

# Start of Tenancy Policy

Version No:	2	Date Approved:	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"><li>• NRSCH Regulatory Framework</li></ul>
Legislation or other requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Residential Tenancies Act (NT) 1999</li></ul>
Contractual obligations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Contractual agreements with funding bodies</li><li>• Residential Tenancy Agreements with tenants</li></ul>

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## 1. Overview

This policy explains how we will start tenancies.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all tenancies managed by CHCA with exception of Town Camp Housing.

## 3. Guiding principles

We will start tenancies in a way that:

- Creates a positive and sustainable relationship with our tenant.
- Makes sure that tenants are told about their legal rights and responsibilities as a tenant and makes them aware of our policies.
- Makes sure that we meet our legal and policy requirements when we create a tenancy.

## 4. Signing a Tenancy Agreement

We will sign a Residential Tenancy Agreement for each tenancy. Before signing, we will explain the agreement and the rights and responsibilities such as:

The tenant must:

- Pay the rent on time and in the way outlined in the tenancy agreement.
- Keep the property clean.
- Notify the landlord of any maintenance or repairs required.
- Comply with the tenancy agreement.
- Advise CHCA when there is a change in household income.

We will:

- Ensure the property is safe to live in and is in a good state of repair.
- Ensure the property is reasonably secure.
- Maintain all fixtures and fittings.
- Observe the tenant's right to 'quiet enjoyment' of the property.
- Only enter the property for maintenance or inspection purposes and that we will give the required amount of notice.

After a person signs a Residential Tenancy Agreement, we will give them a copy of their tenancy agreement, and ingoing property condition report and a copy of various [Tenancy Factsheets](#) (published by Consumer Affairs NT). We will also give the tenant other information that relates to their tenancy.

### **Program eligibility requirements**

For some housing programs, it may a condition of the tenancy that the tenant continue to receive support during their tenancy or participate in the program. Where this is the case, we may ask the tenant to sign a participation agreement and we will explain any requirements to the tenant and their support workers before the tenancy starts.

Rent will start on the first day of the tenancy agreement.

## 5. Length of lease

Generally, when we sign a tenancy agreement with a tenant, the length of the lease will usually be 3 months. The agreement will also include a clause which allows the tenancy

to continue at the end of the 13 weeks if the tenancy isn't legally ended by either the tenant or us.

For some housing programs, such as transitional housing, we may sign a fixed term agreement with the tenant and review the tenancy before the end of the fixed term. We may keep signing fixed term leases during the period of the housing program until the tenant is able to move to independent living or is no longer eligible for the program.

## **6. Rent**

The tenancy agreement will show the market rent for the lease. Where applicable, the subsidised rent may also be shown and we will provide the rent assessment and explanation letter to the tenant. Refer to our Rent policy for more information about rent.

New tenants must pay 2 weeks rent on the day they sign their tenancy agreement. If a tenant cannot pay 2 weeks rent in advance, the Operations Manager may decide whether to start a tenancy. These decisions are made at our discretion and on a case by case basis. If a tenancy is started without the tenant paying two weeks rent in advance, we will enter into a repayment agreement with the tenant so that they do not remain in arrears.

### **Special Circumstances**

If an applicant is being housed in social housing and is currently a rough sleeper or in serious financial hardship at the time of allocation, we may charge them a nominal rent of \$20 per week for up to the first 3 weeks of the tenancy. This may be approved by the Operations Manager and is assessed on a case-by-case basis and other support options will be explored in line with our Financial Hardship policy.

Tenants can pay their rent either weekly or fortnightly as long as rent is paid on time. We will not ask a tenant to pay more than 2 weeks rent in advance.

## **7. Referenced policies**

- Rent
- Financial Hardship