

PURPOSE

This purpose of this policy is to explain the circumstances as to when and why Evolve Housing Vic Limited (EHVL) Employees can gain access to a Resident's home, such as for the purposes of monitoring and maintaining a Resident's Property.

POLICY REFERENCE	VHS005.1
POLICY OWNER	General Manager, Resident Services
APPROVED BY	Evolve Housing Ltd CEO
APPROVAL DATE	1 Mar 2022
REVIEW DATE	1 Mar 2025

RESIDENT VISITS POLICY

1. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Residents of EHVL Properties.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

EHVL is committed to addressing the needs of its Residents and to maintaining the condition of its Properties. One of the ways it does this is through conducting Resident visits.

EHVL may only conduct a visit to a Resident's Property in compliance with the conditions set out in the Residential Tenancy Agreement and the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997* (Vic). It is a policy of EHVL to conduct Resident visits at least once every 12 months (but not more than once every 6 months) in order to carry out a property inspection.

2.1 Benefits of Resident Visits

Resident visits are beneficial to both Residents and EHVL, as they enable EHVL to:

- Help sustain tenancies and maintain Properties;
- Identify and keep up to date with tenancy management needs;
- Update EHVL records on the condition of each Property;
- Discuss maintenance issues with Residents;
- Confirm who is living at the Property;
- Identify issues or problems a Resident may be experiencing with their tenancy;
- Identify whether a Resident may need support to live independently or needs to be linked to a support service; and
- Build a positive relationship with Residents, which facilitates effective communication and responsible tenancy.

2.2 Obtaining access to a Resident's Property

EHVL staff follow a range of guidelines for conducting Resident Visits. These guidelines include:

- EHVL will contact the Resident beforehand to advise of the intended visit and to make arrangements. Where possible, we will try to visit at a time that is convenient to the Resident;
- As a matter of courtesy, the Resident will be sent a letter stating the purpose of the visit and requesting an appointment for property inspections;
- A Resident Visit will only take place between 8am and 5pm Monday to Friday, (not including public holidays), unless the Resident has agreed to another time, or the *Residential Tenancies Act* permits it;

- EHVL staff will carry identification on all visits and produce this on request;
- EHVL staff will conduct themselves in a professional, courteous and respectful manner, mindful of the fact that they are visiting the Resident's home.

Under the *Residential Tenancies Act*, EHVL staff may enter a Resident's premises only in the following circumstances:

- In an emergency, including for the purpose of carrying out urgent repairs. No notice is required to be given.
- To carry out necessary repairs. The Resident must be given two days' notice;
- To inspect the premises. No more than 2 visits may be conducted in any 12 month period (and none in the initial 3 months of the tenancy) and the Resident must be given seven days' notice before each visit;
- If there is good reason for EHVL to believe the premises has been abandoned. No notice is required to be given.
- If the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) orders it (but only as and when specified in the Order).
- At any other time with the Resident's consent.

2.3 If Resident refuses to provide access

When EHVL has requested access to the Property in the circumstances set out above and the Resident refuses to provide access, an application for an access order may be made by EHVL to the Victorian Civil & Administrative Tribunal (VCAT).

2.4 Complaints and Appeals

If a Resident is not satisfied with the service provided by EHVL, they can make a Complaint by completing the form available from EHVL staff.

If a Resident does not agree with a decision EHVL has made, they can request a formal review. To do this, the Resident needs to complete an Appeals Form stating why they disagree with the decision. EHVL's Appeals Policy and the Appeals Form are all available from EHVL staff.

3. DEFINITIONS

- Appeal – a disagreement by a Resident with a decision made by EHVL that affects their tenancy, and which the Resident has requested be reviewed.
- Complaint – an expression of dissatisfaction with the standard or type of service provided by EHVL, which is made by an external person or organisation (Complainant), and where the Complainant had expected or is requesting a different outcome or result.
- Days – means calendar days (unless otherwise stated)
- Property – the property or residential premises as described in the Residential Tenancy Agreement between EHVL and the Tenant
- Resident – a person who resides on a permanent basis in a property which is owned or managed by EHVL under a Residential Tenancy Agreement (includes a Tenant)
- Residential Tenancy Agreement (or Tenancy Agreement) – a written agreement between EHVL (as Landlord) and a Tenant, which governs the terms on which that Tenant occupies the property described in the Agreement.
- Tenant – a person who signs the Residential Tenancy Agreement with EHVL and who has certain rights and obligations under that Agreement. (A Tenant is also a Resident.)
- Victorian Civil & Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) – an independent Victorian statutory body which resolves a wide range of disputes including tenancy and other residential Property issues. VCAT decisions must be followed and are enforceable.

4. RELATED RESOURCES

- Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic)
- Residential Tenancy Agreement
- EHVL Zero Tolerance to Violence Policy

This policy is subject to change from time to time at the discretion of EHVL. Any approvals required under this policy will be granted in accordance with the Evolve Housing group Delegations of Authority Policy. If you have any specific questions regarding this policy, please contact EHVL on 1800 693 865 or email your enquiry to myevolve@evolvehousing.com.au.

5. VERSION CONTROL

VERSION	Date Approved	Author	Key Changes
1.0	1/03/2022	GAL	Policy adopted