

PURPOSE

This document defines Evolve Housing Vic Limited's (EHVL) approach to allocating long term social housing. This policy is intended to:

- Ensure equitable access to all eligible people seeking housing;
- Maintain a fair, needs-based allocations process and non-judgemental attitude to all Applicants;
- Ensure an individual's rights will not be discriminated against on the grounds of ethnicity, gender, marital status, criminal history, physical and/or intellectual ability, mental health or sexual preference in line with state and federal-anti discrimination laws;
- Provide an open and transparent allocations process;
- Meet funding and regulatory requirements for allocation of community housing and other related housing programs;
- Provide Applicants with coordinated access to social housing through the Victorian Housing Register; and
- Maximise utilisation of scarce housing resources.

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| POLICY REFERENCE | VHS008.1 |
| POLICY OWNER | General Manager, Resident Services |
| APPROVED BY | Evolve Housing Ltd CEO |
| APPROVAL DATE | 1 Mar 2022 |
| REVIEW DATE | 1 Mar 2025 |

ALLOCATIONS (MATCHING CLIENTS AND PROPERTIES) POLICY

1. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Applicants for social housing offered by EHVL.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

Applications for social housing are managed through the Victorian Housing Register. If an Applicant is assessed as being eligible, they are then listed on the Victorian Housing Register. EHVL then uses the information in this Register to make an offer of housing to an Applicant when a suitable property becomes available. In making an offer of housing EHVL aims to act consistently with the principles in the Public Housing Allocations Operational Guideline published by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing. To the extent of any inconsistency with this policy, EHVL will follow the Guideline.

EHVL is committed to promoting successful and sustainable tenancies when matching Applicants to properties. This means matching an Applicant to a property that:

- Is large enough for the Applicant's household;
- Meets any known special needs of the Applicant;
- Encourages a sustainable tenancy; and
- Makes the best use of available housing stock.

2.1 Allocation of social housing

Generally, allocations of social housing will be made according to the Victorian Housing Register's order of prioritisation having regard to priority, date of application and the suitability of available properties. Applicants approved for priority transfers are housed ahead of other Applicants on the Housing Register.

Where a vacancy occurs and there is no suitable Applicant approved for priority transfers or priority access categories, EHVL will allocate the property to the next appropriate person on the Housing Register.

EHVL aims to make sure that properties with specific features that are in high demand and short supply are only allocated to those Applicants who need them. These features include:

- Properties that are suitable for older people;
- Properties that have been built or modified to meet the needs of people with a disability; and
- In some cases, properties on the ground floor, properties with level access or properties with a yard/garden.

EHVL relies on Applicants to maintain up to date information on the Housing Register in order to ensure Applicants can be matched to properties which best meet their needs.

2.1.1 Priority Access

Under the Victorian Housing Register there are priority access categories. These include:

- Emergency management housing;
- Priority transfer (family violence);
- Homeless with support (family violence);
- Special housing needs (family violence)
- Special housing needs; and
- Special housing needs aged 55 and over.

Priority access categories are given priority when housing allocations are made under the Victorian Housing Register.

2.2 Supported Housing

EHVL partners with various support agencies in order to help Tenants with specific needs maintain their tenancy and be able to live independently. A Support Partner will normally provide EHVL with the name of a potential tenant who requires accommodation. The potential tenant must have an active priority housing application on the Housing Register (unless the requirement is specifically exempted under the program). All allocations to Applicants nominated by a Support Partner are made in accordance with the specific program guidelines and service agreements.

2.3 Planning, Funding and Program requirements

From time to time, EHVL may need to comply with planning, funding or program requirements when allocating certain properties. These allocations will be fully documented and may include but are not limited to:

- Meeting agreed, externally determined goals (for example, in relation to Aboriginality and homelessness);
- Allocating properties to meet a designated purpose, in accordance with the Victorian Housing Register, Clients with Special Accommodation Requirements Operational Guidelines.

2.4 Matching an Applicant to a property

When a property becomes available, EHVL makes sure that the information pertaining to that property is up-to-date. When deciding if a property is suitable for a particular Applicant, EHVL considers whether the property is likely to address the Applicant's housing needs and result in a sustainable tenancy. If the property is not suitable, EHVL allocates the property to the next suitable Applicant on the housing register whose housing needs would be met by the property.

