

# Offers of Social Housing

## Social Housing Offers

The Women's Housing Company (WHC) provides social housing for women on limited incomes.

When a vacancy occurs, we identify the next person on the NSW Housing Register who has approved housing needs that match the property, in accordance with Housing Pathways and WHC policies.

## Confirming Eligibility

Before we can make an offer, we need to check that you are still eligible for social housing and confirm that your housing needs match the available property.

We will call you to discuss your housing application and we may request some updated documents.

## What is a Reasonable Offer?

Most clients on the NSW Housing Register are entitled to two reasonable offers of housing. A reasonable offer is when the property matches:

- The number of bedrooms your household currently requires (has been approved for)
- The allocation zone you selected (can be any suburb in the allocation zone)
- Any other property features you have been assessed as needing (e.g. level access, disability modifications, etc.)

We consider the information provided by you and the property elements to ensure the property is suitable to your housing needs.

At this point, the offer is made, and you will be invited to view the property.



## Viewing and Responding

To help you make an informed decision, we provide information, including the lease terms and subsidised rent calculation, details about being a WHC tenant, and what happens if you accept or refuse the offer.

You are expected to view the property within two business days of the offer, unless maintenance works prevent safe access. We will find a day and time that suits you and our team. You may bring a support person to view the property with you.

We need to know if you accept or refuse the offer within one business day of viewing the property. You can tell us verbally, either at the viewing or phone our office.

To tell us your decision formally, please complete the Offer Response Form, so we can add this to your Housing Application record.

If you refuse the offer, you have 28 days to provide your reason in writing, or 7 days for a Management Transfer Offer.

Extensions of timeframes are considered on a case by case basis.

## I Accept – What Happens Next?

You will be required to sign a tenancy agreement within five business days of accepting the offer.

If you are breaking a fixed term lease in a private rental, the offer of social housing means you can end your tenancy early without penalty by giving only 14 days' notice to the agent.

If you are transferring from another social housing provider, you may be able to negotiate a shorter notice period.

To prepare for moving in, arrange a removalist or enlist the help of family or friends. Also, arrange utilities such as electricity, gas, phone, and internet in your name, as you will be directly responsible to the utility companies for these expenses during your tenancy. We can help with this via Fast Connect if required.

If you need financial assistance or any other support to begin your tenancy, our team can refer you to relevant support services.

## Rejecting an Offer

You have the right to reject an offer of housing, if you believe it is not right for you, and the right to appeal an offer if you think it isn't reasonable.

When we receive your Offer Response Form, we will review your reason and any supporting evidence to decide the next steps.

### Offer Withdrawn:

If you can demonstrate that the property does not meet your needs, we may decide your reason is valid and withdraw the offer. We may need to reassess your Housing Application.

We may withdraw an offer if we find that false or misleading information was provided, and that you are not eligible for the offer.

In limited circumstances, we may withdraw an offer if we need the property for a person in more urgent need of housing.

If an offer is withdrawn, it will not count towards your offer entitlement and your Application will remain on the NSW Housing Register.

## Housing Application Suspended:

If you can demonstrate you are unable to accept an offer due to certain circumstances, we may suspend your Housing Application for a time.

Circumstances could include:

- Experiencing illness or being in hospital
- Away from home on holidays
- Unable to terminate a tenancy agreement
- Being in prison

### Offer Refused:

If the property matches your approved housing needs, and your refusal reason does not include any new, substantiated information about your needs, the refusal is considered unreasonable.

Personal preference is not a valid reason to refuse an offer of housing. Examples of personal preferences include:

- Wanting gas rather than electricity
- Not liking the colour scheme, design or layout
- Not liking the neighbourhood
- Wanting a specific suburb or near specific facilities, where the locational need is not established
- Wanting a different type of property (e.g. villa, house, townhouse, etc.)
- Wanting a property based on your pet's needs
- Not wanting to accept the terms of the Residential Tenancy Agreement.

If you do not respond to contact about an offer, or do not provide a written reason for refusing an offer, we will record the offer as being refused.

If you refuse two reasonable offers, we may close your Housing Application. You have the right to appeal our decision, in line with our Complaints and Appeals Policy.

## More Information

This factsheet provides a general summary only. For full details, please check the policies on our website: [www.womenshousingcompany.org.au](http://www.womenshousingcompany.org.au)