

Eligibility and Allocations Policy

Version No:	2	Date Approved:	8 January 2021
Next Review Date:	January 2023	Policy Owner:	CEO

Policy context: This policy relates to	
Standards or other external requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NRSCH Regulatory Framework
Legislation or other requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Residential Tenancies Act (NT) 1999• Financial Management Act (NT) 1995• Housing Act (NT) 1982• Limitation Act (NT) 1981
Contractual obligations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contractual agreements with funding bodies• Residential Tenancy Agreements with tenants

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1. Overview

This policy outlines how Community Housing Central Australia (CHCA) manages housing applications, eligibility and allocation of housing.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all housing managed by CHCA with exception of the Town Camps Housing.

3. Guiding principles

We will:

- Meet our legal and contractual duties in housing allocations.
- Have a fair and transparent housing application and allocation process.
- Provide applicants with all information and required documentation to apply for housing.

4. Housing Eligibility

We manage housing across multiple different programs that include the following housing types – social housing, affordable housing and Town Camp housing.

All housing applicants must be an Australian citizen or resident, currently reside in the Northern Territory and not own any property assets.

To be eligible for a property with CHCA, applicants must meet the initial income and demographic criteria shown below.

4.1. Social Housing

- Applicants must be in receipt of an income no greater than Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities [income limits](#). These limits are updated annually.
- Priority is given to Aboriginal people and people who reside in Central Australia that may need to reside in Alice Springs due to medical, social or family reasons.
- Priority is given to people who are homeless, at risk of homelessness or living in overcrowded or unsuitable accommodation.

4.2. Affordable Housing

- Applicants must be in receipt of an income which meets the current National Rental Affordability Scheme household [income limits](#).
- Applicants must also earn sufficient income to ensure they are paying no more than 35% of their income on rent.
- Priority is given to working Aboriginal people who are residing in Alice Springs.

4.3. Town Camp Housing

- Applicants for Town Camps must meet the current Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities eligibility criteria.
- Applicants must be of Aboriginal descent and have familiar, cultural and/or language group connections to the relevant Town Camps.
- Housing allocations are made by the relevant Town Camp Housing Reference Group and priority is given to people who are homeless, at risk of homelessness or living in overcrowded or unsuitable accommodation and that have familiar, cultural and/or language group connections.

4.4. Program specific eligibility requirements

In addition to the eligibility criteria above, CHCA also has multiple program-based eligibility criteria for the following programs:

- Renal Accommodation Program
- Seniors Housing Program
- My Place Private Rental Subsidy Program
- 34 South Terrace Transitional Housing Program
- Mental Health Association Central Australia Housing Program

CHCA will provide applicants with information on specific program eligibility criteria at the time of application.

4.5. Continuing Eligibility

Once housed, we will assess each tenant's household income and rent on an annual basis. Tenant's must continue to meet the eligibility criteria set above to remain in housing. See the Rent policy for more details on this process.

5. Applying for Housing

5.1. Applications

Housing applicants are required to complete the CHCA Housing Applications and provide the following in full:

- Details of each household member included in the application including children.
- Proof of income for each adult household member.
- Proof of identification for each adult.
- Other eligibility information where required.
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- CHCA will only assess fully completed applications. When an application has not been completed in full, the applicant will be advised to provide the additionally required documentation within a reasonable period. If this information is not provided, CHCA may return the incomplete application or destroy it.

5.2. Assessment

We will assess all applications to determine if the applicant is eligible for one or more housing programs.

If the applicant is eligible, they will be placed on the CHCA waiting list and receive a letter or email confirming this.

If an applicant is deemed not eligible, they will also be advised in writing. CHCA may recommend the applicant contact other housing providers to apply for housing. Applicants are welcome to appeal this decision using CHCA's Appeal Policy.

In some circumstances for specific housing programs, housing applications may not be put on the waitlist if there are no further vacancies. In this case the applicant will be advised in writing.

5.3. Housing Waitlist

When a housing application is successful it will be added to CHCA's housing waitlist. The housing waiting list is reviewed periodically and when a vacancy arises.

CHCA will contact applicants periodically requesting the applicant confirms their continued need for housing with CHCA. Applicants who do not respond may have their

housing application archived. Any applicant who subsequently recontacts can have their archived application re-instated.

6. Housing Allocations

Housing allocations are made when a property is available for rent.

6.1. Vacancy assessment

When a vacancy arises a shortlist of eligible applicants for the property will be assessed considering the following:

- Size of the household and property size and location suitability
- Current housing situation and urgency of housing need
- Length of time on the waiting list
- Existing support needs and requirements
- Program specific eligibility requirements

A preferred housing applicant will be identified and offered an interview.

In some specific programs, external service providers may have direct nomination rights to a property.

6.2. Interview and Property viewing

CHCA will conduct an interview with the selected applicant to confirm if there are any changes in circumstances that would change their eligibility such as their household size, income types and support requirements.

Where there has been no major change, CHCA will arrange a property viewing with the applicant within 3 business days. If the applicant does not attend a viewing within this timeframe, CHCA may withdraw the offer of a viewing and discontinue the allocation.

6.3. Offer and acceptance

Following the property viewing, the applicant must confirm acceptance of the property within 1 business day.

If the applicant accepts the housing offer, CHCA will provide a formal letter confirming:

- The rent and bond payable,
- The proposed start date of tenancy, and
- A lease signing time.
- The applicant is expected to sign the lease within 5 business days of acceptance.
- If an applicant does not accept the housing offer, CHCA will confirm this in writing. If the applicant has rejected the offer on reasonable grounds, a second housing offer may be made if there is another suitable property available. This will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

7. Property Size Entitlement

We will offer and allocate properties that are suitable for the person 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 Operations Manager 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

Notes: We will consider requests for additional bedrooms due to ongoing medical reasons or disability on a case by case basis or cultural reasons. These requests must be supported by appropriate documentation and evidence.

CHCA may make a housing offer that does not meet this entitlement with the agreement of the applicant.

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

8. Property Transfers

Tenants wishing to transfer properties must complete the CHCA Tenant Transfer Request Form detailing the reasons for transfer and providing supplementary information when requested. CHCA will assess each request for transfer on a case-by-case basis however, due to the small number of properties available it may not be possible.

If CHCA is unable to make an alternative housing offer, we will support our tenant to seek alternate housing options within Alice Springs.

If a tenant has to move because of domestic and family violence or conflict, all reasonable efforts will be taken to find alternative accommodation. If an alternative property is not available their application will remain active on the housing waitlist. For further information refer to our Domestic and Family Violence Policy.

9. Complaints and/or appeals

If a client is not satisfied with either a decision or action of CHCA, they can access CHCA's complaints and/or appeals processes. For further information, please refer to the Complaints and/or Appeals policies.

10. Referenced policies / documents

- End of Tenancy
- Appeals
- Rent