JULY 2026 EDITION

Home *in* Place

Home in Place Tenant Handbook

FOR AUSTRALIAN SOCIAL AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING TENANTS

Home in Place wishes to recognise the traditional custodians of the lands and waterways where we work and live.

We celebrate the First Peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationship to Country and acknowledge the significance of Aboriginal cultures in Australia.

Welcome to Home in Place.

Welcome to your new home.

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Welcome to Home in Place

This handbook has been developed to support you in your home by clearly setting out what you can expect from us, and what we may need from you as part of your tenancy. It brings together key information about living in a Home in Place property, including your rights, responsibilities, and where to go for help or advice.

A NOTE ON LANGUAGE

You may notice that throughout this handbook we use the word tenant.

When we refer to a **tenant**, we are referring to all people who live in a Home in Place property, **including residents, renters** and, in some cases, **clients**.

We recognise that language differs across states. For example, in Victoria the term renter is commonly used instead of tenant.

You may also notice references to **Community Participation Officers (CPO)**, throughout this handbook. Community Participation Officers are based in a number of locations across our portfolio. Where a Community Participation Officer is not assigned to your location, you can contact your Home in Place **Tenancy Relations Officer (TRO)** or **Tailored Support Coordinator (TSC)**, who can assist you or connect you with the appropriate support.

ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook reflects information that is current at the time of publishing.

Some information may vary depending on the state or territory you live in, or the type of property you reside in. Where details are specific to a location, program or portfolio, links are included to guide you to the relevant information, and the Home in Place website should always be used as the source of the most up to date information.

This handbook is intended as a general guide to living in a Home in Place home. It does not replace individual advice or your tenancy agreement.

If you have questions, need clarification, or would like support at any time, please contact Home in Place on 1300 333 733, or visit our website.

Contacting Home in Place

Call Home in Place on 1300 333 733 during office hours for all tenancy and maintenance enquiries and after hours for emergency maintenance issues.

Email addresses for the branch offices are listed below.

OFFICE LOCATIONS

Broken Hill | Wilyakali Country
123 Creedon Street, Broken Hill 2880
PO Box 966, Broken Hill NSW 2880
brokenhill@homeinplace.org

Central Coast | Darkinjung Country
357-359 Mann Street, North Gosford NSW 2250
PO Box 38 Gosford NSW 2250
centralcoast@homeinplace.org

Cessnock | Wonnarua Country
1c Cooper Street, Cessnock NSW 2325
PO Box 597 East Maitland NSW 2323
maitland@homeinplace.org

Dubbo & Regional NSW | Wiradjuri Country
32 Victoria Street, Dubbo NSW 2830
PO Box 2939 Dubbo NSW 2830
dubbo@homeinplace.org

East Maitland | Wonnarua Country
Shop 3A/11 Molly Morgan Drive, Greenhills NSW 2323
PO Box 2218 Greenhills NSW 2323
maitland@homeinplace.org

Newcastle / Lake Macquarie | Awabakal Country
Suite 302, Level 3 12 Stewart Ave, Newcastle West NSW 2302
PO Box 58 Wickham NSW 2293
newcastle@homeinplace.org
lakemacquarie@homeinplace.org

Taree | Biripi Country
1/57 Albert Street, Taree NSW 2430
PO Box 99 Taree NSW 2430
taree@homeinplace.org

Upper Hunter / Muswellbrook | Wonnarua Country
1/56-58 Brook Street, Muswellbrook NSW 2333
PO Box 71 Muswellbrook NSW 2333
muswellbrook@homeinplace.org

OFFICE ACCESSIBILITY

Offices used by Home in Place will be well identified by signage, will be accessible and, where possible, close to public transport.

If at any time tenants are unable to access the premises, alternative arrangements may be made to ensure access.

OPERATING HOURS

Monday to Friday

Our offices are generally open from **9am to 5pm**.

On Tuesdays, some offices may close from 3pm while staff attend operational meetings.

Communications

Home in Place will ensure all correspondence is written in plain English. Home in Place will make arrangements for information in an alternate language and may use professional interpreter services where appropriate. Home in Place policies are available on our website or hard copies can be provided on request.

If you have a meeting with Home in Place staff you are welcome to bring a family member, friend or advocate to the meeting.

NEWSLETTERS

The Home in Place newsletter **MYPLACE** includes information on events and activities that you might like to be involved in.

If you would like particular information or would like to contribute to the newsletter, please contact us.

Hard copies of MYPLACE are available at branch offices or from your local Community Participation Officer or Tenancy Relations Officer. They are also uploaded to the Home in Place website at www.homeinplace.org/tenant-newsletters

CONNECT WITH US

FACEBOOK
facebook.com/homeinplace
LINKEDIN
linkedin.com/company/homeinplace
INSTAGRAM
@home_in_place
YOUTUBE
youtube.com/@HomeinPlace

WWW.HOMEINPLACE.ORG

MYPLACE

NEWSLETTER FOR TENANTS AND RESIDENTS OF HOME IN PLACE
ISSUE FOURTEEN

Home in Place

IN THIS ISSUE

A MESSAGE FROM EMMA
OUR CALL FOR MORE SOCIAL AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING
UPCOMING TENANT FORUMS
HOME IN PLACE DELIVERING MORE HOUSING
COOKING CORNER AND PUZZLES
PHOTO GALLERY: TENANT CHRISTMAS EVENTS
AND MORE!

YOU'RE INVITED

The Tenant Forums are back!

About us

Home in Place is a Community Housing Provider with a track record stretching back more than 40 years. Home in Place is one of the largest and most experienced not-for-profit housing charities in Australia.

Home in Place provides tenancy and property management for 7370 social, affordable and disability housing properties in New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria and New Zealand. The Home in Place Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) team manages 1400 places in 576 properties for people with high support needs.

Home in Place is an enterprising and socially committed not-for-profit organisation that undertakes all aspects of tenancy and property management. We have extensive experience in providing tailored tenancy services and tenant development initiatives.

Home in Place is registered under the National Community Housing Regulatory System as a Tier 1 provider and holds a full certificate of accreditation under the National Community Housing Standards.

