

Eligibility and Applications Policy

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1 Purpose and Applicability

This policy references the eligibility criteria for Social Housing in New South Wales (NSW) and describes how the Women's Housing Company (WHC) accepts applications and assesses eligibility, in accordance with [Housing Pathways](#) policies.

This policy applies to all Social Housing properties managed by the WHC. This policy applies to all WHC staff, Social Housing applicants and WHC Social Housing tenants wanting to transfer to a different property.

For applications and eligibility information relevant to Transitional Housing, Transitional Housing Plus – DV, and Affordable Housing, refer to the [Transitional Housing Policy](#), the [Transitional Housing Plus – DV Policy](#) and the [Affordable Housing Policy](#).

The [Customer Service Charter](#) and [Customer Rights and Responsibilities](#) guide the interactions between the WHC, applicants and tenants.

2 References

2.1 External or Statutory Requirements

This policy complies with the following external legislation or requirements:

- Housing Act 2001
- Community Housing Providers (Adoption of National Law) Act 2012
- Housing Pathways Eligibility for Social Housing Policy
- Housing Pathways Social Housing Eligibility and Allocations Policy Supplement
- NSW Community Housing Access Policy
- NSW Community Housing Eligibility Policy

2.2 Internal Policies and Forms

This policy refers to the following WHC documents, which are available on the WHC website:

- [WHC Complaints and Appeals Policy](#)

2.3 Definitions

Housing Pathways is the way applications for housing assistance are managed in NSW. It is a partnership between the NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ), including the Aboriginal Housing Office (AHO) and the Housing Contact Centre (HCC), and participating Community Housing Providers (CHPs). Housing Pathways provides a single application process with common eligibility and prioritisation guidelines and a standardised assessment process, regardless of which housing provider is approached by an applicant, using a 'no wrong door' protocol.

NSW Housing Register is the single waiting list for housing assistance across NSW, where eligible applications are registered and from which DCJ, the AHO and participating CHPs make offers of housing.

Social Housing is subsidised rental accommodation provided by not-for-profit, non-government or government organisations to assist people who are unable to access suitable accommodation in the private housing market. Social housing includes public housing and community housing as well as other housing assistance services and products.

The following terms are used in this document, with specific meaning:

- "may" is an acceptable action or requirement but not mandatory
- "must" or "shall" or "will" designates a mandatory requirement or action

3 Eligibility Requirements

To ensure that social housing assists people who are most in need, the eligibility criteria for social housing in NSW concentrates on assisting:

- People on low income that need support to help them live independently, and
- People on low income that have problems finding affordable housing in the private market that is suited to their needs.

To be eligible for social housing, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Be an Australian citizen or have permanent residency in Australia; and
- Be a resident in New South Wales (NSW), and
- Be able to establish their identity; and
- Have a household income within the income eligibility limits; and
- Not own any assets or property which could reasonably be expected to resolve housing need; and
- Be able to sustain a successful tenancy, without support or with appropriate support in place; and
- If applicable, make repayments of any former debts to a social housing provider; and
- In general, be at least 18 years of age.

The Income Eligibility Limits are reviewed and updated annually by DCJ and published on their website. Refer to the [Social Housing Eligibility and Allocations Policy Supplement](#).

4 Applications

Applications for housing assistance can be made through two different channels:

- Call the DCJ Housing Contact Centre (HCC) on 1800 422 322

- Complete the online application form on the [DCJ Housing Assistance website](#)

WHC staff are available to assist applicants by explaining the application process, forms and evidence requirements.

Applications lodged directly with the WHC will be registered, processed and assessed in accordance with Housing Pathways Policies. Applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome of their application assessment.

5 Waiting Times for General Social Housing

The time that an applicant will wait before being offered housing depends on a number of factors, including the supply of social housing in the nominated allocation zone, the number of vacancies, the number of people waiting for the same type of housing in the same area who have been waiting longer, the number of people who have demonstrated a higher need to be housed, and the number of applicants leaving the NSW Housing Register. Expected waiting times are published on the [DCJ website](#).

6 Change in Circumstances

If an applicant experiences any changes in their household circumstances, including contact details, a change of name, the number of people included in the application, any changes to household income or asset ownership, or any factors that might affect the type of property or location required, they must notify DCJ or a participating CHP.

A change in circumstances may require a reassessment of an application for housing assistance, including an interview.

WHC staff are available to assist applicants by explaining the change of circumstance process, forms and evidence requirements, and to conduct interviews and reassessments.

Changes of circumstance lodged directly with the WHC will be processed, assessed and updated on the NSW Housing Register, in accordance with Housing Pathways Policies. Applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome of any re-assessment conducted due to the change of circumstances.

7 Tenancy Reinstatement

Former WHC tenants who have had to relinquish their property due to any of the following may be considered for tenancy reinstatement:

- Long term care
- Prison
- Rehabilitation
- Unapproved absence/abandonment due to serious health and safety reasons eg. domestic and family violence

Former tenants must apply for tenancy reinstatement within 12 months of tenancy termination. Former tenants must provide evidence to support their reinstatement request. Reinstatement and the offer of a new tenancy are determined on a case by case basis.

8 Complaints and Appeals

Any person who has a complaint about how the Eligibility and Applications Policy has been administered, or applicants and tenants who wish to appeal a decision, should refer to the WHC Complaints and Appeals Policy.

9 Privacy and Confidentiality Statement

The WHC will ensure that all applicant and tenant information is kept confidential and is managed and protected in accordance with the WHC Privacy Policy and relevant privacy law.

From time to time, de-identified demographic information may be released to third parties for statistical purposes only.