Some properties may only be matched to Applicants with specific needs.

| Type of Property | Applicant |
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| Singles housing | Applicants who have elected, or are deemed to be considered for this type of accommodation. Some bedsit and one-bedroom housing may be set aside for single people within a specified age group. The groups include youth (under 25), singles (25-54) and an older group (over 55). The properties include bedsit and one-bedroom accommodation. |
| Sponsored housing | EHVL may have sponsorship arrangements with other organisations. The other organisation may nominate or recommend applicants for a property. |
| Special accommodation requirements | Special Accommodation Requirements include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • housing in a specific area or location • housing types such as properties without stairs or are low-density due to limited mobility or a medical or mental health condition • installation of minor modifications such as grabrails or lever taps • installation of major modifications such as internal fire safety sprinkler systems or medical heating/cooling systems • a fully disability modified property • a property with wheelchair accessibility • requirement for an extra bedroom because of a medical condition. |

2.5 Offering a property

Once a suitable match has been identified, EHVL will generally offer the property to an Applicant in accordance with guidelines outlined under the Victorian Housing Register Public Housing Allocations Operational Guideline.

2.5.1 Conditions for former social housing tenants

- **Less than satisfactory** former social housing tenants with a record of substantiated breaches of the 'nuisance and annoyance' condition as described in a Residential Tenancy Agreement, will only receive an offer of housing for an initial six (6) month fixed term. EHVL will use this fixed term tenancy to determine the Applicant's ability to sustain a tenancy.
- **Unsatisfactory** former social housing tenants who meet the specific eligibility conditions set by EHVL for this Applicant group, will only receive an offer of housing for an initial six month fixed term. EHVL will use this fixed term tenancy to determine the Applicant's ability to sustain a tenancy.
- **Ineligible** former social housing tenants will not receive an offer of housing from EHVL.

2.6 Criteria used to match an Applicant to a property

| Basic Criteria | Additional criteria that is considered when relevant | |
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| Location of property | EHVL will match an Applicant to the location/allocation zone requested by the Applicant. | EHVL will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Match to specific locations within an allocation zone when the Applicant has demonstrated a need for this allocation zone. |
| Type of property | EHVL will match an Applicant to a house, townhouse or unit according to availability. | EHVL will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Match an Applicant to a specific type of property if the Applicant has demonstrated a need for this type of property; Match an Applicant to properties with specific features (such as a ground floor property, property with level access, a modified property, or property with a maximum number of stairs) if the Applicant has demonstrated a need for this type of property; Not match an Applicant to properties that have specific features if the Applicant has demonstrated that these features would make the property unsuitable for them; Where possible, match households with young children to properties with yards, subject to availability. |

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| Number of bedrooms in the property | EHVL will match an Applicant to a bedroom allocation based on the Applicant's household composition. The bedroom entitlements used by EHVL are set out in the Bedroom Entitlements table below. | <p>Subject to availability, EHVL will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Match Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Applicants to a property that has one more bedroom than the entitlement for the household, if the Applicant has requested this. This is in recognition of the family responsibilities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Applicants. (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Applicants can ask for an extra bedroom on their Housing Register application or at any time while they are on the Housing Register.);• Offer a bedroom allocation above the entitlement if the Applicant has demonstrated a need for a property of this size. For example, EHVL will allocate an additional room for a family member or carer if the Applicant has suitably demonstrated a need for this;• Consider the future accommodation needs of children in the household and where possible, take this into account when matching the Applicant to a property. |
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Entitlements

| Household size | Bedroom Entitlement |
|--|---|
| Single people | Studio, one or two bedrooms |
| Couples | One or two bedrooms |
| Single people or couples with one other household member | Two or three bedrooms |
| Single people or couples with two other household members | Two or three bedrooms |
| Single people or couples with three other household members | Three or four bedrooms |
| Single people or couples with four other household members | Three or four bedrooms |
| Single people or couples with five or more other household members | Four bedrooms or if available, five or more bedrooms. Applicants who have a five bedroom household complement will generally be offered a four bedroom property unless a five bedroom property is vacant when the Applicant's turn is reached. This is because of the limited availability of five bedroom accommodation. |

2.7 Criteria for accommodating children

| Situation | Entitlement |
|------------------------|---|
| Shared bedrooms | Same sex children up to 18 years of age are expected to share a bedroom. Male and female children are not expected to share a bedroom. |
| Child is over 18 years | The person is considered to be an adult when calculating the minimum bedroom entitlement. |

2.8 Accommodating elderly Applicants

EHVL acknowledges the special needs of elderly Applicants and their households, as well as the need to deliver services that are culturally appropriate. Under the Victorian Housing Register there is a priority access category for special housing needs aged 55 years or over. Priority access categories are given priority ahead of other applicants.