Home in Place is a member of the SDA Alliance and a registered SDA provider with the National Disability Insurance Scheme for NSW, Queensland, Victoria, ACT, Northern Territory, South Australia, and Tasmania.

Our Vision

That all people have appropriate and affordable housing and are engaged in sustainable communities.

Our Mission

At Home in Place, we stand for more than bricks and mortar, we are advocates for transformation, dignity and hope.

Our mission is anchored in the belief that safe, affordable housing is a fundamental human right and the foundation for economic and social participation. United as one team, our shared purpose guides every action: **we provide homes, empower people, connect communities, and impact futures.**

Our Values

EMPOWERMENT: At Home in Place, we are committed to creating a better future by fostering shared responsibility and opportunity while respecting both individuals and their communities.

TRUST: At Home in Place, we believe in the integrity, honesty and goodwill of our staff and stakeholders. Supported by our transparent policies and robust processes, we build unbreakable bonds that make us stronger together.

ASPIRATION: At Home in Place, we dare to envision extraordinary possibilities and pour our energy into realising our shared mission. Aspiration fuels our journey, driving us to reach new heights.

ACCOUNTABILITY: At Home in Place, each of us is responsible for our words, our actions and our outcomes. We stand collectively, holding ourselves and each other to the highest standards, guided by our values, our mission, and our vision.

INNOVATION: At Home in Place, we bravely challenge the status quo, our vision is pursued through innovation and by continuously striving to improve our practices. Every step forward is powered by our drive to build a brighter future for all.

SUSTAINABILITY: At Home in Place, we contribute to sustainable operational and environmental solutions through responsible actions, respect, advocacy and a focus on the long term.

LEADERSHIP: At Home in Place, we are fiercely determined to fulfill our mission. We empower and support one another, making courageous decisions and modelling behaviours that reflect our core values. Our leadership shines brightest when we inspire confidence, demonstrate courage, and celebrate the achievements of our team.

COLLABORATION: At Home in Place, we know the magic of partnerships. Through open hearts and open minds, we form meaningful bonds, build trust, and achieve remarkable results that none of us could reach alone. Our greatest successes are born from the honesty, respect and unity we nurture every day.

SECTION 1

Becoming a tenant

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM HOME IN PLACE

- To be treated fairly and without discrimination
- To be treated with respect and dignity
- To have access to safe, appropriate, and affordable housing
- To have information about you held securely, treated sensitively and confidentially
- To be fully informed of your rights and responsibilities
- To be informed of any changes in your tenancy
- To receive information about the process for making a complaint, lodging an appeal, or providing a compliment
- To lodge a complaint or appeal without fear of losing your home

WHAT HOME IN PLACE EXPECTS FROM YOU

- Tell Home in Place when there is a change in your life that will impact on your tenancy
- Treat Home in Place staff and contractors with respect
- Respect the rights of other tenants
- Ensure your visitors respect the rights of other tenants
- Abide by the terms of the tenancy agreement
- Let Home in Place know if you are going to be away from the property for more than six weeks
- Allow staff and contractors reasonable access to your home when inspections or maintenance are scheduled

PRIVACY POLICY STATEMENT

Home in Place will collect, manage, store, use and disclose personal information about individuals where it is reasonably necessary for one or more of our functions or activities and to meet the requirements of Commonwealth and State government contractual agreements.

When we collect, manage, store, use and disclose personal information Home in Place complies with the Privacy Act (1988) and relevant state privacy laws.

Our policy outlines Home in Place's approach to the collection, management, storage, disclosure, and reporting of personal information, in accordance with the Australian Privacy Principles. It explains when personal data will be collected, the type of personal data that will be collected, how personal data will be used, stored, and disclosed and how the quality and security of the personal data will be maintained. In addition, it provides information on how individuals can access their personal information, how to opt out of marketing or promotions and how to make a privacy complaint if an individual feels there has been a breach of their privacy relating to Home in Place's use and disclosure of their personal information.

Home in Place is committed to managing personal information in an open and transparent way.

Our Privacy Policy is publicly available from the Home in Place website at www.homeinplace.org or alternatively an electronic or paper copy will be provided free of charge on request by emailing governance@homeinplace.org or by calling us on 1300 333 733.

RESIDENTIAL TENANCY AGREEMENT

When you accepted an offer of housing with Home in Place you will have signed a tenancy agreement. The tenancy agreement is the legal contract between you as the tenant and Home in Place as the landlord/ property manager.

The tenancy agreement sets out the rights and responsibilities of the tenant and the landlord. You have been provided with a copy of the signed tenancy agreement and Home in Place will retain a copy for our records.

The tenancy agreement contains a lot of information including:

- Your name and the address of the property
- Home in Place's name and contact details
- The name of other people who will live in the property
- The current market rent for the property
- The terms of the agreement

PROPERTY CONDITION REPORT

A property condition report records the general condition of the property room by room, including fixtures and fittings.

You have been provided with two copies of the completed property condition report.

You need to complete your section on both copies, keep one copy for your records and return one copy to Home in Place within five days.

This is an important document and will be used at the end of the tenancy to review the change in condition of the property throughout the duration of the tenancy.

Home
in Place

Social Housing

Social housing is a form of heavily subsidised rental housing delivered by either state housing authorities, or by not-for-profit organisations like Home in Place.

Social housing that is provided by government agencies is often referred to as **public housing**, whereas social housing delivered by not-for-profit providers is described as **community housing**.

Social housing rents are capped at market rent but calculated on 25%–30% of the assessable household income, plus 100% of the household's maximum entitlement to Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA).

Applicants for social housing must meet strict eligibility criteria including income and asset limits.

At Home in Place, we believe community housing is about much more than providing accommodation. It's also about building communities which is why we're dedicated to making sure our tenants have a voice and are actively engaged in their communities.

In addition to professional tenancy management, Home in Place continues to be an industry leader in the provision of additional wraparound services that help sustain tenancies and delivering tenant engagement initiatives that help foster greater economic and social participation.

SOCIAL HOUSING FAQS

What is CRA?

CRA is a regular extra payment from Centrelink which you may be eligible for if you already receive certain payments and pay rent. The amount you receive is dependent on the amount of rent you pay.

