

Starting a Tenancy (WA)

1. Purpose

This policy explains the process for starting a new tenancy with HOME in PLACE (Australia) Limited (HOME in PLACE).

2. Scope

This policy applies to all new tenancies with HOME in PLACE in its Western Australia Portfolio.

The policy applies to all workers, directors and members of HOME in PLACE decision-making committees and advisory bodies. The policy applies to third parties engaged to carry out activities on behalf of HOME in PLACE if stipulated by agreements.

3. Policy Statement

HOME in PLACE is a social and affordable housing landlord with a commitment to service delivery. HOME in PLACE complies with the requirements of the Residential Tenancies Act 1987 (WA), all contractual arrangements and internal policies. When an applicant accepts an offer of housing HOME in PLACE will ensure the acceptance is acted on promptly by arranging an appointment with the applicant to sign a Residential Tenancy Agreement. HOME in PLACE will not include any unnecessary conditions in Residential Tenancy Agreements and will ensure that all applicants understand their rights and responsibilities when starting a tenancy and signing a Residential Tenancy Agreement.

Applicants have the right to have support persons, advocates and interpreters with them at the time of signing the Residential Tenancy Agreement and to seek advice prior to signing.

There may be other programs that have specific arrangements which may vary from this policy.

Guiding Principles

HOME in PLACE will start tenancies in a way that:

- Creates a positive and sustainable relationship with our tenant;
- Ensures tenants are informed about their legal rights and responsibilities as a tenant;
- Tell tenants about HOME in PLACE policies and where they can access them; and
- Ensure that HOME in PLACE meets our legal and policy requirements when a new tenancy begins.

Signing a Residential Tenancy Agreement

The Residential Tenancy Agreement is a legal documents between the tenant and HOME in PLACE as the landlord, the Residential Tenancy Agreements sets out the terms of the agreement including the rights and responsibilities of the landlord and the tenant. Rent will start from the first day of the agreement. HOME in PLACE staff will explain the agreement to the person.

Tenants will receive:

- A copy of the Residential Tenancy Agreement signed by both parties;
- A property condition report to complete and sign within 7 days of moving into the property; and
- Other information that relates to the tenancy, for example, fact/information sheets.

Costs at Sign Up

When an applicant accepts an offer of housing they will be required to pay:

- 2 weeks rent at sign up.
- Rental bond equivalent to 4 weeks rent. Rental bonds are lodged with the Bonds Administration and held until the end of the tenancy. If a tenant is unable to pay the bond in full at the time of signing the lease or is not eligible for a bond assistance loan, HOME in PLACE may enter into a payment agreement with the tenant to pay off the bond.

Length of Lease

The length of a lease will depend on the program type for the property.

General social housing

To be eligible for public housing you must meet the eligibility criteria set by the Department of Communities at the time of making an application, while waiting for a property and before an offer is made. When you apply for public housing, you are also applying for community housing, this increased your chances of being housed sooner.

For general social housing leases will be for a fixed term usually 26 weeks. Prior to the fixed term expiring HOME in PLACE may request the tenant enter into a further fixed term lease or the lease rolls over to a periodic agreement.

Affordable housing

Community Housing Providers may offer rental accommodation for people on low to moderate incomes, this may include housing under the National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS). To be eligible for affordable housing you must satisfy the requirements of the Community Housing Income and Assets Limits test.

Leases for affordable housing will generally be for a fixed term of 26 weeks in the first instance.

Clients under 18 years of age

Clients under the age of 18 years may be considered for a tenancy if:

- They meet the general eligibility criteria;
- They have an income;
- Social housing is the best way to meet their accommodation needs; and
- HOME in PLACE is satisfied they can meet their tenancy obligations.
- The applicant is accompanied to the viewing and sign up by a legal guardian or appropriate support person (i.e. support agency case worker, Community Services representative etc.)

The process for handling complaints made by a child / minor or complaints from people with disability, families, carers, service providers may be generally managed in accordance with this policy however refer to the following for more information:

HOME in PLACE POL-003-02 Child Safeguarding Policy

HOME in PLACE PROC-012-02 Child Friendly Complaint Handling Procedure

HOME in PLACE POL-003-03 Safeguarding People with A Disability Policy

4. Definitions and Acronyms Glossary

For clarification of any definitions or acronyms contained within this document, please click on the [Glossary](#) for information.

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