Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Housing and Works**

HOUSING AUTHORITY RENTAL POLICY MANUAL

September 2026

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

The Housing Authority was established by the *State Housing Act 1946 (WA)* and currently operates under the *Housing Act 1980 (WA).*
The Housing Authority, through the State Government, is party to the National Agreement on Social Housing and Homelessness (NASHH).
NASHH is an agreement between the Australian, state and territory governments under the *Federal Financial Relations Act 2009*. It replaced the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement from 1 July 2024.

Through the NASHH, the Australian and state and territory governments will work towards a common goal to:

- help people who are experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness
- support Australia's social housing and homelessness services sectors to operate effectively

THE HOUSING AUTHORITY'S OBJECTIVES

The Housing Authority provides public rental housing as an affordable option for eligible low-income singles and families who are unable to afford private housing.
Under the Affordable Housing Strategy 2012-2020 the Housing Authority aims to provide 20 000 affordable housing opportunities by 2020. To achieve this, the Housing Authority is working widely with partners and markets to increase the range of housing options and solutions that are:

- Available (as and when needed)
- Affordable (within the means of low-to-moderate income households) and
- Appropriate (meets the needs of individual circumstances).

HOUSING AUTHORITY FUNCTIONS

The Housing Authority provides public, Aboriginal and regional housing, private rental assistance, Keystart home loans, land and property sales in metropolitan and country areas of Western Australia.

One of the Housing Authority's key functions is providing rental housing for low-income households who are often unable to obtain secure and affordable accommodation in the private rental sector. Some client groups such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, older people, people with disabilities and singles experience difficulties accessing housing in the private market.

RENTAL POLICY MANUAL

This manual contains policies relating to the management of public housing in Western Australia. Policies relating to maintenance are not part of this manual.

The Housing Authority continuously reviews the Rental Policy Manual. The updated version is published internally and on the Housing Authority's external website, www.dohw.wa.gov.au.

LAYOUT OF THE MANUAL

The manual is divided into various policies. Policy statements are set out on the left-hand side of the page with the related guidelines on the right-hand side. Where appropriate, examples are given under "guidelines".

CONTACTING THE HOUSING AUTHORITY

General Enquiries: 1800 093 325
TTY: 9476 2446
Maintenance: 1300 137 677
Customer feedback: 1800 257 677

Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Housing and Works**

ELIGIBILITY POLICY

ELIGIBILITY POLICY

PREAMBLE

Eligibility for public housing assistance is governed by a set of principles as follows:

- Access to housing assistance is to be provided to those unable to obtain adequate and appropriate housing through the private sector.
- Help is to be provided regardless of the age, gender, marital status, race, religion, disability or life situation of the applicant.
- Applicants and tenants must remain eligible while seeking and residing in public housing to ensure that housing assistance is provided to those in greatest need.

Limits on eligibility are to be based primarily on the applicant's financial circumstances by taking into account:

- Level of income
- Value of relevant assets and income derived from them
- Number of dependent children
- Costs arising from disability and other special circumstances; and

Limits on eligibility are to be reviewed at appropriate intervals of time.

The Housing Authority must also comply with the state *Equal Opportunity Act (1984)* when dealing with customers and the interests of the child will be paramount in all decision making in accordance with the International Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Income eligibility limits for assistance are reviewed regularly to reflect changes in gross weekly average earnings.

Applicants, partners and co-applicants must conform to the Housing Authority's eligibility criteria, and all household members must conform to eligibility relating to a debt to the Housing Authority and home finance schemes administered by the Housing Authority.

ELIGIBILITY RELATING TO THE INCOME OF APPLICANTS

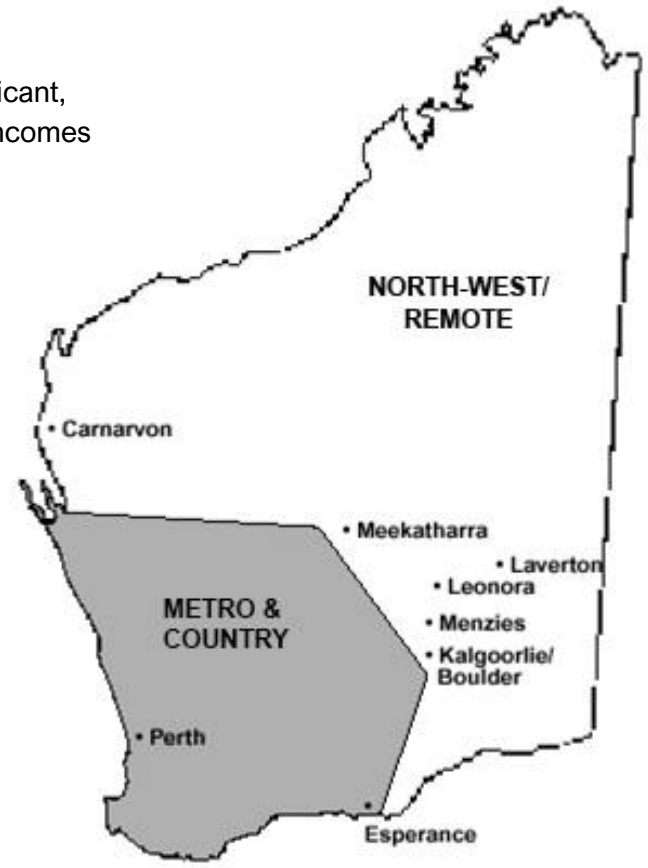
1. Applicants for public rental housing must have an income that falls within the Housing Authority's current income limits, which is assessed on a gross weekly (before tax) basis. Applicants, partners and/or co-applicants must be eligible at the time of application, through the period they are seeking assistance and before an offer of housing is made.

Dual Income - refers to an income earned by partners in the paid workforce and including Centrelink Benefits (i.e. Newstart) but not the Basic Family Tax Benefit A.

Income Eligibility Limits for Public Housing:

To be eligible for Housing Authority assistance the combined weekly gross income of applicant, partner and co-applicant must be below the following limits. Other household members' incomes are not assessed for eligibility (see s8 Eligibility Policy) however, will be considered when assessing rent.

Number of people in household	Metro & country		North-West/Remote	
	Single Income	Dual Income	Single Income	Dual Income
1	$568	-	$796	-
2	$718	$856	$1006	$1,199
3	$833	$976	$1,167	$1,367
4	$953	$1,116	$1,335	$1,563



For households with more than four people add $115 per additional person.

Do not include the District Allowance in household income.

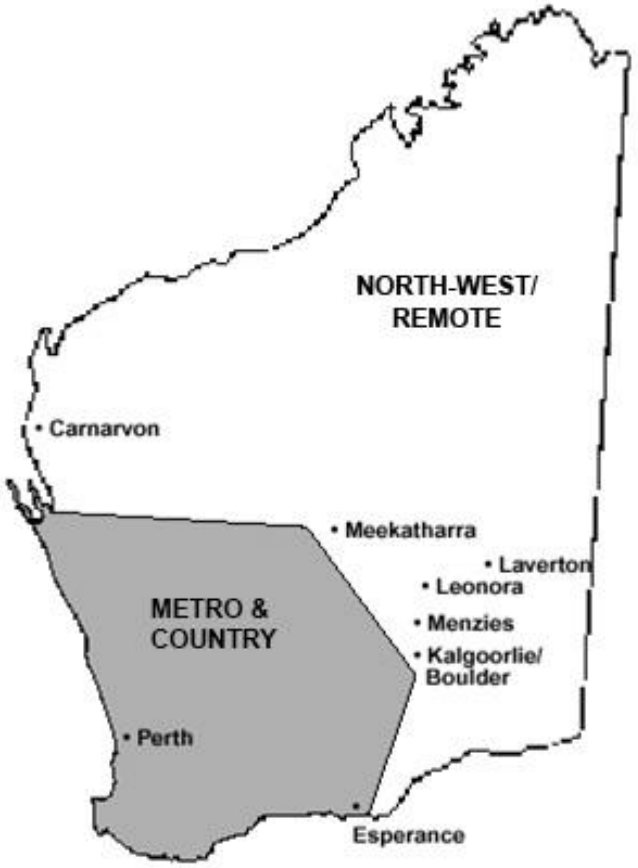
This allowance is to help people with the extra cost of living in remote areas and the North-West. This will be included for rent assessment purposes once housed.

ELIGIBILITY RELATING TO THE INCOME OF APPLICANTS

For people with a disability:

Number of people in Household	Metro and Country		North-West/Remote	
	Single Income	Dual Income	Single Income	Dual Income
1	$710	-	$994	-
2	$898	$1,070	$1,257	$1,498
3	$1042	$1,220	$1,458	$1,708
4	$1,192	$1,395	$1,668	$1,953

For households with more than four people and at least one person with a disability add $145 per additional person.