CRA is a non-taxable income supplement paid to individuals and families who are renting.

More information on CRA eligibility rules can be obtained from the Centrelink website www.servicesaustralia.gov.au.

How do I apply for CRA?

You don't need to apply for CRA as Centrelink will assess your eligibility when you claim a payment from them. However, if you have recently moved you will need to let Centrelink know so that they can reassess your eligibility for CRA. Centrelink will ask you to complete a Rent Certificate in order to calculate how much CRA you can claim.

Can you live in social housing and own property?

You will not generally be eligible for social housing if you own property. There are however a few, very specific exceptions to this rule. Details about social housing eligibility can be found on the Home in Place website at homeinplace.org/applying-for-social-housing.

THERE ARE MORE FAQS ON THE HOME IN PLACE WEBSITE AT

WWW.HOMEINPLACE.ORG/FAQS

Affordable Housing

Affordable housing is an alternative for very low to moderate income households experiencing housing stress in the private rental market.

In Australia, affordable housing is managed by charities and community housing providers such as Home in Place.

Affordable housing is offered at a rebated rent to low-income workers, who would otherwise experience housing stress in the private rental market.

Rents in affordable housing properties are capped at between 75% and 80% of the assessed market rate for the property in question.

To qualify, household income must be within the limits set by the Affordable Guidelines published by the Department of Communities and Justice.

PROGRAM SPECIFIC INFORMATION

BUILDING BETTER CITIES

For affordable properties acquired under the Building Better Cities Program the income limits are set by Home in Place.

They are available to key workers in the Newcastle area on low to moderate incomes and a percentage of household income is required to be employment related.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING FAQS

Who owns and manages Affordable Housing?

Affordable rental housing may be owned by private investors, local governments, charitable organisations or community housing providers. It is usually managed by not-for-profit community housing providers such as Home in Place.

How is my Affordable Housing rent calculated?

Affordable Housing rents are set on a percentage of the market rent – usually between 75%–80%. The amount you pay will depend on the market rent for a similar property in the same area.

Am I eligible for Affordable Housing?

To be eligible for Affordable Housing you must:

- Be an Australian citizen, a permanent resident or have a valid visa to reside in Australia. This could be through work, education, family or long-term residency.
- Be a low-moderate income earner.
- Have satisfactory tenancy history.
- Be earning below the income level relevant to your household type.

How do I apply for Affordable Housing?

All Home in Place Affordable Housing vacancies are advertised on realestate.com under the relevant locations. Links can be found at www.homeinplace.org/our-housing/affordable-housing

Prospective applicants are encouraged to register their interest in available dwellings via the online enquiry form within each listing.

THERE ARE MORE FAQS ON THE HOME IN PLACE WEBSITE AT

WWW.HOMEINPLACE.ORG/FAQS

SECTION 2

Your tenancy with Home in Place

HOW YOUR RENT IS CALCULATED

In social housing, the amount of rent you pay is based on a percentage of your assessable household income. If eligible, this also includes Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA).

The amount of rent you pay will not exceed the market rent.

More information on CRA eligibility rules can be obtained from the Centrelink™ website www.servicesaustralia.gov.au.

RENT REVIEWS

Home in Place will undertake a general income assessment and rent review approximately every six months for all social housing tenants and annually for affordable housing tenants.

Tenants are notified of the upcoming rent review and asked to provide updated household income details. If this information is not provided, you may be charged market rent until the information is received.

In **New South Wales**, Home in Place undertakes an income assessment and rent review every six months.

In **Queensland** tenants' rents are reviewed annually in line with recent changes to Queensland legislation.

In **Victoria**, market rent is reviewed and adjusted, generally on an annual basis.

In **Western Australia**, tenants' rent is typically reviewed annually, or more frequently if a tenant's household income changes.

Home in Place is required to review market rents annually to make sure that the rate at which market rent is assessed is in line with current valuations of properties. Tenants will be notified of any adjustments to the market rent.

Information on the rent review process, including state specific information, is available on the Home in Place website at www.homeinplace.org/rent-payments-bond.

PAYING YOUR RENT

Before you signed the tenancy agreement you would have been asked to supply income details for each member of the household to enable Home in Place to calculate your entitlements to subsidised rent.

Home in Place requires tenants to pay rent in advance based on the frequency of their payments. For example, if you pay weekly, your rent must be paid a week in advance each time you make a payment.

It is important rent is kept in advance at all times. You can pay your rent weekly or fortnightly, it should be paid at the same time each week or fortnight in accordance with your tenancy agreement.

RENT ARREARS

A tenant who does not pay rent will be in breach of the Residential Tenancy Agreement.

If rent falls into arrears at any time, Home in Place will work with tenants to set up a payment plan to catch up. Hopefully, this should only be a one-off situation. Falling behind in rent can put your tenancy at risk. If a tenant is more than 14 days in arrears, Home in Place may issue a notice of termination.

NON-RENT CHARGES

Water Usage

Water usage is charged in line with the relevant state legislation. Where applicable, tenants are responsible for paying water usage charges for their home.

Water charges are shown separately on tenant statements and are payable in addition to rent. This helps ensure transparency about how charges are calculated and applied.

For more information on the state-specific water use/consumption charges please refer to the Policies page on our website www.homeinplace.org/publications-and-policies.

Property Damage

Tenants must not cause or allow any damage to the property, either intentionally or through lack of care or attention, including by other occupants or invited guests.

If the tenant causes or allows damage to the property, Home in Place may ask the tenant to arrange to repair the damage or to pay for costs of the repairs if they are undertaken by Home in Place.

CHANGE OF CIRCUMSTANCE OR CONTACT DETAILS

Home in Place needs to know of any changes that may occur in a tenant's household.

These include:

- Changes in income
- Changes to the people living in the property
- If you would like to get a pet
- If you would like to make any alterations to the property (e.g install an air conditioner or garden shed)

Visitors can stay overnight but if you want someone to move in permanently, you must apply for approval by completing an application for an additional occupant and submitting this to Home in Place for consideration.

Tenants must advise Home in Place within 21 days of any change in circumstances.

Failure to provide this information may result in the loss of the rental rebate and market rent being charged.

