housing Register (unless the program specifically exempts applicants from meeting Housing Pathways eligibility). We will meet our contractual obligations and associated policy and/or guidelines for the specific program.

Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA)

We manage a portfolio of SDA properties in partnership with licensed disability support partners. Each person living in these properties must be a current participant under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) to be approved to live in the relevant SDA building category and have sufficient SDA funds included in their support package. Allocations and vacancies will be managed in accordance with the service agreement between us and the support partner.



Properties with specific features

Modified properties

We will only allocate properties that have been modified for people with a disability to people with a demonstrated need for these features. The applicant or household member must have documentation from a medical professional or allied health care worker that supports their need for a property with modifications and the modifications must meet the needs of the applicant or their household.

Ground floor properties

We will only allocate ground floor properties or properties with level access to applicants or a household member with a demonstrated need for this feature. The applicant/household member must have documentation from a medical practitioner or allied health care worker which supports their need for a ground floor or level access property.

Properties with sustainability performance ratings

Tenants housed in properties that are designed to meet high performance sustainability ratings and/or have energy efficiency measures may not be allowed to make alterations to the property such as installing air conditioning or heating. These properties will only be allocated to suitable applicants. Applicants will be informed of any restrictions when they are offered and allocated the property.

Local allocation strategies

There may be occasions when we develop a local strategy for allocations in a particular area or estate. These strategies may be implemented for vacancies when:

- There is high concentration of social housing
- There is a high concentration of tenants with multiple health, social or economic issues
- There are potential or existing tenancy management issues
- There is a mismatch of supply and demand making the property hard to let
- We want to achieve a diverse, mixed, and cohesive broader community.

Our local allocation strategies will align with the Local Allocation Strategy Guidelines for Housing Pathways Providers. Local Allocation Strategies will be approved by the Executive Director, Customers - Services.

Properties with restrictions

Some properties may have restrictions on who can live there. For example, some properties may only be able to be allocated to older people.

We will ensure that we consider any relevant criteria when we are allocating properties that we manage.

In some circumstances, we may make a non-standard allocation to fill vacant properties that have certain planning or policy criteria. These allocations will be managed in accordance with the Non-Standard Allocations section in this Policy.

Entitlements for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander People

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are entitled to one extra bedroom (if available) to support them to meet their family or kinship responsibilities.



To be eligible for the extra bedroom, at least one member of the household must be an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person, and this person must provide confirmation of their Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent.

Confirmation of Aboriginality can be provided in the form of a letter from a Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) or an Aboriginal community organisation. For more information, see item 3 on the [Housing Pathways Evidence Requirements Information Sheet](#).

Where a person is unable to obtain confirmation from a LALC or Aboriginal Community organisation, they can complete a Statutory Declaration as evidence. The Statutory Declaration must include all of the following:

- details of the person’s Aboriginal family i.e. names and where they are from (land) and/or what they are doing about finding their family details/history, and
- a statement that they identify as an Aboriginal person (the term ‘Aboriginal’ includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people), and
- an explanation as to why confirmation from a LALC or Aboriginal community organisation could not be provided, and
- letters of support from Aboriginal community members, Aboriginal organisations (on the organisation’s letterhead) or government agencies that the person is known to. All documentation must be signed by Aboriginal people.

We may request additional information or seek further clarification regarding information provided in the Statutory Declaration.

Bedroom Entitlements

We will offer and allocate properties that are suitable for the applicant and their current household members. We will allocate properties to people based on the minimum bedroom entitlements and allocating bedrooms for children shown in the tables below. The Head Of Region, Customers, may approve other allocations at their discretion.

Minimum bedroom entitlements

Household composition	Minimum bedrooms
Single person	Studio/One bedroom
Couple	One bedroom
Single person or couple with one other household member	Two bedrooms
Single person or couple with two other household members	Two bedrooms
Single person or couple with three other household members	Three bedrooms
Single person or couple with four other household members	Three bedrooms
Single person or couple with five or more other household members	Four bedrooms



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households where one or more household members are confirmed to be an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person	One bedroom in addition to the minimum bedroom entitlements for the household.
---	--

Note: We don't provide additional bedrooms for specific cultural groups unless otherwise stated in this Policy. We will consider requests for additional bedrooms due to ongoing medical reasons or disability on a case-by-case basis. These requests must be supported by appropriate medical documentation.