ELIGIBILITY RELATING TO THE INCOME OF APPLICANTS

POLICY	GUIDELINES
2. Income Counted When Assessing Eligibility. Definition of income that is counted – Any benefit or allowance that is counted by the Centrelink or Department of Veterans' Affairs in assessing a benefit. **OR** • A wage/salary for applicants in paid employment. • Wages/Salary (Income received by an employee) • Salary Sacrificed Superannuation • Fringe Benefit Tax • Overtime • Centrelink or Department of Veteran's Affairs Benefits, Austudy/Abstudy payments (DEET) • Dividends on shares/investments • Interest "deemed" on money in non-interest-bearing accounts above $8,250 singles and $15,500 couples • Child maintenance payments • Additional Family Tax Benefit A @ 10% (Basic exempt) • Additional Family Tax Benefit B @ 5% • Income derived from a business if applicant is self-employed	**2.1** Regular wages or a salary will be assessed over a 3-month period if wage slips are presented as proof of income. Most applicants complete the Employer Income Verification Statement. **2.2** Salary sacrificed amounts (including superannuation contributions) will be included in the gross assessable income. **2.3** A fringe benefit received as part of earned income but not as a wage or salary. **2.4** Where overtime is known or can be confirmed to be a standard part of the employment package, this can be included without waiting the 3-month waiting period. **2.5** If an applicant is in receipt of the Austudy Loan Supplement, income will be assessed at the Austudy grant the applicant would receive if they were not receiving the supplement. **2.6** Interest will be calculated on the rate received. **2.7** An applicant with money in a non-interest-bearing account will be deemed to be receiving a rate of interest identical to that used by Centrelink. **2.8** Discretion may be exercised where it can be proved that maintenance payments are not regular. **2.9** Spouse or child maintenance payments will be assessed at 20% of maintenance received. **2.10** Self-Employed Applicants will be required to provide the Housing Authority with their Notice of Assessment for the previous financial year. The assessment will provide information regarding the applicant's taxable income on which the taxation assessment is based. The taxable income will be regarded as the income on which the Housing Authority will assess eligibility.

ELIGIBILITY RELATING TO THE INCOME OF APPLICANTS

POLICY	GUIDELINES
Income Counted When Assessing Eligibility continued. • Compensable Income – **Applicants with a Disability.**	**2.10 Continued.** To request a copy of your tax assessment, contact the Australian Taxation Office: Telephone 132861 or log onto my.gov.au. When the taxation assessment is received, any known increases should be included for the period after the assessment was made. Similarly, any applicant whose circumstances have altered after the last income tax assessment was provided is obliged to substantiate the change of circumstances and supply an estimate of the new annual income. This should be accompanied by a statutory declaration supporting the claim. The situation should be reviewed within the next 12 months. Applicants who have not traded for a full financial year will be permitted to apply and build up time on the waiting list, on the understanding that they provide their taxation assessment on its receipt, and that their taxable income falls within the Housing Authority limits. If the region concerned is unable to clarify the income received from the taxation return provided, or to fully understand the assessment made, the services of a local taxation agent should be employed at the applicant/tenant's expense. (Taxation is a complex area and it often requires an expert to understand a business taxation return). Applicants, whose income is derived from compensation payments due to a disability compensation payout, are eligible for Housing Authority assistance if their assessable income, **minus** care costs, does not exceed the Housing Authority income limits.

ELIGIBILITY RELATING TO THE INCOME OF APPLICANTS

POLICY	GUIDELINES
3. Income Not Counted When Assessing Eligibility. Definition of income not counted - All benefits and allowances that are granted by Centrelink and Department of Veterans' Affairs, because they are needed in full to assist with a particular situation or disability. **OR** • Any income source which is not counted by these departments for pension or benefit purposes. • Overtime (where not regular) • Basic Family Payment (minimum standard payment) • Family Tax Payment • Carer Allowance • Scholarship Allowance for Children • Carer Allowance (previously Domiciliary Nursing Care Allowance) • Basic Family Tax Benefit A • Ward Allowances, Fostering Allowances etc. • Assistance for Isolated Children's Scheme (AIC) • Austudy Pensioner Education Supplement • Child Care Rebate • Multiple Birth Allowance • Baby Bonus • Paid Parental Leave • Disability Costs • Mobility Allowance • Double Orphan Pension • Carer's Income • Austudy/Abstudy Fares Allowance	**3.1** Family Payments – Income assessed at 10% of additional payment for Family Tax Benefit A and 5% for Family Tax Benefit Part B. Basic Family Tax Benefit A is non-assessable. **3.2** See Housing for People with Disabilities Policy

ELIGIBILITY RELATING TO THE INCOME OF APPLICANTS

POLICY	GUIDELINES
Income Not Counted When Assessing Eligibility continued. • Abstudy Incentive allowance • Maternity Allowance and Maternity Immunisation Allowance • Telephone Allowance (Centrelink) • Bereavement payment (Centrelink) • Remote Area Allowance (Centrelink) • Pharmaceutical Allowance (Centrelink) • District Allowance • Portion of Austudy Loans Supplement (see 2.4) • Employment Entry Payments • Education Entry Payments • Income of other household members • Government ex-gratia payments. **Local Government** **Department of Veterans' Affairs Allowances.** • Attendants Allowance • Car Maintenance Allowance • Clothing allowance • Decoration Allowance • Recreation Allowance • War Disability Pension (UK also) • Intermediate War Pension • Extreme Disability Adjustment • Totally Permanent Invalid (TPI) War Pension • Prisoner of War (POW) Recognition Supplement	**3.3** District Allowance is assessable for rental assessment purposes but not for eligibility. **3.4** See 8.1 for the definition of another household member. **3.5** Ex-gratia payments, including those paid by the Department of Veterans' Affairs, are not taken into account when assessing eligibility or rent. Income and/or interest from these payments will be included for the purpose of determining income eligibility and/or rent assessment. For example: National Redress Scheme and F-111 lump sum payments. **3.6** Elected Members Allowance that is paid to cover expenses is exempt of being treated as income if the amount of allowance actually used is on expenses. Any excess allowance is to be treated as income.

ELIGIBILITY RELATING TO THE INCOME OF APPLICANTS

POLICY	GUIDELINES
4. Documentary Proof of Income. Applicants must supply documentary proof of income to confirm eligibility for Housing Authority Assistance.	**4.1** Applicants receiving a Centrelink benefit or pension must supply a Statement of Benefit from Centrelink that is not more than four weeks' old. The Housing Authority reserves the right to request such proof of a lesser period. Evidence of a claim for a benefit is not sufficient. Or verification by the Income Confirmation Scheme. In country areas where there may be a delay in obtaining a Statement of Benefit, an applicant may make application and accrue waiting time until the documents arrive. In isolated country areas it is sufficient proof of income to photocopy the applicant's bank book, provided that the deposits shown are equal to the benefit the applicant should receive and are paid on regular pension payment dates. • Applicants in receipt of a wage or salary must have their employer complete the Employer Income Verification Statement or supply their last 3 months of wage or salary advice slips. • Self-employed applicants must supply their last financial year Tax Assessment from the Australian Tax Office. • Applicants receiving part Centrelink benefit and part wage/ salary must supply evidence of both income sources. • Applicants with income sources from outside Australia must supply documentary proof of that income source. **Example:** UK pension. **NB:** July 2004 Recipients of Chile Pension of Mercy is not assessed for eligibility or rental rebates. • Documentary proof of the value of cash assets includes a Centrelink Income Statement no more than four weeks old, an up-to-date statement from a bank or other financial institution and/or evidence from a registered accountant.

ELIGIBILITY RELATING TO THE INCOME OF APPLICANTS

POLICY	GUIDELINES
5. Cash Assets. Applicants must conform to the Housing Authority's eligibility criteria relating to cash assets. **Definition of a cash asset:** Cash assets refer to the financial investments of a Housing Authority client and any income derived from them and includes: • deposits in a bank, credit union, building society, savings/cheque account, cash, term deposit and shares, • friendly society and insurance bonds, managed investments such as loans, debentures, unlisted equity and property trusts. Cash assets do not include a client's car, antique furniture, stamp collection or life insurance policies. Superannuation and annuities that are not accessible are not assessed but any annual income/return/dividend received is assessed as part of the income assessment process.	**5.1** Current criteria are: • $38 400 – single applicant. • $63 800 per couple. • $80 000 Seniors 60 years plus (singles or couples). Disabled applicants as defined by the Housing for People with Disabilities Policy may not be subject to the cash assets limit of $100 000 (Refer to Housing for People with Disabilities Policy). **5.2 Superannuation.** **Superannuation funds for applicants under the age of 55 years.** Superannuation funds that cannot be realised (e.g. superannuation roll-over fund) are not assessed as an asset. **Superannuation funds for applicants 55 years of age and plus** where a lump sum superannuation payment is taken, it will be treated as a cash asset and any income derived will be assessed for eligibility and rent assessment purposes. Where superannuation is placed in a managed or roll-over fund and the client receives an annuity or allocated pension that income will be considered for eligibility and rent assessment purposes. The gross annual income is converted to a weekly amount for assessment.
6. Source of income. An applicant's income must be derived from a source within Western Australia.	**6.1** An applicant must be registered with a Western Australian office of Centrelink, be employed or have a registered business within the state.
7. Applicants with no current source of income may make application for assistance and accrue time on the waiting list but must have an income that meets the Housing Authority's eligibility criteria when turn reached for assistance.	**7.1 Example** Individuals serving a jail sentence, refugees, or supported migrants.

