

PURPOSE

This Policy sets out Evolve Housing's approach to proactively identifying Vulnerable Residents (see Definitions) and ensuring those residents are provided with the opportunity to receive relevant support services with respect and dignity.

POLICY REFERENCE	HS257.2
POLICY OWNER	General Manager, Resident Services
APPROVED BY	Evolve Housing Ltd CEO
APPROVAL DATE	31 October 2022
REVIEW DATE	31 October 2025

VULNERABLE RESIDENTS POLICY

1. SCOPE

This Policy applies to all social housing Residents of Evolve Housing Limited and its controlled entities, excluding Evolve Housing Vic Limited (referred to as the Company).

2. POLICY STATEMENT

Evolve Housing social housing tenants are offered the opportunity to undertake a needs assessment on behalf of all Residents in their household. The needs assessment, conducted by an Evolve Specialist Support Worker, is used to identify areas of vulnerability in relation to the Resident(s).

A needs assessment may result in the development of a Personal Support Plan in relation to areas of vulnerability and if required, will include referrals to external support partners.

While this Policy relates to social housing Residents, from time to time, the opportunity for a needs assessment may also be offered to individuals residing in other types of housing managed by Evolve. In those cases, and for the purposes of this Policy, the definition of Resident will apply equally to those individuals.

2.1 Identifying Vulnerable Residents

The Company collects a range of information about Residents through the initial social housing application process, and throughout their time as an Evolve Housing Resident. Through this information, areas of potential vulnerability can be identified, including in relation to the Resident's locality, gender, age, ethnicity and whether the Resident identifies as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

The information gathered also allows a Needs Assessment to be conducted for a Resident, which provides Evolve with important additional indicators regarding Residents who may be vulnerable because they are experiencing certain risks such as:

- Domestic or family violence;
- Mental health issues;
- Financial hardship;
- Antisocial behaviour; or
- Disability or other medical conditions.

There is opportunity for a Resident's vulnerability to be assessed at many touchpoints during a tenancy, including:

- Through the tenancy application process;
- During Resident home visits and housing inspections;
- At Evolve events or community engagement programs;
- Through suitable reports received from other individuals or organisations; and
- Through phone calls, emails or other methods of communication to, or instigated by, the Resident.

2.2 Support Plan

A needs assessment is conducted by an Evolve Housing Support Officer either in Evolve's offices, or at the Resident's home.

If a Resident is identified as being vulnerable and requiring support, the Evolve Support Officer will develop a Support Plan for the Resident to address their personal health, wellbeing, education, training and employment needs, and in consideration of the available support programs. Referrals to external support partners will also be included in the Support Plan if required.

The needs assessment, which includes a Personal Wellbeing Index, will only be completed when consent is received from the Resident to participate in Evolve's support programs.

2.3 Monitoring and Review

Evolve will continually update a Resident's information, as and when it is received, through formal and informal communication with the Resident. A vulnerable Resident's information will also be updated with actions which have been undertaken in relation to support programs. This assists Evolve to monitor the Resident's circumstances and their progress in relation to addressing identified vulnerabilities.

In the event that a Resident is determined as no longer requiring the additional support indicated in their Support Plan, this will be discussed with the Resident and that particular Plan concluded.

This does not prevent the Resident from participating in a future program if a vulnerability is identified at a later time.

3. DEFINITIONS

- Support Program – support programs are developed for groups of Residents in relation to particular areas of need, based on available data and feedback received from Evolve clients.
- Resident - a person who resides on a permanent basis in a social housing property which is owned or managed by Evolve Housing.
- Risk - a person at risk is someone who may be exposed to danger, harm or loss of something due to actions either performed by themselves or by others.
- Support Plan – Support Plans are developed for individual Residents based on their needs assessment.
- Vulnerable Resident - a Vulnerable Resident is a Resident who is or may potentially be experiencing difficulties or challenges due to circumstances relating to their physical wellbeing, mental health, social isolation or frailty, gender, sexuality, financial means or demographic.
- Personal Wellbeing Index- Eight items of satisfaction that correspond to a quality of life domain such as health, life achievement, standard of living, personal relationships, personal safety, community connectedness, future security and spirituality.

4. RELATED RESOURCES

- Evolve Housing Appeals Policy
- Evolve Housing Complaints Management Policy
- Evolve Housing Supported Housing Policy
- Evolve Housing Zero Tolerance to Violence Policy
- Evolve Housing Privacy Policy

This Policy is subject to change from time to time at the discretion of the Company. Any approvals required under this Policy will be granted in accordance with the Company Delegations of Authority Policy.

Further information on this Policy and other topics, is available on the Evolve Housing website www.evolvehousing.com.au. If you have any specific questions regarding this Policy, please contact Evolve Housing on 1800 693 865 or email your enquiry to myevolve@evolvehousing.com.au

5. VERSION CONTROL

VERSION	Date Approved	Author	Key Changes
1.0	1/08/2017		Policy adopted
2.0	31/10/2022	Raylee Golding, GM GAL/ Co Sec	Application of policy extended to controlled entities