

Starting a Tenancy Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to explain the process for starting a new tenancy at HOME in PLACE (Australia) Limited.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all new tenancies with HOME in PLACE.

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 2010* (NSW). 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 tenant will sign a Residential Tenancy Agreement, the agreement is between HOME in PLACE as the landlord and the tenant. Rent will start from the first day of the agreement. HOME in PLACE will explain the agreement to the person. Tenants will receive:

- A copy of the signed Residential Tenancy Agreement;
- Ingoing Property Condition Report – two (2) copies to be completed, one (1) to be returned to HOME in PLACE and the other retained by the tenant for their records; and
- Other information that relates to the tenancy.

Length of Lease

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

General Social Housing

Most HOME in PLACE properties are capital or leasehold and are offered as part of HOME in PLACE General Social Housing Program. Eligibility is determined through Housing Pathways, the common access system for social housing. Leases for social housing are generally for a period of 26 weeks, leases usually roll over into a continuing lease after the fixed term has expired, unless the tenant or HOME in PLACE seeks to end the lease.

Transitional Tenancies

For some supported housing programs and transitional housing, HOME in PLACE will sign a fixed term lease and review the tenancy before the end of the fixed term. HOME in PLACE and the tenant will continue to sign fixed term leases until the tenant is able to move to independent long-term housing or is no longer eligible for the program.

Affordable Housing Programs

Affordable Housing provides properties for moderate income, working households through several different programs. Leases are generally for an initial fixed term period of 26 weeks. Some Affordable Programs may have leases of 52 weeks. Tenants must continue to meet the eligibility requirements for the specific affordable housing program for the tenancy to continue.

Fee for Service Program

HOME in PLACE manages some properties on a fee for service basis on behalf of the property owner, this means HOME in PLACE becomes the property manager. In this program HOME in PLACE takes instructions from the property owner on all property management matters.

Clients under 18 years of age

Generally, an applicant must be at least 18 years of age before HOME in PLACE can consider them for social housing. However, HOME in PLACE will consider applicants between 16 and 18 years of age if:

- They meet all the general eligibility criteria for social housing;
- They have an income;
- Social housing is the best way to meet their accommodation needs;
- 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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