ELIGIBILITY RELATING TO THE INCOME OF APPLICANTS

POLICY	GUIDELINES
8. Income of other household members. Income received by other household members who will be living in the household, but who will not sign the tenancy agreement must be proved at the point of application, as well as at the time of property allocation.	**8.1** Other household members are non-dependent members of the household (excluding the applicant's partner), who will not be signing the tenancy agreement. Their income is not included for eligibility purposes, nor do they have to be eligible for Housing Authority assistance except in relation to a debt to the Housing Authority. Their income is included as part of the gross household income for the purpose of calculating rental payments. **8.2 Definition of a dependent household member**. A dependent is a child of a family, or a child being fostered or cared for by a family, who is wholly or substantially in the care or control of the applicant and is financially dependent on the applicants. **8.3 Partner's Income** The applicant's partner's income is included when assessing eligibility relating to income. This is regardless of whether the partner will be a signatory to the tenancy agreement or not.
9. Clients must have a residential and postal address within Western Australia to apply for Housing Authority assistance.	
10. Clients who do not live within Western Australia, are not eligible to apply for assistance, regardless of any future intention to reside in Western Australia.	**10.1** Applications or tenancies in different Australian states are not transportable.

ELIGIBILITY RELATING TO CITIZENSHIP AND RESIDENCY STATUS

POLICY	GUIDELINES
11. To be eligible for housing assistance, applicants must hold Australian citizenship, or a permanent Australian visa, or a **protected** Special Category Visa (SCV).	**11.1** New Zealand citizens who were in Australia on 26 February 2001 as the holder of an SCV, are protected SCV holders. **11.2** New Zealand citizens who were in Australia for 365 days or more (does not have to be consecutive days) between 26 February 1999 and 25 February 2001 and returned to Australia after 26 February 2001, are protected SCV holders. **11.3** New Zealand citizens who satisfy the conditions of *sections 7(2B), 7(2C) or 7(2D)* of the *Social Securities Act 1991*, are protected SCV holders. **11.4** Protected SCV holders are required to provide proof of their protected status. **11.5** Non-protected SCV holders are New Zealand citizens who arrived in Australia after 26 February 2001 and do not hold Australian citizenship or a permanent visa.
12. Applicants who hold or have applied for Australian citizenship or a permanent resident visa can accrue time on the housing waitlist.	**12.1** Includes non-protected SCV holders from New Zealand. **12.2** All other eligibility criteria must be met. **12.3** Proof that an application for Australian citizenship or a permanent Australian visa has been made is required. **12.4** Housing will not be allocated to any applicant on the housing waitlist until they hold Australian citizenship or a permanent visa for Australia.

ELIGIBILITY RELATING TO PROPERTY OWNERSHIP AND OTHER RESIDENCES

POLICY	GUIDELINES
13. Applicants must not own or be part owner of property or land.	**13.1** A **Park Home** will be a barrier to public rental housing, only if it is so determined by Regional Management that it is suitable accommodation. Factors in this consideration will be the construction and permanency of the home, the suitability of the location and the needs/age of the applicant.
14. The Housing Authority may permit continuing ownership or joint ownership of property or land for a period of time after application, where there are specific difficulties relating to immediate disposal. However, sale of the property must have been concluded at the time of the allocation of a property.	**14.1 Examples:** • Where an applicant is pursuing a property settlement through the Family Court. • Where the Housing Authority is building a property for a family which has a member with a disability. **Discretion** can be exercised in all instances where there are specific difficulties in disposing of a property. (See Discretionary Decision-Making Policy). **Examples:** • Where the sale will realise limited or negative personal equity to the applicant. • Where the asset owned is a single block of residential land of little value and the applicant has no prospect of building a home on it. • Where there is limited or no real estate market in the area concerned e.g. some rural areas experiencing an economic downturn. • Where a property is owned for the purpose of a business income, discretion may be exercise in permitting the applicant to retain the property. **Example:** A service station. • Where a property has been purchased through a home ownership scheme administered by the Housing Authority and the property is being taken back by the Housing Authority and the disposal date is outside their control assistance can be provided following confirmation of the action by the Home Ownership section.
15. Clients housed by Community Housing Organisations may apply for public rental housing assistance, where: • They are identified as having a priority housing need (see Priority Housing Need Policy) and the Community Housing Organisation confirms it is unable to meet that need, • the housing provided by the Community Housing Organisation is of a short-term nature (up to three years), or • they are in rehabilitation, recovery and/or therapeutic programs provided in conjunction with Community Housing Organisation accommodation.	
16. Tenants occupying a town-based, or remote Aboriginal Housing property may apply for public rental housing assistance.	

ELIGIBILITY RELATING TO THE AGE OF APPLICANTS

POLICY	GUIDELINES
17. Applicants must be at least 16 years of age, with no upper limit on age.	**17.1** Applicants under the age of 18 will be referred to support services, where appropriate. **17.2** Applicants between 16 and 18 years, who have a disability and have accommodation supports, should be referred to Housing Programs Directorate. **17.3** Applicants who are young people leaving Communities (Department of Child Protection and Family Support) care, that are younger than 16 years of age, are qualified to accrue time on the Housing Authority's waitlist.
18. A senior is classified as being 55 year or above or is the spouse of such a person.	**18.1** This is based on the definition of the *Retirement Villages Act (1992).* **18.2** Where possible, applicants under 55 years of age should be listed for family or singles accommodation. **18.3** Where local authority R codes require occupants of seniors' accommodation to be of a specific age; the Housing Authority will conform to the requirements.

ELIGIBILITY RELATING TO APPLICANTS WITH A DEBT TO THE HOUSING AUTHORITY

PREAMBLE

Some clients who apply for public rental housing assistance have debt from previous Housing Authority assistance. The Housing Authority requires that these clients enter into and maintain an arrangement to repay their debt. Discretion is available for applicants with extenuating circumstances (for example, Family Violence). See the Housing Authority Discretionary Decision-Making Policy.

It must also be noted that the Housing Authority does not exercise a legal right to Joint and Several Liability and that joint applicants need only repay a proportion of the debt equal to the number of other tenants and need not accept responsibility for the proportion of the debt of the other party/s.

POLICY	GUIDELINES
19. Applicants with a debt to the Housing Authority will be requested to make arrangement to repay their debt, if applicable they may make application to participate in the Debt Discount Scheme. The term 'applicant' under this policy refers to the applicant, their partner or a household member listed on the application.	**19.1** Also see Discretionary Decision-Making Policy. Bankruptcy policy suspended May 2001. Debt repayment does not apply to the bankruptcy component of any debt – this debt is non-recoverable.
20. Agreement to Repay the Debt. An applicant requiring public rental housing assistance with a debt to the Housing Authority must enter into an agreement to repay the debt on application for assistance. The applicant may apply to participate in the Debt Discount Scheme.	**20.1** The debt must be paid off in regular instalments, as stipulated in the agreement.
21. The agreement to repay the debt will be confirmed in writing with the applicant and include an itemised account of the debt. The Applicant may apply to participate in the Debt Discount Scheme.	
22. Any applicant who defaults on an agreement to repay their debt may have their application for assistance withdrawn and will be required to reapply for housing assistance.	**22.1** The decision to withdraw the application will take into account the repayment history. Contact will be made with the applicant where possible, to ascertain whether there are any extenuating circumstances contributing to the default. Any future application after an application has been withdrawn may not have the benefit of the earlier listing date.

