

## 2.3.1.2 Mutual Exchange



### 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.

WHC guarantees the following of all landlord responsibilities as stated in the NSW Residential Tenancy Act 1987.

WHC recognises that applicants and tenants needs differ greatly based on past experiences, independent living skills, cultural and language backgrounds, age, health which are all factors contributing to differing expectations. As a social housing provider we are committed to provide best quality services at all times. It is recognised that needs and expectations may not always be possible to meet by WHC.

WHC pursues positive networking and cooperation with other housing associations and support service providers to best meet the needs of our applicants and tenants.

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### POLICY

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A **Mutual Exchange** refers to an agreement between Women's Housing Company and another community housing association for one of these associations to take on a tenancy from the other in exchange for a vacant unit.

A mutual exchange may be pursued in the event of:

- The tenant has become ineligible for housing with WHC
- Irreconcilable conflict between WHC and the tenant
- To address the issue of under- and over-occupancy
- Neighbourhood conflict

A mutual exchange can be a one-off agreement or a formal agreement between one or more housing associations.

There is no obligation for a housing association to enter into a mutual exchange unless a formal agreement to such effect exists. The success of a mutual exchange relies on the housing association having access to a vacant property. This may be a lengthy process and no timeframes can be given.

If two existing WHC tenants agree on a swap of their WHC properties, WHC will agree to such a swap providing that the whole process is worked through by the tenants without any responsibilities for WHC. WHC would treat such a swap by transferring the properties to the new, respective tenants.

A new tenancy agreement and condition report must be issued per tenant.

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**PROCEDURE**

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Housing workers will identify situations in which a mutual exchange could be beneficial, to the Senior Housing Manager (SHM).

The SHM will raise the possibility with the relevant tenant to ascertain their interest in the possibility of a mutual exchange. It needs to be highlighted that Women's Housing Company is not the final decision maker thus cannot guarantee the success or timeframe for such an exchange.

If the tenant is interested to pursue this option, they are required to fill in a consent form allowing information between the identified housing associations to be exchanged to facilitate the negotiations.

The SHM will conduct the negotiations with the other housing association.

If a housing association agrees to take over the identified tenancy, a property in exchange, will be handed over to the other association. It is the responsibility of the SHM to develop systems for the monitoring of such exchanges.

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**Date developed: 1/1/06**

**Date/s policy was ratified and/or changed by Board: 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.