2.9 Evidence to substantiate housing needs

The information and evidence requirements necessary for EHVL to substantiate an Applicant's housing needs, are consistent with the requirements set out in the Victorian Housing Register policy and related policy supplements.

2.10 Appealing decisions

If an Applicant does not agree with a decision EHVL has made, they can request a formal first-level review.

To do this, the Applicant needs to complete an Appeals Form stating why they disagree with the decision. The Evolve Housing Appeals Policy sets out information regarding the decisions which can and cannot be appealed. The EHVL Appeals Policy and the EHVL Appeals Form are available from EHVL's offices.

If an Applicant believes the decision made by EHVL in the first-level review is incorrect and they remain dissatisfied, they can ask the Victorian Housing Appeals Committee to review the decision. The Victorian Housing Appeals Committee is an independent agency which can review appeals from individuals who are dissatisfied with decisions made by social housing providers such as EHVL.

3. DEFINITIONS

- Capital Property - A property that is fully managed by EHVL. EHVL organises and pays for all repairs, as well as property insurances, Council and water rates.
- Client – for the purpose of this policy, a Client is an Applicant for social housing offered by EHVL.
- Ineligible Former Tenant – a category assigned to a former tenant after they move out of a social housing property. An Ineligible Former Tenant is someone who was evicted from a property or vacated it prior to eviction, **due to an extreme breach** of their Tenancy Agreement (eg conducting illegal activities). An Ineligible Former Tenant is not eligible for any future social housing assistance.
- Landlord –the person or entity granting the right to occupy residential premises under the Residential Tenancy Agreement.
- Less Than Satisfactory Former Tenant – a category assigned to a former tenant after they move out of a social housing property. A Less Than Satisfactory Former Tenant is someone who abandoned or left a property in an unsatisfactory condition, or left a property having had substantiated complaints of antisocial behaviour.
- Property – the property or residential premises as described in the Residential Tenancy Agreement between the landlord and the Tenant.
- Residential Tenancy Agreement (or Tenancy Agreement) – a written agreement between a Landlord and a Tenant, which governs the terms on which that Tenant occupies the property described in the Agreement.
- Social Housing – is secure and affordable rental housing for people on low incomes with housing needs. It includes public, community and Aboriginal housing. Public housing is managed by HousingVic. Community housing is managed by non-government organisations such as EHVL.
- Support Partner – an organisation which has a Service Level Agreement with EHVL to assist clients in need, where support services provided by the organisation are matched with housing provided by EHVL
- Tenant – a person who signs the Residential Tenancy Agreement with EHVL and who has certain rights and obligations under that Agreement.
- Termination Notice – a Notice to Terminate Tenancy Agreement under the Residential Tenancies Act 1997
- Victorian Housing Register - a single list of approved applicants waiting for social housing. When a social housing provider approves an applicant for social housing, the provider places them on the Victorian Housing Register. DFFH Housing and community housing organisations use this register to offer housing when a suitable property becomes available.
- Unsatisfactory Former Tenant - a category assigned to a former tenant after they move out of a social housing property. An Unsatisfactory Former Tenant is someone who was evicted from a property or vacated it prior to eviction, **due to a breach** of their Tenancy Agreement (eg anti-social behaviour). They are not eligible for social housing until they have shown they can sustain a tenancy (ie no breaches) for at least six months.

4. RELATED RESOURCES

- EHVL Appeals Policy
- EHVL Privacy Policy
- EHVL Supported Housing Policy
- EHVL Terminating a Tenancy Policy
- EHVL Transfer Policy
- [Housing Act 1983 \(Vic\)](#)
- [Residential Tenancies Act 1997 \(Vic\)](#)
- <https://www.housing.vic.gov.au/>

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 |