ELIGIBILITY RELATING TO APPLICANTS WITH A DEBT TO THE HOUSING AUTHORITY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
23. Debt Subject of Dispute. Where the debt is the subject of a dispute, which is pursued through court action or the Housing Authority Appeals Mechanism, no action will be taken until the process has been completed.	**23.1** This includes entering into an agreement to repay the debt.
24. Referral to Commercial Debt Collection Agency. A debt will only be referred to a commercial debt collection agency, after all approaches from the Housing Authority have failed.	**24.1** Where personal contact can be made, the debtor will be contacted by the Housing Authority, advised of the debt and the intention to refer to a commercial agency and offered an opportunity to make repayment.
25. Statute-Barred Debt. Under the *Limitation Act 2005 (WA)* the period for a tenancy debt is 6 years. Expiration of the period does not expunge the debt as if it never existed but once this period has elapsed, the debt becomes "statute barred" and legal recovery is not permitted. Under the *Bankruptcy Act 1996 (Cth*), where a client declares bankruptcy, the debt becomes "statute-barred", subsequent discharge of the bankruptcy relieves the customer of the legal liability to repay the debt, but it does not expunge the debt as if it had never existed. Repayment of statute-barred debts will not be pursued by the Housing Authority and will not preclude housing assistance being offered by the Housing Authority	**25.1** Repayment of statute-barred debts cannot be actively pursued. **25.2** Statute-barred debts can be reactivated if a client makes a payment or provides the Housing Authority with written acknowledgement that the debt exists. The debt then becomes Written Off Recoverable and standard recovery procedures resume.

ELIGIBILITY RELATING TO A BANKRUPT APPLICANT

PREAMBLE

Housing Authority customers, who have made application for bankruptcy which includes a debt to the Housing Authority for rental assistance or Bond Assistance Loan (BAL), and who apply for housing assistance subsequent to the bankruptcy, will have their application assessed by and in the same eligibility criteria as any other applicant. The Bankruptcy Policy was suspended from 16 May 2001. Debt repayment does not apply to the bankruptcy component of any debt – this debt is non-recoverable.

NOTE: Tenants in Occupation are also covered by this policy, but for specific criteria for tenants, see Tenant Eligibility Policy.

POLICY	GUIDELINES
26. Proof of Bankruptcy The Housing Authority requires documentation from the Insolvency and Trustee Service, as proof of bankruptcy.	**26.1** Undischarged bankrupts must provide their pink card. **26.2** Discharged bankrupts must provide their Discharge Certificate
27. Lodgement of Claim by the Housing Authority When a customer with a debt to the Housing Authority makes application for bankruptcy, a proof of debt claim will be lodged with the Official Receivers Office.	**27.1** The minimum amount submitted to the Insolvency and Trustee Service (ITSA) for write-off is $50.

ELIGIBILITY RELATING TO OTHER CRITERIA

POLICY	GUIDELINES
28. Principal Place of Residence. Applicants must reside in the allocated property as their principal place of residence.	**28.1** See Tenancy Management Policy – Absence from the Property and Housesitting.
29. Different Region. Applicants must be eligible for the region in which they are residing at the time of application even when the application is for a different region for which they may be currently ineligible.	**29.1** Applicants must satisfy the eligibility requirements of the region of choice at allocation. **Example:** an applicant residing in a region covered by the North-West and Remote income criteria for which they are currently eligible, may apply for assistance in a region covered by the Metropolitan and Country income criteria, although not income-eligible for those regions at time of application.
30. Transfers. Applicants for priority transfer to an alternative property must be: • eligible for priority housing assistance, and • a current public housing tenant.	**30.1** Where a tenancy ends, an approved priority transfer application will be withdrawn in line with the Application Management Policy.
31. Housing Authority Staff Member, Friends or Relatives. Employees of the Housing Authority who are eligible for public housing may make application for assistance, but their application must be approved by the Housing Authority's Executive before an allocation.	**31.1** This is not a requirement of the *Housing Act (1980)* but is to ensure the integrity of the process. **31.2** Before the allocation of a property the Regional Manager of the region concerned must present a submission to the Executive outlining the details of the application. **31.3** If an application is rejected, a written copy of the reasons must be placed on the employee's file.
32. Employees of the Housing Authority who are eligible for public housing may make application for assistance, but their application must be approved by the Housing Authority's Executive before an allocation.	**32.1** Staff must pass the administration of the Housing Authority service for a relative or friend to a senior officer if there is any likelihood of a perception of a conflict of interest.

ELIGIBILITY RELATING TO OTHER CRITERIA

POLICY	GUIDELINES
Housing Authority Staff Member, Friends or Relatives continued.	**32.2** Examples of unethical behaviour regarding dealing with services to employees or friends: • Allocating a rental property ahead of turn • Ignoring guidelines for eligibility • Awarding consultancy contracts outside of prescribed guidelines. • Providing sensitive or confidential information • Approving maintenance outside of prescribed guidelines. All work that is required to be carried out on properties known to be occupied by employees or relatives of the Housing Authority employees must be authorised by regional management (see s6.3 Maintenance Policy Manual).
33. People Required to Prove Eligibility. Applicants, partners, and co-applicants must prove eligibility for assistance and all household members must be eligible regarding a debt to the Housing Authority.	**33.1** All persons signing the tenancy agreement on the allocation of a property must prove eligibility for assistance. **33.2** See also – Definition of other household members, and Eligibility Relating to Applicants with a Debt to the Housing Authority Policy.
34. Appeal Regarding a Housing Authority Decision Relating to Eligibility for Assistance. Applicants can appeal regarding any decision made in relation to their eligibility for assistance.	**34.1** See Housing Authority Appeals Mechanism.

Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Housing and Works**

TENANCY MANAGEMENT POLICY

TENANCY MANAGEMENT POLICY

PREAMBLE

This section deals with policies relating to the occupation of the Housing Authority's property. It also deals with the rights and responsibilities of a tenant and the contractual arrangement of tenancy.

Where a tenant does not adhere to the contractual obligations of the Tenancy Agreement the Housing Authority will take legal action to recover its property within the provisions of the *Residential Tenancies Act 1987* and reserves the right to withhold future housing assistance.

Continued public housing assistance is subject to a tenant's ongoing eligibility. If a tenant becomes ineligible for public housing, the Housing Authority may commence action to terminate the tenancy agreement. Tenants who are eligible for public housing may be required to relocate to an alternative public housing rental property if the Housing Authority wishes to recover the property they currently occupy for a specific reason.

Where an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander tenancy is in jeopardy, the Regional Recovery Officer must consult and/or refer tenants to the Aboriginal Customer Support Officer employed in the relevant office, wherever possible.

Other sections relating to the occupation of a Housing Authority tenancy are in a number of other policy categories dealing with specific issues, such as tenant liability, water consumption and transfers and these categories should be consulted in reference to a particular issue.

The Housing Authority also has responsibilities under the contractual obligations of tenancy. These are:

- To provide security of assistance to tenants who abide by the conditions of their Tenancy Agreement and the *Residential Tenancies Act 1987*.
- To provide possession of a property which is clean and in good repair.
- To provide a tenant with quiet enjoyment of a property and only seek entry according to the provisions of the *Residential Tenancies Act 1987*.
- To provide a secure premises.
- To pay local authority and Water Corporation Rates.
- To provide and maintain the property in a reasonable state of repair and to be responsible for all maintenance and repairs that are not due to neglect, misuse, wilful damage and rubbish.
- To comply with relevant building, health and safety laws.
- To provide the tenant with a copy of the Tenancy Agreement.
- To keep density accommodation pest free, with limited responsibility for single detached accommodation.
- To ensure the privacy and confidentiality of tenants.
- To inspect the property to maintain contact with tenant and for asset management purposes.

TENANCY MANAGEMENT POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
1. Major Responsibilities of a Tenant – General. A tenant must abide by the conditions of the Tenancy Agreement and the *Residential Tenancies Act 1987* if continuation of the tenancy is to be assured.	**1.1** It is a principle of the *Housing Act 1980* that people in public rental housing shall have security of assistance, subject to the fulfilment by the tenant of the tenancy conditions.
2. A tenant must honour his/her financial responsibilities pay the rent payments as agreed and advise the Housing Authority immediately of any increase in household income of $10 per week or more.	**2.1** This includes additional household occupants, where those persons are in receipt of an income. **2.2** Rental payments are made by either: • Centrelink (CLADD) for pension and beneficiary recipients • Direct Bank Debit or direct deduction from salary • The Housing Authority Card. **2.3** All rental payments must be at least one payment in advance.
3. A tenant is responsible for the payment of all water consumption, gas, electricity, and telephone charges relating to the property and for contents insurance if required.	
4. A tenant may not do anything on the premises or permit someone else entering the premises with the tenant's permission to do anything, which causes a nuisance.	**4.1** A tenant is responsible for the actions and behaviour of visitors to the property. **4.2** Nuisance is defined as disruptive behaviour which substantially interferes with one or more neighbour's use or enjoyment of their premises.
5. A tenant must not use the premises or permit the premises to be used for illegal purposes.	**5.1** See Illegal Use of Premises Policy.