Allocating bedrooms for children

Situation	How we allocate bedrooms
Children 18 years of age or older	Children 18 years of age or older are considered adults when determining the bedroom entitlement
Children of the same sex who are under 18 years of age	Children of the same sex who are under 18 years of age are expected to share a bedroom
Male and female children who are under 18 years of age	Male and female children are expected to share a bedroom until one of the children reaches 10 years of age
Children under the age of 2	We will not allocate an additional bedroom for a child under the age of 2
Children who may need a separate bedroom in 2-3 years' time	We will, where possible, consider the current circumstances and future needs of children when allocating a property. Decisions regarding future needs will be made on a case-by-case basis according to the size and type of housing that is available in the area.
Children with special needs	We will allocate an additional bedroom where the tenant/applicant can demonstrate a need for same sex children over the age of 10 or children under the age of 10 to have separate bedrooms
Shared custody/access visits from children	We will consider the children to be part of the household if they stay for 3 days or more per week. Formal documented evidence is required.

Offers of housing

Applicants, including transfer applicants, will be offered 2 reasonable offers of housing. Allocations are made based on information provided by the applicant. If there is evidence of false or misleading information provided by the applicant, we may withdraw the offer of housing. When allocating properties, we will consider the information the applicant has provided and the property elements to make sure that the property is suitable. Through this process, we will ensure that:

- The property being offered is appropriate for the applicant's current household needs
- The property won't be under or over-occupied



-
- The property location matches the applicant's needs
 - The property type will not have a negative impact on an applicant's health or disability
 - It is not envisaged that the neighbourhood will have a negative impact on the new tenant's wellbeing, and the new tenant will not have a negative impact on the neighbours
 - We sufficiently document any reasons for not allocating a property to an individual and we review the information before making a final decision.

An offer is not reasonable if the property:

- Has a negative impact a medical condition or disability of an applicant or their household or makes it harder for them to stabilise or improve their condition
- Places the applicant or their household in an area that will put them at risk
- Makes it difficult for the applicants or their household to remain together.

If an applicant does not accept an offer:

- We will send a letter requesting the reasons for the rejection of the property and for any supporting documentation to be provided to us within the 28-day timeframe
- We will consider the information provided by the applicant and decide whether the applicant's response is:
 - A rejection of an offer that is considered to be reasonable, this will count towards the number of offers an applicant is entitled to receive; or
 - A rejection of an offer considered to be unreasonable, which should be withdrawn as the offer did not meet their needs; and
- We will respond in writing to the applicant within 7 days advising the whether the offer is considered reasonable or that will be withdrawn.
- Rejections of offers will be managed in accordance with SGCH and Homes NSW's [Matching and Offering a Property to a Client Policy](#).

The applicant can expect us to:

- Confirm the applicant's current situation to make sure that the offer meets the applicant's needs
- Inform them about information and documentation they need to provide before any offers are made, especially if the applicant specifies a particular type of dwelling or location
- Determine if the applicant has any support needs and decide if offer is appropriate
- Promote stable communities and sustainable tenancies
- Offer the property to the applicant/tenant once a suitable match has been identified
- Explain the offer policy, the options available and what will happen when an offer is accepted, rejected, or withdrawn along with the timeframes for responding to offers of housing
- Make up to two offers of reasonable of housing
- Provide the applicant 24 hours to consider an offer
- Encourage the applicant to accept the first reasonable offer and explain what happens if the offer is rejected



- Understand that an applicant has a right to reject an offer of housing without being penalised and to appeal an offer if they think it wasn't reasonable
- Consider requests for modifications to properties as required and in accordance with our Modifications Policy
- Disclose any known material facts when offering a property as required by the *Residential Tenancies Act 2010 (NSW)*
- Withdraw an offer if it is not reasonable.