It is also important that tenants notify Home in Place if they change their contact details.

ANTISOCIAL/DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR

Home in Place takes all complaints about antisocial or disruptive behaviour seriously and will investigate each incident in a fair and reasonable manner. Home in Place can only act when satisfied that the antisocial/disruptive behaviour has occurred, and the complaint relates to a tenancy issue.

Home in Place can only investigate allegations if the alleged behaviour may be a breach of a tenancy agreement.

Home in Place cannot investigate alleged illegal behaviour. This type of alleged activity must be reported to the police.

Other types of disruptive behaviour can be reported to other relevant authorities.

Behaviour that can be reported to the local council includes:

- Noise complaints
- Excessive dog barking
- Dangerous or roaming animals
- Cars blocking footpaths

Home in Place encourages tenants to sort out problems in an informal manner, for example, talking with the person first as this may solve the problem quickly. Tenants can also be referred to mediation services for assistance.

Where the problem involves harassment, verbal/physical abuse or intimidation, tenants are encouraged to contact the police before contacting Home in Place.

This type of alleged behaviour, if proven, may be a breach of a person's tenancy agreement and Home in Place may take action in the relevant state's Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

More information on antisocial behaviour on Page 53

ENDING THE TENANCY

If a tenant wants to end a tenancy agreement, they are required to provide at least 28 days' written notice giving the notice period required by the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997*.

The notice is effective from the date it is received by Home in Place.

Home in Place may agree to accept a shorter notice period on a case-by-case basis, this is at the discretion of the Tenancy Relations Officer.

Tenants will be advised of the responsibilities when ending a tenancy including:

- Rent is paid up to the date the tenancy ends
- Any outstanding maintenance issues, that are the responsibility of the tenant, are rectified
- The property is left in a clean and tidy condition
- Remove all belongings from the property
- All keys and other locking devices are returned to Home in Place

If belongings and rubbish are not removed, the charges associated with storage, removal and disposal may be passed onto you.

The property should be returned to Home in Place in the same or similar condition it was in at the commencement of the tenancy, taking into account fair wear and tear.

Tenants should refer to the Property Condition Report for any repairs/damage they may be responsible for.

For more information, please refer to the relevant state-specific Ending Tenancy Policy on the Home in Place website at www.homeinplace.org/publications-and-policies.

SECTION 3

Property Care and Maintenance

PROPERTY INSPECTIONS

Home in Place will inspect your property one to four times per year. You will be notified in writing of the date of the inspection.

An inspection report will be kept on your file following each visit. If Home in Place is concerned about property care or damage a follow-up inspection may be arranged.

PROPERTY CARE HINTS

A few hints to make sure the property is well looked after:

- Regularly clean the inside of the property
- Keep the property, including any yards or gardens, free of rubbish
- Sweep concrete paths around the property on a regular basis
- Regularly remove any mould from walls and tiled areas

GARDEN CARE

If you live in a house with a yard it is your responsibility to maintain the outdoor areas of the property. Tenants are required to keep plants and lawns watered, mow the lawn regularly, and remove weeds and debris as required. Tenants must also comply with any water restrictions.

During periods of absence from the property, tenants are asked to make arrangements to have the garden watered and maintained.

Trees must not be removed from properties without the written approval of Home in Place. Excessively tall trees can become dangerous and Home in Place may arrange to have them lopped.

Home in Place is responsible for the upkeep of common grounds/areas attached to units. If you live in a unit complex that has an enclosed or fenced off garden or courtyard, it is your responsibility to maintain the enclosed area.

CAR PARKING

If you are provided with a designated parking space, this means the space is for your use only. In some unit complexes it is not possible to allocate designated parking, this means any tenant can park in any space. Some complexes may have visitor parking or parking for emergency vehicles, these spaces must not be used by tenants.

Vehicles of any description must not be parked on common areas, for example, lawns.

RUBBISH

Rubbish must be placed in the correct rubbish and recycling bins as approved by the local council. Generally, the council will not collect rubbish placed in boxes or other containers. If the bin goes missing during the tenancy, please contact Home in Place.

Each local council provides bins for the homes in their zone. The bin lid colours indicate what rubbish or recycling you put in that bin. Councils can use different systems for their rubbish and recycling bins.

Please check your local council website for information about what day the bin collections are in your street.

In general, the three main colours are:

RED OR DARK GREEN BIN LID

Non-recyclable household waste such as food, plastic bags and wrappers, foam, nappies and crockery and other non-recyclable household rubbish.

LIME GREEN BIN LID

Garden cuttings, leaves, cut flowers, twigs, and branches. Put these in loosely, no plastic bags please.

YELLOW BIN LID

Plastic bottles, tubs and containers, glass bottles and jars, paper and cardboard, tin and steel cans, milk and juice cartons. No plastic bags please.

Most local councils will offer either bulk waste collection services or tip vouchers. Please contact your local council directly for enquiries about bulk waste services.

PETS

In some cases, tenants can have a pet live with them in their home. There are conditions about the type of animal and the type of housing the tenant is living in.

Tenants must seek permission to have any type of pet at a property by completing a **Request for Pet or Animal form**. This form is available on our website or by contacting your branch.

ALTERATIONS TO THE PROPERTY

You must gain approval from Home in Place before making any alterations to the property. Home in Place will not unreasonably decline requests for minor alterations such as picture hooks, however it is always best to seek approval first.

You will be responsible for paying for the cost of any alteration or installing any fixture.

At the end of your tenancy, you will be responsible for leaving the property in the same condition as at the start of your tenancy, except fair wear and tear. This includes making sure any alterations or additions are removed, and fixing any damage caused to the property.

You can choose whether to remove any fixtures you have installed, provided you repair or compensate Home in Place for any damage caused by removing the fixture. You cannot remove any fixtures Home in Place has paid for.

The Alterations to Properties Policy sets out what alterations are, how tenants can apply for permission to make alterations and how Home in Place manages the requests. It can be downloaded from the Home in Place website at www.homeinplace.org/publications-and-policies.

GENERAL MAINTENANCE

Home in Place is responsible for carrying out maintenance and repairs to your property.