TENANCY MANAGEMENT POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
6. A tenant is responsible for keeping the premises or, where relevant, a common area or personal property in a common area clean and undamaged with garden and yard areas maintained. **Definition:** • Internal of the property free from rubbish, wall and doors undamaged with no holes, premises and fixtures clean. • Yards – grass cut, gardens maintained and free of rubbish. • Common Areas – Areas designed for use by multiple people or inhabitants of a place. • Personal Property – Effects or belongings placed in common areas.	**6.1** A tenant must maintain the property including the garden and yard, commensurate with general street and community standards. Assistance to re-establish gardens may be given to new tenants if the grounds have been neglected by previous tenants. **6.2** The tenant is responsible for regularly testing safety devices and for advising the Housing Authority immediately if a smoke alarm, RCD or any other safety device is not functioning.
7. A tenant is responsible for all costs associated with the maintenance of the property due to neglect, misuse, and wilful damage and rubbish removal.	**7.1** This is termed Tenant Liability (TL). **7.2** Where a person other than the tenant is lawfully on the premises or, where relevant, a common area the tenant is responsible for and will be held liable for any act by that person if they intentionally or recklessly cause damage to the premises or, where relevant, a common area or personal property in a common area and any neighbouring premises. Factors to consider when assessing Tenant Liability: • Fair wear and tear, • Accidental damage, and • Damage caused by family violence.
8. A tenant must report damage to the premises or, where relevant, a common area or personal property in a common area as soon as practicable after the occurrence.	

TENANCY MANAGEMENT POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
9. A tenant is not responsible for damage done by: • Unknown persons, if the matter has been reported to the police and the tenant/s has provided the Housing Authority with a report number provided by the police; or • Visitors to the property, if the matter has been reported to the police and the tenant has provided the Housing Authority with the report number and the tenant has taken reasonable precautions to prevent visitors from doing damage. • The Family Violence Policy should be referred to in situations where family violence is suspected to have contributed to damage done.	**9.1** Unknown persons committing offences such as vandalism or breaking and entering. **9.2** Where a property is abandoned, the ex-tenant will be responsible for any damage, including vandal damage, until the Housing Authority has completed the Property Condition Report (PCR).
10. Tenants must not keep unlicensed or unroadworthy vehicles on the premises without verbal or written consent of the Housing Authority.	**10.1** "Vehicles" includes a car, truck, bus, caravan, boat and motorcycle. **10.2** Tenants may be granted up to 6 months to remove or license a vehicle.
11. Householders and Visitors. Any person who resides at a public housing property and is not a signatory to the Tenancy Agreement is considered a householder unless they meet the definition of a visitor.	**11.1** A householder will have their income assessed for rent from the date they occupied the property. **11.2** The Housing Authority may permit the number of occupants to exceed the maximum number allowed under the Tenancy Agreement provided the correct rent is paid, there are no cases of disruptive behaviour and/or no violations of local authority by-laws.
12. A visitor is a person who has a primary place of residence other than the public housing property and stays at the public housing property for no more than 8 consecutive weeks.	**12.1** Evidence may be requested to verify that a visitor has a permanent address elsewhere. **12.2** If a visitor remains at the property for more than 8 consecutive weeks, they will be considered a householder and have their income assessed for rent from the 9th week.

TENANCY MANAGEMENT POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
13. Local Authority By-Laws/Strata Title Rules. A tenant must abide by the by-laws of the local government authority governing the area in which the property is located.	**13.1** Local authorities have jurisdiction over issues such as health, rubbish disposal, parking and animals. **13.2** The local authority has jurisdiction over working from a property. **13.3** Approval to work or run a business from home must be obtained from the local authority. Written permission to work or run a business from home must also be given by the Housing Authority. **13.4** The Housing Authority will support any action initiated by a local authority against a tenant.
14. A tenant living in a strata title complex, must abide by the rules laid down by the Strata Company.	**14.1** A copy of the strata company rules must be given to the ingoing tenant at sign-up.
15. Absence From the Property. The tenant must occupy the property as their principal place of residence.	**15.1** A tenant will be considered to not occupy the property as their principal place of residence if, without the written consent of the Housing Authority, they are absent from the property for: • A continuous period of more than one month, or • Any periods, which in total exceeds three months of a continuous 12-month period.
16. A tenant intending to be absent from the property for a continuous period of more than one month must obtain written consent from the Housing Authority. The request must be made in writing at least one month before the intended absence.	**16.1** If consent for absence is given the tenant must: • Provide the Housing Authority with their contact details, and • Ensure that all conditions of their tenancy agreement, including the payment of rent and other charges, are met for the entire period of absence.

TENANCY MANAGEMENT POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
17. Housesitting. The Housing Authority may give a tenant permission to have a house sitter look after their property for a maximum continuous period of up to 6 months.	**17.1** A housesitting arrangement may be approved in extenuating circumstances, assessed on a case-by-case basis, including but not limited to: • incarceration • being held on remand awaiting sentencing or trial • health reasons (including hospitalisation or rehabilitation) • family or cultural reasons • undertaking work, study or training within Western Australia (for tenants living in remote/country arears of the state only). **17.2** The tenant must request permission in writing from their Housing Services Officer one month in advance of their absence from the property. The tenant must provide documented evidence to support their request. **17.3** A housesitting arrangement will not be approved where the tenant and/or the house sitter have an unsatisfactory tenancy history with the Housing Authority, including but not limited to: • debt • history of eviction • previous history of illegal use of premises • prior substantiated complaints of disruptive behaviour. **17.4** Even if the house sitter and the tenant satisfy the housesitting requirements, the Housing Authority may, in its absolute discretion, refuse to grant permission for a housesitting arrangement. **17.5** The Housing Authority's tenant remains the legal tenant and is responsible for property standards and all other obligations of maintaining the tenancy in accordance with the requirements of their tenancy agreement.

TENANCY MANAGEMENT POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
Housesitting Continued. **18.** A house sitter is a person who "occupies" a public housing property for no longer than 6 months and provides security and access to the property when required by the Housing Authority while the tenant is absent.	
19. The tenant is responsible for maintaining all payments related to the tenancy during the period of approved housesitting.	**19.1** The income of the house sitter will not be included in the rent assessment. **19.2** Where the tenant fails to return to the property by the end date of the approved housesitting period and the house sitter remains in occupation, the tenant will be charged Market Rent from the end date of the period of approved absence, until the date the house sitter vacates.
20. Subletting. Housing Authority tenants are not permitted to sublet their public housing property at any time. A subletting request will not be approved by the Housing Authority.	**20.1** Subletting is to lease or rent all or part of a leased or rented property to another person. (see Section 23, Illegal Occupation).
21. Incarcerated Tenants. A tenant sentenced to a term of imprisonment, for which the minimum period to be served is six months or greater, will be considered to have ceased to occupy the property.	**21.1** The tenant will be considered to have ceased occupying the property from the date the sentence is ordered. **21.2** The Housing Authority will commence action to recover the property. **21.3** If the tenant has a partner who is not a co-tenant, the tenant can request for the partner to be added as a tenant. **21.3** The tenant must request the consent of the Housing Authority within 14 days of imprisonment.
22. A tenant imprisoned for less than six months may be absent from the property for the term of imprisonment with the written consent of the Housing Authority.	**22.1** The tenant may request the consent of the Housing Authority to have someone housesit the property while they are in prison, in accordance with the Tenancy Management Policy – Housesitting. The Housing Authority may grant consent with or without conditions.

TENANCY MANAGEMENT POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
Incarcerated Tenants Continued.	**22.2** The tenant may request the consent of the Housing Authority to have someone housesit the property while they are in prison, in accordance with the Tenancy Management Policy – Housesitting. The Housing Authority may grant consent with or without conditions. **22.3** If consent for the absence is given, the tenant must provide the Housing Authority with their contact details and ensure that all conditions of their tenancy agreement, including the payment of rent and other charges, are met for the entire period of absence, regardless of whether there is a housesitting arrangement in place. **22.4** The tenant will be deemed to be receiving the statutory benefits they would otherwise be entitled to for the purpose of determining rent for the period of imprisonment. See Rent to Income Policy. **22.5** Where the tenant has a partner or co-tenant as part of the tenancy agreement, the partner or co-tenant will be required to submit a new rent assessment form.
23. Illegal Occupation. Where a property is found to be occupied by another person while the tenant is away and without the Housing Authority's permission it will be considered illegally occupied and the tenant will be in breach of the terms of their tenancy agreement. The Housing Authority will charge the legal tenant(s) Market Rent for the period of the illegal sublet of the property.	**23.1** All efforts to contact the legal tenant will be made including contacting the next of kin and/or friend/s as provided by the tenant/s at sign up. **23.2** If the legal tenant cannot be contacted or does not return to the property it will be treated as illegally occupied and action will be taken to remove the illegal occupant. **23.3** The legal tenant is responsible for any damage to the property, rent arrears and water consumption charges including legal costs to recover the property. **23.4** Confirmation in writing should be obtained from the illegal occupant on the circumstances of the sublet to confirm why they are occupying the property and the whereabouts of the legal tenant.

