

PURPOSE

This policy, effective 1 April 2022, outlines the changes introduced to the management of rent arrears and income assessment to help prevent hardship during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

POLICY REFERENCE	VHS262.1
POLICY OWNER	General Manager, Resident Services
APPROVED BY	Evolve Housing Ltd CEO
APPROVAL DATE	1 Mar 2022
REVIEW DATE	1 Mar 2025

COVID-19 HARDSHIP POLICY**1. SCOPE**

This policy applies to all residents of Evolve Housing Vic Limited (EHVL) who live in social housing and EHVL owned Affordable Housing properties.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

EHVL is committed to provide safe, secure and affordable housing to all residents. In line with Department of Families, Fairness and Housing adopted policy changes this policy is created to alleviate adverse financial impacts to residents as a result of the COVID-19 global pandemic.

The changes will extend to waivers for additional payments made to residents under the Commonwealth Government Stimulus package to address economic impacts from COVID-19 for eligible Centrelink recipients.

Effective from 1 April 2022 (with earlier instances assessable on a case-by-case basis) the following policy changes now apply:

2.1 Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment

This is a one-off payment to help Victorian workers, who have been directed to self-isolate or quarantine for 14 days, or care for someone who has been directed to self-isolate or quarantine. The Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment recognises that the requirement to self-isolate or quarantine at home can cause a financial burden for some individuals and families who are without an income during this period.

If you have lost or expect to lose at least 20 hours of work, you can apply for \$750. If you have lost or expect to lose between 8 and 19 hours of work, you can claim \$450. You can make a claim through your online Centrelink account through myGov.

2.2 Emergency Accommodation

If you have tested positive for COVID-19 or are a close contact of someone with COVID-19, you may be offered the option of moving into government operated hotel quarantine accommodation. Accommodation is available to people who cannot quarantine or isolate safely because they use shared facilities or may have safety, wellbeing or other health issues. To confirm your eligibility, please contact the coronavirus hotline on 1800 675 398 and press 0 if you need an interpreter. This service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

2.3 Food and Essential Items Support

Food and essential items are only supplied to people who are in self-quarantine or isolation due to COVID-19, or have been diagnosed with COVID-19, or are a household contact or presumed to have COVID-19 but

are unable to access a PCR or rapid antigen test. If you have provisions at home or can buy what you need with an online shopping delivery, or if you have friends, family or neighbours who can assist you with meals or to do some grocery shopping for your 7 day self-isolation or quarantine period – then please use those means.

If you do not have these options, you may be eligible for an Emergency Relief Package. Please contact the Victorian Coronavirus Hotline on 1800 675 398 and select option five (5) for support to access food and other essential items. If you need to speak to someone in another language, select option zero (0).

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

3. VERSION CONTROL

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