Criteria for accepting, rejecting and withdrawing housing offers and suspending applications

Situation	Evidence
Offer accepted	The person has accepted the property and must sign a tenancy agreement within 3 business days.
Offer is rejected and is considered to be a reasonable offer	<p>The offer of housing meets the matching requirements, and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no grounds for suspending the person's NSW housing register application. • The person did not provide any new, substantiated information to us about their needs within the required timeframe. • The person has declined the offer for a reason that we consider to be a personal preference because it does not directly impact on the person's housing needs. Common examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Wanting a brick property ○ Wanting floorboards or tiles or vinyl instead of carpet ○ Wanting gas rather than electricity ○ Not liking the neighbourhood ○ Not liking the cladding, internal or external layout, design, or colour scheme of the property ○ Wanting a bath rather than a shower ○ Wanting to live in a different suburb (where the need for a particular suburb has not been established) ○ Wanting to live on a specific street ○ Wanting to live near shops, family, school, church (where the need for a specific location has not been established) ○ Wanting a different type of property (house, townhouse, villa or unit) ○ Wanting to live on a specific floor of a block of units ○ Only wanting to live in a senior communities property ○ Wanting us to match them to a property based on their pets needs



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The person has declined the offer due to not liking, or being unwilling to accept, our requirements or the requirements of the type of the housing program, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The type or length of lease we offer ○ The need to pay rent in advance and/or bond at sign up (if relevant) ○ Any additional terms attached to the Residential Tenancy Agreement.
Offer withdrawn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The person declined the offered property and we have decided that the person’s decision is valid because, based on information provided by the person, the property did not meet their needs. Such information may include a letter and supporting documents explaining their reasons for declining an offer and supplying relevant supporting documentation such as a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Medical Assessment Form ○ Letter from their doctor or health care provider ○ Letter from their support provider ○ Letter from their employer • We offered the property, but it is now required for to house an applicant with a more urgent need • We matched the applicant to the property but did not provide the details to the person because the person’s needs or circumstances had changed • We matched the person to the property but did not provide the details to the person because they did not meet the eligibility criteria • The person decided not to accept an offer of a bedsitter, high rise or senior communities property. We will change Pathways records to indicate that the person should not be offered this type of property again. • The person rejected the offer because of material facts about the property that we disclosed under the <i>Residential Tenancies Act 2010 (NSW)</i>. Note: Only material facts relating to Residential Tenancies Regulation 2019 clause 8(1)(a) - (e) and (j) will be considered valid for withdrawal of an offer. Rejection of offers based on material facts relating to clause 8(1)(f)-(i) will be considered on case-by-case basis by the Head of Region. • The person rejected the offer because there has been a death by suicide in the property
Application suspended	<p>The person provided information demonstrating that they are temporarily in a situation where they are unable to accept an offer due to circumstances beyond their control. These</p>



	<p>circumstances include, but are not limited to, situations where the person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is experiencing illness or is in hospital• Is overseas or on holidays• Cannot terminate a residential tenancy agreement• Is in prison. <p>The person is responsible providing advising us when their situation changes, so that we can unsuspend their application.</p>
--	---

Once a decision is made, the offer and the outcome will be updated on the NSW Housing Register.

Offers of alternative premises

If we make 2 reasonable offers of alternative housing (which meet the requirements for offers of housing outlined above) and if the applicant declines these offers, we may take action to end their tenancy under Section 148 of the *Residential Tenancies Act 2010 (NSW)* (the alternative premises ground). See our End of Tenancy Policy for more information.

Appeals

If you think the wrong decision has been made, you can talk to the person who made the decision or another team member.

If you are still not satisfied, you can ask for the decision to be reviewed.

Customers may lodge an appeal about a decision relating to their eligibility or housing assistance that is provided. Refer to our Appeals, Complaints and Feedback Policy for further information.

Relevant legislation, regulations or standards

- [Residential Tenancies Act 2010 \(NSW\)](#)
- [Residential Tenancies Regulation 2019 \(NSW\)](#)
- [State Environmental Planning Policy \(Housing for Seniors or People with a Disability\) 2004 \(SEPP\)](#)
- [Local Allocation Strategy Guidelines](#)

Policy information

Version:	24
Approved:	June 2024
Reviewed:	June 2024
Review frequency:	24 months
Responsible team/position:	Executive Director, Customers – Services