TENANCY MANAGEMENT POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
24. Improvements or Additions to a Property and Reimbursement. A tenant may apply to the Housing Authority requesting permission to make non-structural and structural improvements or additions to their public housing rental property.	**24.1** Reasons for application may be security (i.e enclosed veranda), medical(i.e Disability modifications), or quality of life(i.e bedroom additions). **24.2** Tenants may request to carry out improvements/additions at their own expense or request that the cost be met by the Housing Authority. **24.3** Improvements/additions undertaken by the Housing Authority are subject to a satisfactory tenancy history and availability of funds. **24.4** Tenants requesting permission to undertake Improvements must have written approval from all applicable governing bodies (e.g. local council) and provide copies to the Housing Authority. **24.5** A transfer may be considered an option where urgent modifications are required. **24.6** The cost of removal of sub-standard improvements/additions will be charged to the tenant as tenant liability. **24.7** As of 28 March 2016 the Housing Authority does not permit the installation of swimming pools and/or spa pools which can hold water greater than 300mm in depth. Tenants who received written consent from the Housing Authority before this date will only be required to remove the swimming pool and/or spa pool (including safety barriers): • At the end of the structural life of the swimming pool and/or spa pool. • Before vacating the property. • If they fail to comply with legislative, local council or Housing Authority requirements. **24.8** Tenants who received written consent from the Housing Authority before 28 March 2016 to install a swimming pool and/or spa pool will not be permitted to replace the swimming pool and/or spa pool at the end of its useful/structural life.

TENANCY MANAGEMENT POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
25. Where a tenant makes additions to a property at his/her own expense, but on Housing Authority land in order to house another person/s, the other person/s are regarded as other household members for the purpose of rental assessment.	**25.1 Example:** a granny flat.
26. There will be no reimbursement unless the Housing Authority plans to carry out the improvement as part of upgrade and then only at a depreciated value and is subject to the correct approvals being obtained.	**26.1** The only exception is the installation of security screens. Reimbursement of this item may be approved subject to funding and Executive approval (see Family and Domestic Violence Policy). **26.2** Any reimbursement must be offset against any outstanding debts to the Housing Authority at finalisation and funds being available.
27. Surveillance Devices. A tenant wishing to install a surveillance device, at their expense must seek approval from the Housing Authority. The Housing Authority reserves the right to approve or decline a tenant's request to install and/or the ongoing use of a surveillance device.	**27.1** Tenants must comply with the *Surveillance Devices Act 1998*. **27.2** A surveillance device must not be directed at or be able to view other people's private premises including doorways, windows, balconies or entrances or observe private activities or conversations. **27.3** A breach of the *Surveillance Devices Act 1998* is an offence and may result in action being taken by the Police. **27.4** A tenant found to be operating a surveillance device without the required approval and/or in an illegal manner will place their tenancy at risk.
28. Form 24 – Request to Lessor to Fix Furniture. A tenant wishing to affix furniture to the wall/s to ensure the safety of a child or a person with a disability, the tenant will be required to seek approval from Housing by completing the Form 24 - Request to Lessor to Affix Furniture. A response must be provided within 14 days of receiving the request or consent will have been deemed to be given.	**28.1** Consent to affix furniture to the wall/s will be refused if: • Affixing an item to the wall would disturb material containing asbestos, • the premises are entered in the Register of Heritage Places compiled under the *Heritage of Western Australia Act 1990*, or • the premises is in a scheme under the *Stata Titles Act 1985* and by-laws for the scheme prohibit affixing the item to the wall of the premises.

TENANCY MANAGEMENT POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
29. Transfer of a Tenancy Agreement. Where a joint tenancy ends due to the death or departure of a co-tenant, the tenancy can be transferred into the names of the remaining signatories to the tenancy agreement.	**29.1** Where a joint tenancy ends due to the death of a co-tenant, a property inspection to apportion tenant liability and the signing of a new tenancy agreement is not required. **29.2** Where a co-tenant vacates, a property inspection must be conducted and tenant liability apportioned at the time that the tenancy is transferred to the remaining tenant/s. A new tenancy agreement is required. **29.3** If the remaining person (or persons) is no longer eligible for the number of bedrooms in the property, the Housing Authority reserves the right to transfer that person to accommodation for which they are now eligible (see also Tenant Eligibility Policy). **29.4** Where the tenancy was a family relationship, the party with the custody of the children is regarded as the legal tenant.
30. If a tenancy ends due to the death of all legal tenants, remaining household members must either vacate the property, or contact the Housing Authority to seek approval to continue occupying the property, as a tenant on a new tenancy agreement.	**30.1** The Housing Authority may or may not approve the request. Any decision will consider the circumstances of all remaining householders, including: • The length of time the householder has occupied the property. • The householder's relationship to the legal tenant. • The householder's eligibility for public housing as detailed in the Eligibility Policy. • Any current application for housing assistance, and • The condition of the property.

TENANCY MANAGEMENT POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
31. Pets. Tenants may keep a pet or pets, provided the keeping of the pet or pets does not contravene a written law, local law or strata by-law.	**31.1** The tenant must seek Housing Authority consent, using the prescribed form, to keep a dog in the following circumstances: • The premises do not have a fully enclosed, non-communal yard, with fences, sufficient to prevent a dog escaping the premises. • The dog is listed as a dangerous dog (restricted breed) in the *Dog Regulations 2013 (WA)* or as a dangerous dog in the *Dog Act 1976 (WA)*. **31.2** The Housing Authority may place conditions on the keeping of pets. **31.3** Housing Authority consent is not required to keep an assistance animal as defined in the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*. **31.4** It is the tenant's responsibility to ensure that a dangerous dog that is either a restricted breed or an individual dog that has shown itself to be aggressive and is consequently declared dangerous by a local council or its authorised agent is kept in a child proof enclosure from which it cannot escape and from which it cannot be released without the authorisation of the person responsible for the dog. The tenant is responsible for putting up warning signs, of the type described in the *Dog Regulations 2013*, on all entrances where the dog is kept. **31.5** Failure to comply will result in the Housing Authority referring the matter to the local government for action under the *Dog Act 1976*.

TENANCY MANAGEMENT POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
32. Household Pests. A tenant is responsible for the eradication of cockroaches, fleas and vermin in single detached accommodation. **33. Ending of a Tenancy by Tenant or the Housing Authority.** A tenant must give the Housing Authority 21 days' notice in writing of intention to vacate a property, and remains responsible for the property as legal tenant, until the tenancy agreement is formally ended. **34.** The Housing Authority may terminate a tenancy due to a breach of the *Residential Tenancies Act 1987*. **35. Debt to the Housing Authority.** The Housing Authority will pursue the recovery of a debt through the provisions of the *Residential Tenancies Act 1987* where the tenant does not repay the monies owing. **36.** A tenant with a debt to the Housing Authority will be requested to enter into an agreement to repay the debt in affordable instalments and the payments must be maintained until the debt is cleared. For all debts, the Housing Authority should seek an arrangement so that the combined total of the tenant's arrears and current rent does not exceed 30% of their total assessable household income. **37.** Tenants with a debt to the Housing Authority will not be assisted with property maintenance or upgrade above normal health and safety requirements.	**32.1** The tenant is not responsible where: • The infestation occurs within three months of occupation, or • the infestation is severe and undermining of paving occurs. **32.2** For further details, see the Maintenance Policy Manual, Rule 2.1.11.

TENANCY MANAGEMENT POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
38. Bankruptcy of a Tenant in Occupation Tenants with a debt to the Housing Authority who make application for bankruptcy are subject to scrutiny as to whether the application was made to avoid the repayment of a debt to the Housing Authority. Such tenants are in breach of the terms of the tenancy agreement and where a court order has been obtained before the application for bankruptcy, action to evict may continue.	**38.1** See Eligibility Relating to a Bankrupt Applicant Policy. **38.2** Bankruptcy Policy suspended May 2001.
39. Purchase of a Rental Property A tenant may make application to purchase their rental property if they are eligible.	**39.1** Information and brochures regarding the Housing Authority's sales programs to be provided to tenant. **39.2** Tenants are to be advised if the property is not available to purchase. In this case, provided the tenant is eligible to purchase a property, tenant should be advised that the Housing Authority will canvass for a suitable property which it is willing to sell to the tenant.
40. Liquor Restricted Premises A tenant may apply for a Liquor Restricted Premises Declaration to be issued for their rental property.	**40.1** The Housing Authority will not apply on behalf of a tenant. **40.2** The Housing Authority will support all applications by tenants for their rental properties to be declared a liquor restricted premises.
41. The Housing Authority may apply for a Liquor Restricted Premises Declaration to be issued for: • An entire unit complex, or • the common grounds of a unit complex.	**41.1** The decision to apply on behalf of an entire complex or common grounds of a unit complex is guided by the requirements of the Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety (LGIRS), and is at the discretion of the Regional Manager.
42. Abandoned Premises If a tenant is believed to have abandoned the premises, the Housing Authority may enter the premises to inspect and secure the property in accordance with the Residential Tenancies Act 1987.	**42.1** If the Housing Authority suspects a premises is abandoned every effort will be made to contact the tenant before commencing action under the *Residential Tenancies Act 1987*.