Tenants are expected to keep their home and any private outdoor areas in a clean and tidy condition, and to report damage or maintenance issues as soon as possible. Prompt reporting helps issues be addressed early and reduces the risk of further damage.

Tenants must allow reasonable access to the property for Home in Place staff or contracted tradespeople to assess and carry out maintenance. **Access is generally required during normal business hours, 8am to 5pm, Monday to Friday, excluding public holidays.** Where possible, staff or contractors will attend while the tenant is present. If this is not possible, tenants are asked to make suitable arrangements for access.

> Home in Place is responsible for maintaining common areas. Tenants are asked to help keep common areas clean, tidy and safe. Items must not be stored in common areas, as this can create safety risks. Items left in common areas may be removed without notice.

IDENTIFYING THE TYPE OF MAINTENANCE

Before reporting a maintenance issue, it can help to identify whether the issue relates to your home or a common area.

A common area is any shared space outside your front door that is used by more than one household. Common areas can include hallways, stairs, foyers, gardens, shared laundries, paths, car parks and bin bays.

Common areas do not include spaces for your exclusive use, such as inside your home, your balcony, or a fenced courtyard or garden that is only accessible to your unit.

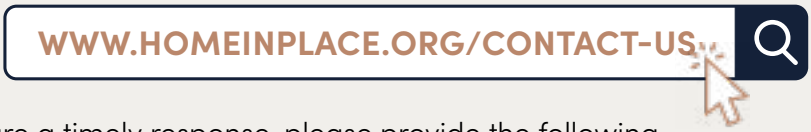
Examples of common area maintenance issues include:

- Broken or faulty lighting
- Water leaks in shared spaces
- Broken gates or doors
- Damaged paths or paving

REPORTING MAINTENANCE ISSUES

Maintenance issues can be reported 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by calling Home in Place on 1300 333 733.

Non-urgent maintenance can also be reported using the maintenance request form on the Home in Place website.



To help ensure a timely response, please provide the following information when reporting a maintenance issue:

1. Your name
2. Property address and current contact phone number
3. A clear description of the issue
4. Whether the issue has been reported previously
5. If the issue relates to your private residence, please provide suitable times for tradespeople to access the property.

If you are unsure whether a maintenance issue is urgent, please contact Home in Place and our staff will assist.

MAINTENANCE TIME FRAMES

TYPES OF REPAIRS	ACTION TIME FRAME
EMERGENCY / URGENT *Maintenance raised in response to an immediate threat of danger due to safety, health, or security risks of the occupants of the premises.*	
Examples include electrical danger, gas leaks, major water entry leaks and pipe failure and sewer overflow.	**1-4 hours depending on the location**
PRIORITY / NON-URGENT *Maintenance raised in response to a threat to the safety or security of the tenant where prompt action is needed.*	
Examples include toilets not flushing, minor leaks, grab rails loose or falling off, lighting issues.	**1-7 days**
RESPONSIVE *Maintenance that does not fall into Emergency or Priority categories but causes significant disruption to a tenant and requires attention before they escalate to urgent status.*	
Examples include broken clothesline, loose skirting tiles, exhaust fans not working.	**21 days**

More information maintenance timeframes can be found on the Home in Place website.

WWW.HOMEINPLACE.ORG/REPAIRS-AND-MAINTENANCE

SOME MAINTENANCE JOBS ARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF TENANTS

Tenants can be held responsible for:

- Damage to walls and doors
- Damage to floor coverings, window treatments or furnishings by burns, stains, etc.
- Cost of clearing blocked drains, should they become blocked through misuse
- Cost of repairing electrical fuses or circuits damaged by tenants using faulty electrical appliances. **All electrical repairs must be completed by a licenced electrician and are not to be attempted by tenants. Please call Home in Place to report all electrical faults**.
- Eradication of household pests and vermin such as mice, cockroaches, ants and fleas due to pets kept at the property, accumulated rubbish or the tenant's failure to keep the property clean and tidy
- Upkeep of lawns and garden areas
- Replacement of lost keys
- Replacement of light globes

For more information on your maintenance responsibilities refer to the state specific Maintenance and Repair Charges Policy on the Home in Place website at www.homeinplace.org/publications-and-policies

HANDY HOUSEHOLD HINTS VIDEO SERIES

The Home in Place team have created a series of videos to step you through some basic home maintenance.

You can find them on the Home in Place website.

WWW.HOMEINPLACE.ORG/REPAIRS-AND-MAINTENANCE

SECTION 4

Fire Safety

Fire Safety

SMOKE ALARMS

Working smoke alarms are the best way to alert people to fires in their home. Home in Place properties are fitted with hardwired smoke alarms.

Home in Place will:

- Ensure that at least one smoke alarm is installed in a hallway, outside a bedroom or another suitable location
- Check smoke alarms every year to ensure they are working
- Replace batteries every year (or lithium batteries, in the period specified by the smoke alarm manufacturer)
- Replace smoke alarms within 10 years of manufacture, or earlier if specified by the smoke alarm manufacturer
- Give the tenant at least two business days' notice to inspect or assess the need for a smoke alarm repair or replacement
- Give the tenant at least one hour notice to carry out a repair or replacement of a smoke alarm
- Use a licenced electrician to repair or replace a hardwired smoke alarm

All tenants must notify Home in Place if a smoke alarm is not working. This includes when a battery needs to be changed. Smoke alarms are installed for tenants' safety. Do not remove the battery or interfere with the smoke alarm for any reason!

EVERYDAY FIRE PREVENTION

1. Never leave cooking unattended.
2. Keep tea towels, paper, and other flammables away from stoves.
3. Don't overload power points or use damaged cords.
4. Switch off heaters, stoves, and appliances when not in use.
5. Keep heaters, candles and incense away from curtains and bedding.

FIRE BLANKETS

Fire blankets are made of fire-resistant fabric (like woven fiberglass) used to smother small fires, particularly in kitchens (oil/fat fires) or on a person's clothing, by cutting off their oxygen supply, and it can also shield against heat. They are simple to use, require no special training, and come in various sizes.

