

2.2.8.3 Centrelink Confirmation eService



Preamble

Women's Housing Company (WHC) is a community housing association as part of the social housing system in NSW. WHC provides long term housing for single women and medium term housing through support partnerships.

Women's Housing Company aims to improve our services to tenants and applicants at all times.

One of the operational requirements consists of 6-monthly income reviews. During these periods, tenants are requested to provide income statements verifying their income, investments and assets to a specified date. Tenants unable to provide the information to such deadline are at risk of being charged with market rent until the income information can be verified.

The vast majority of all tenants with WHC are in receipt of some form of Centrelink income support payment, and a large number of these are elderly.

Centrelink offers a service, Centrelink Confirmation eService, which permits organisations to obtain income statements on behalf of clients as long as written authority to do so is provided. This authority can be withdrawn at any time by the client.

Women's Housing Company is registered as a participating agency for this service to minimise stress and inconvenience for tenants. Applicants and tenants wishing to use the service will no longer need to go to their Centrelink office to obtain their income statements.

POLICY

Women's Housing Company is the registered Participant of the Centrelink Confirmation eService.

Three staff members are identified as users for the service. Only they will have access to the data. These staff members are;

- Admin Worker
- Financial Manager
- Senior Housing Manager

These staff members are provided with a copy of Centrelink's security requirements and sign a guarantee to abide by these. The names of these staff and any future changes are notified to Centrelink.

Income information from Centrelink is only obtained for tenants or applicants who have provided written, informed consent.

Consent form received by fax only are not accepted by WHC.

PROCEDURE

Women's Housing Company offers new tenants and continuing tenants to make use of Centrelink' Confirmation eService. This is done by outlining the requirements of income verification and the advantage of applicants/tenants not needing to go to Centrelink at least twice a year, in some cases more often.

Women's Housing Company explains the service to the applicant/tenant including their right to withdraw this authority in writing at any point in time with Centrelink and/or Women's Housing Company.

Women's Housing Company guarantees the applicant/tenant that the income information obtained will strictly be for the purpose of assessing rent.

Applicants/tenants are informed that Women's Housing Company is bound by Centrelink's security requirements and privacy legislation (Privacy Act 1988).

Applicants/tenants are informed that Women's Housing Company has three designated staff members with authority to obtain the income verification from Centrelink's database.

If the applicant/tenant wishes to make use of Centrelink's Confirmation eService, a Centrelink Customer Consent Record must be signed by the applicant/tenant.

Once consent has been provided to Women's Housing Company to obtain income statements for the applicant/tenant there is no longer a requirement for the applicant/tenant to respond to the income reviews with respect to the requirement of providing income verification. This is providing the tenant receives no other income from another source in addition to the Centrelink income support.

When a signed consent form is received at the WHC office, the admin team is required to date stamp the form.

The consent then needs to be entered on TMS by the administration worker. The admin worker sends an email notification to the relevant housing worker informing them that the consent has been received and entered.

Date developed: 15/5/06

Date/s policy was ratified and/or changed by Board: 23/5/06; 28/8/07

Note: Procedures are designed to guide the implementation of a policy and will be updated on a regular basis as part of ongoing best practice service improvement.