TENANCY MANAGEMENT POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
43. Abandoned Goods and Documents. If goods and documents are left on the premises more than 2 days after the termination of the tenancy, the Housing Authority will dispose of, remove, store or sell them. **44. Housing Initiated Transfer.** Tenants occupying a property with one or more spare bedrooms are ineligible for that property and may be required to transfer to an alternative public housing property. **45.** Tenants occupying a property that is purpose built or modified for a person with a disability, may be required to transfer to an alternative public housing property if the modifications are no longer required by a member of the household. **46.** Tenants occupying a property that requires extensive or essential maintenance, that cannot be completed while the property is occupied, will be required to transfer to an alternative public housing property. **47.** Tenants occupying a property that is required by the Housing Authority for redevelopment and/or refurbishment as outlined in the Refurbishment of Occupied Properties Policy, will be required to transfer to an alternative public housing property. **48.** The Housing Authority may offer incentives and/or contribute to the reasonable costs associated to relocate a household. **49.** A tenancy agreement may be terminated if transfer to an alternative public housing property cannot be negotiated.	**43.1** The action taken will depend on the type of items abandoned and the value of these items.

Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Housing and Works**

ILLEGAL USE OF PREMISES POLICY

ILLEGAL USE OF PREMISES POLICY

The Illegal Use of Premises policy outlines the Housing Authority's response to illegal activities arising out of the use of public housing premises. The Housing Authority will respond to the illegal use of public housing premises in proportion to the severity of the offence.

The Housing Authority will take immediate action where there is sufficient evidence to seek the termination of the tenancy agreement. In most circumstances legal action will commence where a tenant or any other person, given express or implied permission to be on the premises by the tenant, has been convicted of an offence that warrants termination of the tenancy agreement. In some circumstances legal action will commence before a conviction.

If the public housing premises are a necessary component of criminal activity, it will be considered that the premises have been used for an illegal purpose and therefore action will be taken in line with this policy.

The Housing Authority will take action in line with this policy in all instances. Discretion cannot be applied by regional staff. In exceptional circumstances Executive Management may approve alternative action.

POLICY	GUIDELINES
1. A tenant must not use the premises, or cause or permit the premises to be used for an illegal purpose.	**1.1** This includes any illegal activity occurring on the premises or arising out of the use of the premises. **1.2** A tenant is responsible for any illegal act by a person who has been given express or implied permission to be on the premises by the tenant.
2. The Housing Authority will respond to illegal activities occurring on the premises or arising out of the use of the premises in proportion to the severity of the activity.	**2.1** Where the activity causes considerable concern for, or is likely to impact on, the safety or security of the community or is sufficiently serious to warrant such action, the Housing Authority will apply to the court to seek the termination of the tenancy agreement. This includes drug offences such as the unlawful sale, supply or manufacture of a prohibited drug. **2.3** Where the activity does not cause significant concern for, or is unlikely to impact on, the safety or security of the community, the action taken by the Housing Authority will be based on the circumstances.
3. The Housing Authority will apply to the court to seek the immediate termination of the tenancy agreement in response to dangerous illegal activities occurring on the premises or arising out of the use of the premises.	**3.1** Dangerous illegal activities include activities that pose an immediate risk to the safety or security of people or property.

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Department of **Housing and Works**

TENANT

ELIGIBILITY

POLICY

TENANT ELIGIBILITY POLICY

PREAMBLE

The Housing Authority has strict eligibility criteria for all applicants for public rental housing. These are based on an applicant's income, assets (property/land and cash assets), citizenship and residency status, age, and family size and subject to proof of identity.

Eligibility assessments are undertaken to ensure that tenants are eligible for public housing. While not all applicant criteria will be applicable to tenants, criteria relating to income, cash assets, ownership of property and land and family size/number of bedrooms continue to apply. Therefore, after occupation, the Housing Authority reviews ALL tenancies on an annual basis, to ensure continuing eligibility. Where a tenant's circumstances and their housing requirements have changed the Housing Authority may take action to ensure that housing assistance is provided to those in greatest need.

Tenants who cease to be eligible for public housing assistance or who fail to provide income details when required will no longer be eligible to have their income calculated by reference to income (see Rent to Income Policy) and will be required to pay Individual Property Market Rent.

INCOME ELIGIBILITY

Income eligibility for the Housing Authority's rental accommodation must be demonstrated and proven at the time of:

1. Application for rental assistance
2. Allocation of a property
3. For the purpose of rent assessment, and
4. Annually, for the purpose of proving ongoing eligibility for public rental housing.

Applicants and tenants must also immediately declare to the Housing Authority any change in their financial circumstances as they occur.
In such situations an applicant or tenant must disclose and provide details of all sources of wage or salary income, statutory income, assets, shares or bonds, chattels, real property, assets held in corporate trust, inheritances, family trusts and any other income sources to which they are beneficially entitled. Failure to disclose all sources of income will result in the withdrawal of an application/allocation and recovery action in the case of an existing tenant.

Applicants or tenants who are unsure of what they are required to declare should discuss the matter with a Housing Authority's Regional Officer.

TENANT ELIGIBILITY POLICY

Tenants who become ineligible after signing the tenancy agreement.
All tenants in occupation who become ineligible for continued public rental housing assistance will be advised of alternative housing options to consider including:

- Home ownership options
- Bond Assistance Loan
- National Rental Affordable Scheme
- Private Rental Brokerage Scheme, and
- Affordable Rental Housing options through the community housing sector.

The Housing Authority will only allow a period of up to 6 months (except tenants residing in remote locations) from the date ineligibility is established for the tenant to source alternative housing. Should a tenant not pursue or take up any of these options, the Housing Authority will seek vacant possession of the premises at the expiry of the vacation period where a tenant does not source alternative housing options.

Income ineligible tenants residing in Northwest and remote locations.
Tenants in this category have up to 2 years from the date ineligibility is established to source alternative housing options.

POLICY	GUIDELINES
1. Tenants must remain eligible for assistance during their tenancy.	**1.1** Tenants must: • Not acquire property or land, • not acquire cash assets in excess of $38,400 (single) or $63,800 couple, seniors 60 years and over $80,000 (singles or couple) or $100,000 (people with disabilities), and • remain eligible for the number of bedrooms allocated.
2. Tenants with property or land will be required to pay an Individual Property Market Rent for the property. Tenants, who already pay a market rent, will be required to pay the current private market rent for the property.	**2.1** The Housing Authority will give 60 days' notice of an increase in rent, as required by the *Residential Tenancies Act 1987*. **2.2** Both will be backdated to the purchase of the property.
3. Tenants who have given false or misleading information on an application or rent assessment form will be subject to the same action as tenants who are no longer eligible. The Housing Authority also reserves the right to take criminal action in such cases.	

Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Housing and Works**

RENT TO INCOME POLICY

RENT TO INCOME POLICY

PREAMBLE

The Housing Authority requires tenants to pay either 25% of the household income as rent or the market rent for the property.
Tenants eligible to pay rent by reference to the household income will pay no more than 25% of the household income as rent. If 25% of the household income is more than the market rent, then the rent payable is the market rent.

Tenants not eligible to pay rent by reference to the household income may pay a market rent which is more than 25% of the household income.
The Housing Authority is committed to providing a rent setting method that is fair and equitable for all public housing tenants.

After 28 March 2016 any income that is regular, ongoing and provided to meet the cost of living is considered by the Housing Authority to be "assessable" and used to calculate how much rent is payable. In addition, some previously non-assessable incomes and incomes assessed at less than 25% in the rent calculation became assessable at the full 25% rate from 28 March 2016.

If applicable, tenants who occupied their current rental property before 28 March 2016 will receive rent increases until they are paying 25% of the assessable household income as rent or the market rent. The rent increases will be staged with increase limits applied to reduce the impact of the changes for these tenants.