Fire blanket use

- Keep fire blankets accessible in the kitchen and away from the stove.
- Take hold of the two tabs and pull the blanket from its bag
- Hold the tabs towards yourself and protect your hands.
- Walk slowly towards the fire, stretching your arms in front of you.
- As the blanket touches the top of the stove, place it over the fire.
- Leave the blanket over the pot for at least thirty minutes.
- If it's safe to do so, turn off the gas/electricity at the stove or at the main supply.
- Call Triple Zero (000)

ESCAPE PLANNING

- **In a fire: Get out, stay out, and call 000.**
- Know two ways out of your home if possible.
- Keep exits clear. Ensure your home is clear of clutter as this it can affect emergency response time and access.
- Share your escape plan with everyone in the household.
- If safe, close doors behind you to slow the spread.
- Never use lifts — always use stairs.
- Have a meeting point outside with family/housemates

EXTRA SAFETY IN APARTMENTS AND COMPLEXES

- Don't block hallways, balconies, or fire exits.
- Don't wedge fire doors open.
- Know where fire extinguishers/alarms are in your building.

Important Contacts

EMERGENCY 000

People who are deaf or hard of hearing, dial 106 using a TTY.

Fire services in each state offer free programs and information to help residents identify fire and safety risks in the home.

NSW TENANTS

Fire and Rescue NSW Safety Visits Program

Free home safety visits are available, including advice on fire risks and smoke alarms.

Phone: **02 9265 2999** (general enquiries)

www.fire.nsw.gov.au/safetyvisits

You can also contact your local fire station for more information.

QUEENSLAND TENANTS

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services SAFEHOME Program

Free home fire safety visits delivered by firefighters.

Phone to book: **13 QGOV (13 74 68)**

www.fire.qld.gov.au/safety-education/programs/safehome

VICTORIA TENANTS

Fire Rescue Victoria

Fire Rescue Victoria provides home fire safety advice, resources and community education to help reduce fire risks in the home.

Phone: **1300 367 617**

www.frv.vic.gov.au/home-fire-prevention

WESTERN AUSTRALIA TENANTS

Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES)

DFES provides home fire safety information and prevention advice for Western Australian residents.

Phone: **13 DFES (13 3337)**

www.dfes.wa.gov.au/hazard-information/fire-in-the-home

SECTION 5

Get Involved

TENANT REFERENCE GROUPS AND OUR VOICE PANEL

Tenant Reference Groups provide a local forum for tenants and Home in Place staff to discuss key aspects of our service. Members of these groups meet quarterly to discuss a range of issues that impact their lives.

Discussions from each Tenant Reference Group feed into the deliberations of an overarching **Our Voice Panel** which in turn reports to the Home in Place Board. This ensures the views of tenants are able to influence company policy and decision making at the highest levels.

Developing local opportunities for tenant 'voice' is an important aspect of our overall tenant engagement strategy.

Benefits can include:

- Services more closely aligned to tenants needs
- Direct feedback on issues of quality of service
- Costs savings from efficiencies identified by tenants
- Better tenant relations and opportunities for tenant empowerment

To find out more or register your interest in joining the Tenant Reference Group in your area, contact your local Community Participation Officer or Tenancy Relations Officer on 1300 333 733.

VOLUNTEERING

Home in Place encourages and supports tenants who wish to take part in volunteering opportunities. Tenants can volunteer at our events and activities or can talk to us about referral pathways to other types of volunteerism.

You can find out more by talking to your local Community Participation Officer or Tenancy Relations Officer by calling 1300 333 733 or by visiting the local branch to make an appointment.

SUSTAINABILITY AND GARDENS

Home in Place works with tenants to help them participate in building resilient, sustainable, and inclusive communities. We have introduced community gardens in social housing complexes across the country.

Community gardens not only provide tenants with access to fresh fruit and vegetables but create a platform for social inclusion and address good health and wellbeing on a number of levels.

Home in Place also engages tenants on other sustainability issues providing information on energy and water efficiency and responsible waste management.

To find out more about our sustainability initiatives, keep an eye on our social media pages and the Home in Place website, or contact your local Community Participation Officer or Tenancy Relations Officer on 1300 333 733.

CLASSIC
KNIGHTS
nib
NSW

TENANT INCENTIVE SCHEME

The Tenant Incentive Scheme recognises tenants who are excelling in five categories. Winners are announced on a quarterly basis and are presented with a certificate and $50 voucher. Nominations for this award can come from Home in Place staff or from within the tenant group.

CATEGORY 1. STAR AWARD

Awarded to tenants who look after their properties to a very high standard, and in some cases, look after the common areas at their complexes. Additionally, these tenants are up-to-date or in advance on their rent.

CATEGORY 2. MOST IMPROVED AWARD

Awarded to tenants who have demonstrated significant improvement in property care, engagement and/or improved financial sustainability.

CATEGORY 3. COMMUNITY AND SUSTAINABILITY CONTRIBUTION AWARD

Awarded to tenants who have created or contributed significant improvement to local environment, recycling, gardening and/or common areas, or have undertaken a clear role supporting their community.

CATEGORY 4. PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Awarded to tenants who have worked hard to achieve a significant personal goal or accomplishment.

CATEGORY 5. HOME IN PLACE TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT AWARD

Awarded to tenants who have completed a learning program or training course or gained employment.

Grow a Star

Grow a Star is an innovative youth mentoring and scholarship program that supports young people to pursue creative, musical, sporting, education and training goals.

Do you know a young person who could do with some support through the Grow a Star program?

Applicants must be 5-18 years old, already engaged in education, training, or employment and able to demonstrate a need for assistance.

You can find out more on the Grow a Star website www.growastar.org..

TENANT EVENTS

Throughout the year Home in Place runs a number of tenant and community events. These will be advertised in our newsletter, on our website, via our social media accounts or you may receive a text message telling you about an upcoming event.

We encourage you to join events and activities when you can, and welcome volunteers should you wish to help us deliver activities for tenants and the community. You can do this by contacting your local Community Participation Officer or Tenancy Relations Officer on 1300 333 733.

SECTION 6

Providing feedback

Complaints

Home in Place is committed to ensuring all tenants and applicants have fair and equitable access to its services.

