FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is Commonwealth Rent Assistance?

Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) is a non-taxable payment from the Australian Government to people in receipt of an eligible Department of Human Services (Centrelink) payment who are paying rent in the private market (including non-government organization such as community housing providers).
Public housing tenants are not eligible to receive CRA because they pay rent to a government housing authority.

Will I be eligible for CRA when I become an Evolve Housing VIC tenant?

You may be eligible for CRA when you become a tenant of Evolve Housing VIC. Eligibility depends on your individual circumstances, such as, household income and the rent you are charged. Most tenants receiving a Centrelink or Department of Veterans' Affairs payment are eligible for CRA. We will provide further information about eligibility for CRA during the lease sign-up process.

What help will I get to apply for CRA?

Evolve Housing VIC will assist with the application process during the transfer to make it as simple as possible for renters. More information will be provided by Evolve Housing VIC at the time of lease sign-up and there is no need for you to contact Centrelink. All renters will be provided with a letter to submit to Centrelink to claim for CRA.

Will I need to reapply for CRA if my rent changes, e.g., general rent increase, or my income changes?

No, you do not need to reapply for CRA if your rent changes. However, if your rent, income or the makeup of your household changes, you need to advise both Centrelink and Evolve Housing VIC, as changes may affect both your rent and CRA payments. Renters must advise Centrelink of any changes within 14 days.

What if I am eligible for CRA but choose not to apply for it?

The amount of rent charged will be based on the amount of CRA a household is entitled to receive, even if an application for CRA is not made.

Will my rent increase if I am eligible for CRA?

Yes, rent will increase if renters are eligible for CRA. Rent will only increase by the new amount of CRA your household receives, and your 'after-rent income' will be the same as if you had stayed with Housing Victoria – refer to the following example.

Will my rent increase if my household is not eligible for CRA?

Renters who are not eligible for CRA, rent will only increase if there are any other increases to the household income, the same as would occur with Housing Victoria.

Example
Please note the rate of CRA paid may vary according to individual circumstances.

Housing Vic Tenant	(per fortnight)	Community Housing Tenant	(per fortnight)
Income: (Aged Pension Single & Energy Supplement)	$950.90*	Income: (Aged Pension Single & Energy Supplement)	$950.90*
Income charged as rent: (25% of income)	$237.72	Income charged as rent: (25% of income)	$237.72
Public Housing Tenant not eligible for CRA		CRA received:	$151.60*
Total rent charged: (income charged as rent)	$237.72	Total rent charged: (income charged as rent + CRA)	$389.32
'After Rent' Income:	**$713.18**	**'After Rent' Income:**	**$713.18**

Rates current at February 2023

Could someone be asked to pay more than the market rent for their property, if their household becomes eligible for CRA?

No, renters will not be asked to pay more than the Market Rent if the household is eligible for CRA. The maximum 'income charged as rent' that a renter can be charged is the Market Rent for the property.

I pay my rent now Online through Housing Vic Online Services– Will this change?

Evolve Housing strongly encourage all renters to pay rent via Centrepay. Evolve Housing also offer other payment options, such as Direct debit from your bank account, Eftpos payments over the phone or in the office, and at the Post office. For more information about your payment options speak to your Housing Manager at the time of sign-up.

What if I have more questions regarding CRA?

For more information about Commonwealth Rent Assistance please contact us on **1800 693 865**
or via email: myevolve@evolvehousing.com.au
You may also telephone the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing on **1300 475 170**, or visit Services Australia website: www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/rent-assistance for more information