

# Social and Affordable Housing Fund

## Overview

This policy explains how we will manage properties which are funded under the Social and Affordable Housing Fund (SAHF) and meet our responsibilities under law, other rules and our agreements. SAHF properties can be affordable or social housing.

## Scope

This policy applies to St George Community Housing Limited and its subsidiaries (**we, our and us**).

## Definitions

### **Affordable Housing**

Affordable Housing is housing for people on a very low, low or moderate income, who earn at least some of their income from regular paid employment. Affordable housing is managed under the NSW Affordable Housing Guidelines.

### **Market rent**

Market rent is the rent that would be charged for the property if the rent wasn't discounted.

### **Social Housing**

Social Housing is housing for people who meet the eligibility rules of the NSW Community Housing Eligibility Policy and the NSW Community Housing Access Policy.

## Guiding principles

We will follow all relevant laws, policies, guidelines, and agreements, when managing SAHF properties.

## Eligibility

Social and affordable housing have different rules that applicants need to meet to be eligible.

The eligibility rules for social housing are outlined in our [Eligibility](#) policy, while the eligibility rules for affordable housing are outlined in our [Affordable Housing](#) policy.

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## Allocations and property offers

We will allocate and offer properties to people using our Allocations policy for social housing and our Affordable Housing policy and Allocation Plan for Affordable Housing.

## Tenancies

For affordable housing tenancies, people will be offered 12 month leases which will be renewed as long as the tenant is still eligible.

For social housing tenancies, people will either be offered a 2 or 5 year fixed term lease or continuous lease, depending on their household circumstances.

### 2 year fixed term leases

We will offer 2 year leases to people:

- with transitional or temporary support needs, whose support needs are likely to decrease in the next 2 years, or
- whose support needs over the next 5 years are unclear because the household's financial circumstances may improve.

This includes people who:

- are eligible for housing but don't meet the criteria for any of the other leases explained in this section, or
- are not eligible for a lease extension but can demonstrate a severe and continuing need to stay in social housing.

### 5 year fixed term leases

We will offer 5 year leases to people who will probably still have some housing and support needs over the next 5 years. This include where:

- The person's household includes at least one child under 10 years of age, or
- The person or an approved household member:
  - Receives a Disability Support Pension, Age Service Pension, Invalidity Service Pension, Partner Service Pension, Carer Payment, Carer Allowance or Mobility Allowance, or
  - Is represented by the NSW Trustee and Guardian, or
  - Is represented by the NSW Public Guardian, or
  - Is participating in the Brain Injury Rehabilitation Program, or
  - Is participating in a Transition to Work Program or Community Participation Program, or
  - Is aged 16-18 years leaving the care of Community Services, Out-Of-Home Care, or juvenile detention and receiving the Youth Disability Supplement, or

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- Has a disability which is permanent, or likely to be permanent, medical condition or permanent injury restricting everyday activities, but does not receive support from a listed program, and
  - Can show that because of their condition, they would experience significant hardship if they were given a 2 year fixed term lease (instead of a 5 year fixed term lease).

### Continuous leases

We will offer continuous leases to people who have ongoing housing and high support needs which are unlikely to decrease. This include where the person or an approved household member:

- Is 65 years of age or over, or
- Is an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person 45 years of age or over, or
- Receives support from a person receiving the Centrelink Carer Payment or Carer Allowance (this carer does not need to live in the property), or
- Receives support from one of the following programs:
  - Attendant Care Program
  - ADAHPT (Aids, Dementia & HIV Psychiatry Team) Service
  - Children's Home Ventilation Program
  - High Needs Pool (Care Program)
  - HASI 1, 3 or 4 (Housing and Accommodation Support Initiative 1, 3 or 4)
  - Lifetime Care and Support
  - Community Aged Care Package
  - EACH (Extended Aged Care at Home) Package
  - Ventilator Dependent Quadriplegic Program

### Transition Readiness Assessments

Each year, we will assess each tenant's ability to move from social housing into affordable housing, or from affordable housing rents to market rent. The Transition Readiness Assessment will consider the tenants rent, income, eligibility and other information about the tenant and their household including the Needs Assessment.

Where a tenant is assessed as being no longer eligible for social or affordable housing, we will assess tenant's ability to transition to alternate accommodation.

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## Rent

We will charge tenants rent using our Rent policy for social housing and our Affordable Housing policy for affordable housing.

We will review rents within 12 months of signing the tenancy agreement, within 12 months of a Transition Readiness Assessment or as required by our policies, whichever comes first.

If we assess a social housing tenant's rent and they aren't eligible for social housing, we will transition the tenant to affordable housing, alternative accommodation or charge the tenant market rent while they remain a social housing tenant.

If we assess an affordable housing tenant's rent and they don't meet the maximum eligibility for affordable housing, we will start the process to end the tenancy while supporting the tenant to transition to alternative accommodation.

## Needs Assessments and Needs Reassessments

We will assess the needs of each person in the household within 6 weeks of the tenant signing a tenancy agreement or within 6 weeks of the person being approved as an authorised household member. Household members aged 12 years and over will have an individual need assessment.

We will reassess the needs of each person in the household every 12 months or as specified in the previous assessment.

If a tenant or household member accepts support, we will use the information that we get from this assessment to prepare a support services plan for the person.

## Support Services Plans

If a tenant or household member accepts support, we will prepare a support services plan with the tenant and household members within 12 weeks of signing a lease with the tenant or the person being approved as an additional occupant.

We will update support services plans within six weeks:

- after we do a needs assessment/reassessment
- when the tenant or household member gives us new information
- if there are any unforeseen circumstances that affect the tenant or household member

## Tenant Survey

We will carry out an annual survey of tenants and household members to measure their satisfaction with their support coordination services and to check their progress towards their goals and outcomes. The survey will be offered to all tenants and household members aged

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16 years or older. Household members under the age of 16 can choose to participate in the survey.

The results of the survey will be reported to Family and Community Services (FACS) to meet our reporting requirements.

## Tenant Satisfaction Survey

We will carry out an annual survey of all tenants to measure their satisfaction with their housing and our asset and tenancy management services.

The results of the survey will be reported to FACS to meet our reporting requirements.

## End of Tenancy Reports

We will collect information for reporting purposes from each tenant and household member when a tenancy ends (before allocating the property to a new tenant) or within 6 weeks when a person leaves the dwelling without the tenancy ending.

The information we collect will include the reasons the tenant or household member left the property and any changes to the circumstances of the tenant or household member since their last needs assessment such as:

- employment
- education
- level of education attainment
- safety and risk
- any other relevant information about them leaving

## Succession of tenancy

For details about succession, please refer to our Succession of Tenancy policy.

If a person applies for succession of tenancy for a SAHF property and is approved, they will be offered either a 2 year, 5 year or continuous lease as outlined in the [‘Tenancies’](#) section above.

## Privacy

We will meet our duties under [privacy laws](#) and our [Privacy policy](#) when collecting, holding, using and disclosing personal information.

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## Appeals

Applicants and tenants may be able to appeal decisions that we make. Refer to our Appeals policy for more information.

## Relevant laws, regulations and standards

- [Residential Tenancies Act 2010 \(NSW\)](#)
- [Privacy Act 1988 \(Cth\)](#)

## Related Documents/Resources

- [Policy: Eligibility](#)
- [Policy: Affordable Housing](#)
- [Policy: Privacy](#)

## Policy information

<b>Version:</b>	2
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<b>Amended:</b>	February 2019
<b>Reviewed:</b>	February 2019
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<b>Responsible team/position:</b>	General Manager, Customers and Communities