If you are not happy with our service, standards, practices, or policies, you have the right to make a complaint. Home in Place welcomes complaints and views them as a way to improve our services.

The following information is important to remember about our complaints system:

- Home in Place will acknowledge your complaint in writing as soon as possible.
- Complaints will be investigated as quickly as possible in accordance with company policies and procedures.
- You have the right to use an advocate or a friend to assist you throughout the process.
- Complaints received will be recorded in an appropriate manner.
- The complaints process will be clearly communicated to applicants and tenants. Information about the complaints process is accessible on our website or by contacting your local branch for information.
- Home in Place will respond to all complaints in a confidential, effective, and timely manner.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome, Home in Place will provide you with contact information for external agencies that may be able to assist you.

This may include making an application to the relevant state Housing Registrar or Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

HOUSING REGISTRARS AND TENANCY TRIBUNALS

Each state has an independent Housing Registrar and a tribunal that can hear tenancy-related matters. Contact details are provided below.

NEW SOUTH WALES

Registrar of Community Housing
Phone: 1800 330 940
www.nsw.gov.au/departments-and-agencies/registrar-of-community-housing

NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT)
Phone: 1300 006 228
www. ncat.nsw.gov.au

QUEENSLAND

Queensland Housing Registrar
Phone: 13 QGOV (13 74 68)
www.housing.qld.gov.au/about/department/business-areas/policy-performance-and-first-nations/qld-registrar

Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT)
Phone: 1300 753 228
www.qcat.qld.gov.au

VICTORIA

Housing Registrar Victoria
www.vic.gov.au/housing-registrar

Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT)
Phone: 1300 018 228
www.vcat.vic.gov.au

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Community Housing Registration Office
Email: registrar@communities.wa.gov.au
www.wa.gov.au/government/document-collections/housing-investors-and-partners-community-housing-organisations

State Administrative Tribunal (SAT)
Phone: 1300 306 017
www.sat.justice.wa.gov.au

HOW DO I MAKE A COMPLAINT AND WHAT HAPPENS?

To make a complaint:

1. Obtain a copy of the Complaint Form from your local branch, Head Office or by downloading a copy from the Home in Place website at www.homeinplace.org/complaints.
2. Make sure you include as much information as possible about your complaint. Anonymous complaints are only investigated if there is sufficient information provided about the issue, and parties responsible, to support an investigation.
3. Lodge the Complaint Form to our Complaints Officer via email at feedback@homeinplace.org or with your Tenancy Relations Officer. Alternatively, complaints may be lodged in person at any of our branches or over the phone.

All complaints will be reviewed and all information available at the time of complaint will be considered. We may need to contact you if we need more information.

Following the investigation, a formal response will be forwarded to you in writing.

Please note, to protect the rights and privacy of tenants and staff, we may not be able to tell you the result of the investigation if it involves others

For more information, please refer to the Complaint, Compliment and Feedback Handling Policy POL-012 and Complaint, Compliment and Feedback Handling Procedure PROC-012-01 on the Home in Place website at www.homeinplace.org/publications-and-policies or contact Home in Place.

COMPLAINTS ABOUT NEIGHBOURS OR ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Home in Place takes all complaints about antisocial or disruptive behaviour seriously and will investigate each incident in a fair and reasonable manner.

Home in Place can only act when satisfied that the antisocial/disruptive behaviour has occurred, and the complaint relates to a tenancy issue.

It may be helpful to keep a diary of incidents. An **incident diary form** is available for you to download from the Home in Place website at www.homeinplace.org/complaints or you may obtain a copy of the form by contacting Home in Place.

When an incident is confirmed appropriate action will be taken.

Home in Place can only investigate allegations if the alleged behaviour may be a breach of a tenancy agreement.

Some complaints must first be reported to the relevant authority.

Behaviour that can be reported to the local council includes:

- Noise complaints
- Excessive dog barking
- Dangerous or roaming animals
- Cars blocking footpaths

Home in Place cannot investigate alleged criminal/illegal behaviour and this type of alleged activity should be reported to the police. Home in Place can act if the behaviour is substantiated by police and constitutes a breach of the tenancy agreement.

Examples of behaviour that must be reported to the police includes:

- threatening behaviour
- domestic violence
- suspected illegal drug activity
- stalking
- theft
- a neighbour being either physically or verbally harassed by another neighbour

Home in Place investigates all complaints of antisocial and disruptive behaviour thoroughly and fairly, giving tenants the opportunity to respond. Tenants can have a support person or advocate help them with this process.

Tenants who have been the subject of a complaint must be given a reasonable chance to address their behaviour. Home in Place may take a range of actions to help the tenant address the behaviour and maintain their tenancy, including referral to a support service, closely monitoring the tenancy or action in the tenancy tribunal.

For more information, please refer to the Management of Antisocial Behaviour Policy POL-025-04 on the Home in Place website at www.homeinplace.org/publications-and-policies or contact Home in Place.

Where there is a dispute between neighbours, Home in Place will not normally get involved except where required to under the relevant tenancy legislation.

Dispute resolution services may be able to assist with these types of disputes.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION SERVICES

Independent dispute resolution services may be available in each state to help people resolve disputes without going to a tribunal or court.

QUEENSLAND

Dispute Resolution Centres (DRC)
www.qld.gov.au/law
Phone: 1800 017 288

VICTORIA

Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria (DSCV)
www.vic.gov.au/dispute-settlement-centre-victoria
Phone: 1300 372 888

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Legal Aid WA
www.legalaid.wa.gov.au/find-legal-answers/homes-and-neighbours
Phone: 1300 650 579

INTERNAL REVIEWS AND APPEALS

If you are dissatisfied with a decision, you may be able to seek to have that decision reviewed.

The following is information about Home in Place's internal review and appeal process:

- Appeals must be lodged in writing
- Appeals will be acknowledged
- The issues raised will be reviewed
- Appeals will be managed confidentially unless Home in Place is required by law or contractual obligations to report a matter
- You have the right to use an advocate or friend during the appeal process
- If you are not satisfied with the outcome, Home in Place will provide contact details of external agencies that may be able to assist you
- Appeals will be managed in a timely manner

INDEPENDENT OR GOVERNMENT-RUN APPEAL SERVICES

If you are still dissatisfied, you may be able to request a review of a housing decision, independent or government-run appeal and review services are available in each state.

