

Alterations to Properties Policy

1. Purpose

This policy explains what alterations are, how tenants can apply for permission to alter their property and how HOME in PLACE manages requests for alterations.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all properties owned and managed by HOME in PLACE. For leasehold properties or properties managed on a fee for service arrangement, the approval of the property owner will be required, HOME in PLACE will liaise with the property owner. For properties managed on behalf of the NSW Lands and Housing Corporation (LAHC) HOME in PLACE will liaise with the relevant personnel within the department as required.

This policy does not cover modifications for medical or disability purposes.

3. Policy Statement

HOME in PLACE acknowledges that tenants may want to make alterations to improve the property for themselves and family members.

An alteration occurs where a tenant changes, removes, replaces or makes an addition to an existing property. Existing property means the building itself, yard or boundary fences.

Tenants must seek approval from HOME in PLACE before carrying out any alterations to a property. The request must be in writing and include supporting documents, for example, quotes, drawings and photographs. HOME in PLACE will not unreasonably withhold consent to make minor alterations and all applications will be assessed in a fair, transparent and timely manner.

Types of Alterations

The *NSW Residential Tenancies Act 2010* lists the kinds of 'minor' changes for which it would be unreasonable for the landlord to decline, these include, but may not be limited to those listed below

Minor alterations	Major alterations
Putting a reasonable number of picture hooks in the wall	Internal or external structural changes
Installing flyscreens that meet Australian standard	Air conditioners, heaters and other fixed appliances

Minor alterations	Major alterations
Planting flowers, shrubs or a border in the garden	Ducted air conditioning
Installing a telephone line or internet connection	Security shutters
Securing furniture to non-tiled wall for safety reasons	Build -in wardrobes or cupboards
Installing safety gates inside the property	Carpet/floor tiles
Fitting a childproof latch to an outdoor gate of a single dwelling	Painting internal & external
Installing or replacing an internal window covering, for example, curtains and removeable blinds	Carports, awnings and garages
Installing cleats or cord guides to secure blind or curtain cords	Fences/paving
Making modification that do not penetrate a surface, or permanently modify a surface, fixture, or structure of the property	Pergolas or gazebos
Security cameras	Kitchen and bathroom renovations
	Rainwater tanks

HOME in PLACE will not grant permission for tenant to undertake the following alterations due to health and safety and ongoing maintenance issues:

- Install a swimming pool, pond, or spa.

Applying for an Alteration

Before making any changes to a property a tenant must first get written approval from HOME in PLACE by submitting the FOR-055 Additions and Alterations to Property Application Form .

To assist HOME in PLACE to assess the application, tenants should provide as much information as they can about the proposed work including a full description of the alterations required including any quotes, drawing, photographs and the details of the proposed contractor, if a contractor is required to complete the work.

Assessing applications

HOME in PLACE will assess each application fairly and in a timely manner. HOME in PLACE will use the information provided in the application and are considered in the context of the following:

- Tenant's acceptance of responsibility and conditions;
- Safety of the tenant and their household
- The extent of the work required;
- Consistency of the alteration with the nature, classification and future use of the property; whether the works will meet all relevant standards;
- Compliance with HOME in PLACE Assets Standards and any statutory authorities (i.e. local councils); and

- Whether the contractor that will be engaged by the tenant has all relevant insurances and has provided relevant safe working method statements in accordance with current work health and safety requirements.

HOME in PLACE will also consider the following factors to ensure the proposed alteration:

- Matches the current design;
- Does not impact on any entry or exit;
- Does not impact on adjoining neighbours;
- Does not impact the structural integrity or asset standard of the property;
- Is consistent with the nature of the property; and
- Does not change the configuration of the property.

When a decision has been made, HOME in PLACE will advise the tenant in writing. This letter will include clear reasons for approval or decline of the request.

Conditions of approval

The following conditions apply and must be accepted by tenants:

- Submit a detailed written request for the alteration or addition and copies of any plans or drawings;
- Obtain and provide copies of all required approvals;
- Oversee the construction of the work and repair any damage to the property caused during the construction work;
- Ensure work is carried out in accordance with Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 and by qualified/licensed contractors (where required);
- Pay all costs associated with installing, maintaining and removing the alteration or addition;
- Notify HOME in PLACE when work is completed and submit copies of any certificates issued;
- Maintain the alteration or addition throughout the tenancy; and
- If requested, remove the alteration or addition at the end of the tenancy and make good any damage caused by the removal.

