

Allocations

Overview

This policy explains how we will allocate properties in line with contractual, legal, and regulatory requirements.

Scope

This policy applies to SGCH Homes Victoria and its subsidiaries (we, our and us) across social 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 the Victorian Housing Register
- Use resources effectively and efficiently
- Consider human rights when making an allocation

Housing allocations

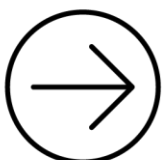
The Victorian Housing Register (VHR) is the central system for applying for social housing in Victoria, for both public housing and community housing. We are a participating agency of the Victorian Housing Register (VHR). When one of our social housing properties becomes available, we will use the VHR to allocate a new renter. We may offer social housing to new applicants or renters approved for transfers. This could include transfers from public housing, another community housing agency, or our properties.

Social housing is allocated to eligible people from the VHR following the [Eligibility Framework and Operational Guidelines](#) set by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH). Generally, we allocate housing based on priority, the date of application, and the suitability of the available property.

Properties with specific features

Modified properties

We will only allocate properties that have been modified for people with 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

Renters living 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.

These strategies may be implemented for vacancies when:

- There is a high concentration of social housing
- There is a high concentration of renters 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

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.

Former renters

A former renter is someone who previously lived in a property provided by us. We will review an applicant's tenancy history with us to determine any conditions that the applicant needs to meet before we will make an offer of housing assistance. Former renters can expect us to:

- Explain any conditions that they need to meet
- Comply with laws and relevant policies relating to payment of debts of former renters

Former renters are expected to repay the debt in full or make consistent repayments over the course of 6 months to reduce the debt before they are offered housing with us.



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 relevant Head Of 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 approved on the Priority Access list, 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 number of bedrooms is matched in accordance with our housing size guidelines
- The area requested is in the preferred area and meets a household's safety and access needs. The property may be in any suburb within the preferred area unless there is a location exemption. For example, a suburb within a preferred area is exempt due to domestic and family violence
- The property meets the household's assessed need, for example, ongoing medical need or disability modification
- The household's circumstances that affect their housing outcome remains the same
- The property address has been provided to the applicant
- The household has been advised of all the mandatory disclosure requirements under the *Residential Tenancies Act (Vic)* and has not advised that given what has been disclosed they are not willing to accept the property
- The applicant has been given the opportunity to view the property internally and externally which allows them to make an informed decision
- The applicant was given until the close of business the next working day to make a decision about the offer

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 declines two reasonable offers of housing, their priority status will be removed and the application is placed on the Register of Interest. If an applicant has Register of Interest status they will be made a maximum of two reasonable offers of housing before being removed from the VHR.

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 (Vic)*
- 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 rental agreement within 3 business days.
Offer is rejected and is considered to be	The offer of housing meets the matching requirements, and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no grounds for suspending the person’s VHR application.



<p>a reasonable offer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • 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 rental agreement.
<p>Offer withdrawn</p>	<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 ○ An Intervention Order due to domestic and family violence ● We offered the property, but it is now required 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 VHR 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 1997 (Vic)</i> and the <i>Residential Tenancies Regulations 2021 (Vic)</i> ● The person rejected the offer because there has been a death by suicide in the property ● An applicant chooses community housing only and they decline the offer because they only want to be housed by a particular social housing organisation, for example Aboriginal Housing Victoria.
<p>Application suspended</p>	<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 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 rental agreement ● Is in prison. <p>The person is responsible for 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 VHR.

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 1997 \(Vic\)](#)
- [Residential Tenancies Regulations 2021 \(Vic\)](#)
- [Housing Act 1983 \(Vic\): Performance Standard 1 \(Tenant and housing services\)](#)
- [Victorian Housing Register: Policy Framework and Operational Guidelines](#)
- [Victorian Housing Register: Offer of Housing Eligibility Guidelines](#)

Related documents/resources

- Policy: Appeals, Complaints and Feedback

Policy information

Version:	1
Approved:	February 2025
Reviewed:	Not applicable
Review frequency:	24 months
Responsible team/position:	Customers - Services
Transparency and accessibility	Available on our website