NEW SOUTH WALES

Housing Appeals Committee (HAC)
An independent body that reviews social and community housing decisions.
Phone: 1800 629 794
Email: hac@homes.nsw.gov.au
www.nsw.gov.au/departments-and-agencies/housing-appeals-committee

QUEENSLAND

Department of Housing and Public Works – internal review process
Housing decisions can be reviewed through the Department's review and appeal process.
Phone: 13 QGOV (13 74 68)
www.qld.gov.au/housing/public-community-housing/public-housing-tenants

VICTORIA

Housing Appeals Office
Phone: 1800 807 702
www.housing.vic.gov.au/appeal-decision

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Department of Communities Housing Appeals
Appeals relating to housing decisions are managed by the Department of Communities.
Phone: 1800 333 325
www.wa.gov.au/organisation/department-of-housing-and-works/department-of-housing-and-works-housing-appeals-process

SECTION 7

Tips and Assistance

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Police, Fire or Ambulance	000
State Emergency Service SES	132 500
Crime Stoppers	1800 333 000

CYBER SECURITY AND ONLINE SAFETY

Tips for improving your cyber security and online safety:

1. **Avoid clicking hyperlinks**, especially if they claim to be from a financial institution. Most scammers will use links and impersonate banking emails. If the first thing a link asks for is your username and password it is the first warning flag something is not right.
2. Ensure your **computer is patched and updated** as often as possible.
3. Always use an **antivirus program**, Microsoft Windows has Defender built in, but we also recommend Webroot, Kaspersky or ESET.
4. **Scams, competitions, giveaways. If they sound too good to be true then double check the source** is correct and the email you have received the offer from is legitimate. Hackers often use these giveaways to capture your email address, passwords and other personal information.
5. Enable **two factor or multifactor logins** wherever possible, especially on your Facebook and email accounts. These systems use either SMS, phone call or an app to deliver you a special one-time pin or code to enter when logging in. This adds an additional layer of verification to your account.

SUPPORT SERVICES AND HELPLINES

There are many organisations available to support your needs. We have listed some here, although if you would like help connecting to a service, you can call Home in Place on 1300 333 733 to speak with a member of our tenancy support team.

Police Assistance Line
To report a crime
131 444

Domestic Violence Line
Counselling and referrals for women
1800 656 463

Lifeline
24/7 crisis support and suicide prevention
13 11 14

Suicide Call Back Service
24/7 counselling for those at risk or affected by suicide
1300 659 467

Beyond Blue
24/7 mental health support
1300 22 4636

13YARN
24/7 national crisis support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
13 92 76

MensLine Australia
24/7 support for men
1300 78 99 78

1800RESPECT
24/7 confidential support for sexual assault, domestic and family violence
1800 737 732

Family Relationship Advice Line
Support for families affected by relationship breakdown
1800 050 321

Kids Helpline
24/7 counselling for ages 5-25
1800 55 1800

National Debt Helpline
Financial counselling
1800 007 007

QLife
LGBTIQ+ peer support
1800 184 527
3pm-12am AEST

PANDA Perinatal Anxiety & Depression Australia
Support for new/expecting parents
1300 726 306

Translating and Interpreting Service
1800 131 450
www.tisnational.gov.au

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)
1800 800 110
www.ndis.gov.au

Salvation Army
Supporting those in hardship
13 72 58
www.salvationarmy.org.au

Senior Rights Service
For older people experiencing or at risk of elder abuse 1300 368 821
www.seniorsrights.org.au

Ask Izzy
Find services you need, now and nearby
www.askizzy.org.au

Centrelink
Social security payments and services to Australians
132 300
www.servicesaustralia.gov.au

SECTION 8

Policies

Policies

Throughout this handbook, we have referenced various policies. These, and many others, are available on the Home in Place website or by contacting Home in Place.

ABSENCE FROM PROPERTY POLICY

This policy sets out Home in Place's approach to managing absences from properties and ensuring properties are not left vacant for long periods of time.

ACCESS TO PROPERTY POLICY

This policy defines the circumstances in which Home in Place will seek to enter a property, the type of access and the frequency of access.

ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

This policy defines Home in Place's position on the management of antisocial behaviour within the Home in Place portfolio.

APPEALS

This policy sets out Home in Place's Appeal and Internal Review processes for tenants and applicants for housing assistance.

ARREARS AND DEBT MANAGEMENT POLICY

This policy defines Home in Place's approach to the management of debt incurred by tenants and former tenants.

DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE POLICY

This policy defines how Home in Place will respond to and support tenants or applicants experiencing domestic and family violence.

ENDING A TENANCY POLICY

This policy explains the process undertaken when a tenant or Home in Place ends a tenancy.

HOME VISITS AND PROPERTY INSPECTIONS POLICY

This policy defines the approach Home in Place takes to fulfill its responsibilities in undertaking home visits and property inspections.

OCCUPANCY OF PROPERTY POLICY

This policy defines Home in Place's approach to occupancy of properties, including tenant occupancy, additional occupants, and visitors.

PRIVACY POLICY

This policy outlines Home in Place's approach to the collection, management, storage, disclosure, and reporting of personal information in accordance with the Australian Privacy Principles.

RENTAL BONDS POLICY

This policy explains that Home in Place requires rental bonds to be paid when renting a property and covers how Home in Place will manage the collection of rental bonds.

STARTING A TENANCY POLICY

This policy explains the Home in Place process for starting a tenancy.

SUCCESSION OF TENANCY POLICY

This policy outlines the circumstances in which Home in Place may agree to transfer a social housing tenancy to another household member.

TENANT CHARGES POLICY

This policy explains how Home in Place will identify and manage liability for damage or services to a property.

HOUSING TRANSFER POLICY

This policy explains how Home in Place will manage transfer applications by current social housing tenants.

THE INFORMATION PROVIDED IN THIS HANDBOOK IS ACCURATE AT THE TIME OF PRINTING. (JULY 2026)

MY NOTES

MY NOTES

MY NOTES

Home
in Place