Tenant responsibilities

When HOME in PLACE approves an application for an alteration to property, the tenant:

- Is expected to pay the full costs for any alterations;
- Is responsible for repairing and maintaining any alterations;
- Must pay for all remedial work caused by negligence, poor workmanship or failure to complete an alteration, including the cost of rectifying any damage caused by any alteration;
- Is responsible for repairing any damage the alteration may cause;
- Must, if requested by HOME in PLACE, remove an alteration at their own expense and restore the property to its original condition at the end of the tenancy.

HOME in PLACE responsibilities

- Review applications for alterations in a timely manner;
- Inspect alterations on the property;

- Inspect removal of alterations at the end of the tenancy.

When a tenant moves out of a property

When a tenant moves out of a property they have altered, HOME in PLACE may request them to remove any alterations. Tenants are responsible for the removal of the alteration and restoring the property to its original condition and rectifying any damage caused by the work. If a tenant fails to do this, HOME in PLACE will charge the tenant for any rectification work.

Unapproved Alterations

An alteration without written permission is a breach of a tenant's Residential Tenancy Agreement. When an unapproved alteration is identified, HOME in PLACE will inspect the alteration and assess it against the assessment criteria. If there are no problems with the alteration the tenant can apply for retrospective written approval, including any council or other approvals.

If HOME in PLACE has any concern about the quality, safety or amenity of the unapproved alterations, the tenant will be required to remove the alteration and make good any damage caused by the installation and/or removal of the alteration at their own cost. This must be completed within the specified timeframe and to HOME in PLACE standards. If the tenant refuses or the work is not undertaken to the appropriate standard, HOME in PLACE may take action in the NSW Civil & Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) for an order to remedy or to terminate the tenancy. HOME in PLACE may also undertake the work and on charge any cost to the tenant.

Review of Decisions

If a tenant's application to make an addition to a property is declined, the tenant should first discuss this with a Tenancy Relations Officer. If the tenant is still dissatisfied, they may seek a review of the decision or lodge an application with the NSW Civil & Administrative Tribunal (NCAT).

4. Responsibilities

All HOME in PLACE workers have an obligation to:

- familiarise themselves with and ensure they have a clear understanding of HOME in PLACE policies and procedures,
- observe and implement such policies, and associated procedures in delivering services to HOME in PLACE clients,
- inform HOME in PLACE's clients of the impact of this policy on them and assist them to understand their rights and obligations, as required,
- identify issues that require amendment to this policy document and complete the relevant documentation to propose any amendments, and
- report breaches of HOME in PLACE's policies or procedures.

The relevant Group Executive Manager is ultimately responsible to:

- ensure all stakeholders within their area of responsibility are informed about HOME in PLACE Policies and Procedures,
- ensure appropriate processes and controls are implemented to enable the correct application of and adherence to relevant policies and procedures, and
- ensure appropriate processes and controls are implemented to enable breaches of approved HOME in PLACE's Policy and Procedures to be reported and managed.

5. Implementation and Review

This policy is listed on HOME in PLACE's Controlled Documents Register and is a controlled document requiring approval of any changes. It may not be amended or shared outside HOME in PLACE without approval. The policy is reviewed regularly and published on HOME in PLACE's SharePoint intranet once approved. Employees receive communications and training on new and reviewed policies and procedures.

HOME in PLACE complies with relevant contractual compliance obligations and jurisdictional laws and regulations when implementing this policy. Confirmation of internal compliance with this policy is undertaken regularly.

It is the responsibility of HOME in PLACE Group Executive Services to maintain and update the HOME in PLACE's Master Policy Document, Policy Directory and the Policy Review Register, administer the review and approval process and inform and distribute new and amended policies and procedures once approved (refer PROC-011 Policy and Procedure Development Approval).

HOME in PLACE Workers should refer to SharePoint Company Documents Policy and Procedure site for the latest version which takes precedent over any uncontrolled version. If this document is printed, downloaded, or saved elsewhere from this site it becomes an uncontrolled version.

For further information contact the Responsible Officer listed under Document Information.

6. Resources and related documents

Related documents

- FOR-055 Additions and Alterations to Property Application Form
- POL-025-38 Ending Tenancy Policy

Related legislation/standards

New South Wales

- [Residential Tenancies Act 2010](#)
- [Residential Tenancies Regulations 2019](#)
- [Housing Act 2001](#)
- [Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997](#)

7. Definitions

For the glossary of definition for Home in Place QMS documents please click on the link: Definitions Table Group and Australia

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