RENT TO INCOME POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
1. Tenants are required to pay 25% of the total assessable gross (before tax) income of all household members who have reached 16 years of age as rent or market rent, whichever is the lower amount. Any income which is regular, ongoing and provided to meet the general costs of living is considered assessable income for the purpose of calculating rent.	**1.1** Assessable income includes: • **"General income"** - e.g. wages, salaries, superannuation, salary sacrificed amounts, child maintenance and interest from financial assets including savings. • **"Statutory Income"** - e.g. pensions, benefits and allowances. **1.2** Assessable income is further defined as payments that: • Are or can be received as regular fortnightly income and therefore can be planned for, • are ongoing and for which recipients do not need to requalify for once eligible, • temporarily replace a recipient's primary form of income - e.g. Paid Parental Leave, or • are for, or able to be used for general livings costs. **1.3** Household members are the tenant(s), their partner(s), dependants and non-dependants of the tenant, non-family members and boarders. Refer to the Tenancy Management Policy for information about visitors. **1.4** Rent is determined at the time of signing the Tenancy Agreement and whenever a rent assessment is carried out.
2. "Non-assessable" incomes are not used in calculating how much rent is payable. The Housing Authority currently treats the following incomes as non-assessable for the calculation of rent.	**2.1** Any income received by a household member who is under 16 years of age or has reached 100 years of age is non-assessable for the calculation of rent. Refer to "Centenarians" for more information.

RENT TO INCOME POLICY

2.2 NON-ASSESSABLE GOVERNMENT INCOME PAYMENTS

- Abstudy Pensioner Education Supplement
- AIC Pensioner Education Supplement
- Assisted and Isolated Children
- Attendant Allowance
- Austudy Education Pension Allowance
- Bereavement Payment
- Child Disability Allowance – One Off
- Clothing Allowance (DVA)
- Crisis Payment
- Dad and Partner Pay
- Decoration Allowance (DVA)
- Disaster Recovery Allowance
- DVA Disability Pension
- DVA Disability Compensation Payment - General Rate
- DVA Disability Compensation Payment - Intermediate Rate
- DVA Disability Compensation Payment – Temporary Special Rate
- DVA Disability Compensation Payment - Special Rate
- DVA Disability Compensation Payment – Extreme Disablement
- Adjustment
- Education Tax Refund Payment
- Emergency Payment
- Emergency Recovery Payment (including Burial Assistance,
- Hospital, medical and Repatriation Expenses)
- Essential Medical Equipment Payment
- Exceptional Circumstances Relief Payment
- Ex-Gratia Payment
- FACS Pensioner Education Supplement
- Flexible Support Payment
- Foster Carer Subsidy
- Funeral Expenses – One Off
- HECS or Course Fees
- Income Support Bonus
- Mobility Allowance
- Newborn Supplement
- Newborn Upfront Payment
- Orphans Allowance/Pension (DVA)
- Overseas Add-On Payment (For Child)
- Pensions Loan Scheme
- Permanent Impairment Payment (DVA)
- Prisoner of War Recognition Supplement (DVA)
- Recreation Transport Allowance (DVA)
- Remote Allowance (DVA)
- School Kids Bonus
- Special Employment Advance
- Stillborn Payment
- Student Education Payments (DVA)
- Student Start-Up Scholarship
- Veterans Supplement (DVA)

RENT TO INCOME POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
3. Tenants who are not eligible to have their rent calculated by reference to income will pay the market rent for the property.	**3.1** Tenants may be required to pay market rent if they: • Are ineligible for public housing (refer to the Tenant Eligibility Policy for information about tenants residing in the Northwest or remote locations and those who become ineligible after occupying the premises), • do not keep the Housing Authority up to date with changes to their household income, • do not respond to the annual income review, or • leave the premises for longer than 6 months. **3.2** Tenants paying rent under this option may pay a market rent which is more than 25% of their household assessable income.
4. Documentation Required for a Rent to Income Assessment. Applicants will be required to provide documentation as proof of income.	**4.1 Centrelink and Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) pension or benefit recipients** will need to provide a Statement of Benefit from Centrelink or DVA that is not more than four weeks' old. The Housing Authority reserves the right to request such proof of a lesser period. A claim for benefit is not sufficient evidence. **4.2 Wage and Salary earners** will need to provide their last 3 months' payslips if available, or alternatively have their employer complete an Employer Income Verification Statement. If payslips are provided, an average income will be determined for the rent assessment even if the payslips cover less than a 3-month period. Any variation in income will be taken into account for the rent assessment once 3 months' payslip history has been provided. **4.3 Overseas pension recipients** must provide proof of the pension source and amount.

RENT TO INCOME POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
Documentation Required for a Rent to Income Assessment continued.	**4.4** For the purpose of determining rent, any household member (tenant, partner, and non-dependant householder), aged 16 years or over, **who is not in receipt of an income or has an income lower than the base statutory benefit** and is eligible to apply for a statutory benefit but chooses not to, will be deemed to be receiving the base statutory benefit for which they would be eligible. **Examples:** • A person who loses their job but would prefer to live off savings than apply for unemployment benefits. • A person who loses their job but would prefer to live off savings than apply for unemployment benefits.
5. Salary Sacrifice Salary sacrificed payments (including superannuation contributions) are included in the total assessable income.	**5.1** The salary sacrificed component is not deducted from the gross (before tax) income for the rent calculation.
6. Income From Assets For the purpose of the rent to income assessment, all household members are required to declare all financial and property assets and income derived from these assets. Where an income from these assets is not provided, is not received, cannot be substantiated or does not accrue, then an income will be deemed, based on the net value of the asset, for the purposes of the rent to income assessment.	**6.1** The deeming rate that is applied to the value of financial and property assets is in line with Centrelink's deeming rate for financial assets. (See Eligibility Policy for definition).
7. Income From Self Employment Self-employed tenants will have their rent to income assessed on the basis of their taxable income or an equivalent award wage for the occupation in that industry, whichever is the greater.	**7.1** Self-employed tenants will need to provide their last financial year income tax assessment from the ATO. If they have difficulties in supplying this documentation, they will be assessed at the equivalent award rate for the occupation in that industry.

RENT TO INCOME POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
Income from Self Employment Continued.	**7.2** Where a household continues to be eligible for part or full Centrelink entitlements, including the New Enterprise Incentive Scheme (NEIS), then the assessable income will be the Centrelink entitlement or equivalent and the estimated profit from self-employment. **7.3** For the purpose of determining rent, where a couple are in a business partnership and the level of assessable income is less than an award wage for a similar occupation or trade, then only one wage is deemed. **7.4** The following is provided as an example only. A taxi driver is considered self-employed. As there is no award for taxi drivers the Transport Workers (Passengers vehicle) Award is the closest equivalent. • A fulltime taxi driver working 38 hours per week would have an assessable income of the award rate. • A part time taxi driver's assessable income will be calculated by multiplying the number of hours worked by the hourly rate. • The hourly rate is calculated by dividing the award rate by 38 hours.
8. Lump Sum Compensation and Severance Payments Tenants in receipt of a lump sum compensation or severance payment will continue to have rent assessed on the same income they received before the receipt of the lump sum payment, for the period that they are excluded from receiving a Centrelink benefit or allowance.	**8.1** Centrelink excludes a person from receiving a benefit or allowance for a period of time after the receipt of a lump sum compensation payment. The exclusion period is based upon Centrelink calculations regarding the component of the payment that is for loss of income. **8.2** Centrelink may exclude a person from receiving a benefit or allowance for a period of time after the receipt of a lump sum severance payment. Centrelink's Unemployment Non-Payment period may apply if a person becomes unemployed voluntarily or is dismissed by their employer due to misconduct.

RENT TO INCOME POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
Lump Sum Compensation and Severance Payments continued.	**8.3** Any interest received from the lump sum payment will be included as income. **8.4** Where the partner continues to be eligible or Centrelink entitlement other than Family Allowance, then this amount may not be assessed if this causes income to be double counted.
9. Child Maintenance Payments Child maintenance payments will be assessed as part of the household income.	**9.1** Discretion may be exercised where it can be proved that maintenance payments are not regular.
10. Absentee Tenant Minimum Rent Tenants in sole occupation who are required to enter supported accommodation will have their rent reduced to the minimum rent of $10 per week for a period of 3 months. If the tenant is absent from the property due to family and domestic violence, see the Family and Domestic Violence Policy.	**10.1** This is applicable to tenants who are entering into a specific rehabilitation program, respite, nursing home and outpatient treatment where they are required to pay rent or lodgings to another organisation. **10.2** Public housing tenants are eligible for Centrelink Rent Assistance when in supported accommodation. **10.3** A review will be undertaken at the end of 3 months. Absentee Minimum Rent can be cancelled at any time during the 3-month period if the tenant returns to the property or is found to be ineligible for the rent concession **10.4** If there are other household members the rent is reassessed on their income only and no income details are entered for the tenant. **10.5** Tenants are to provide supporting documentation verifying that they are entering into a specific program to be entitled to Absentee Tenant Minimum Rent. Should they not remain in the program or are absent from the property for a period that is less than 3 months the Housing Authority is to be advised immediately they return to the tenancy, and a new Rent Assessment Form is to be completed and submitted to the Housing Authority.

RENT TO INCOME POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
Absentee Tenant Minimum Rent continued.	**10.6** The tenant must advise the Housing Authority of contact address and telephone number(s) of the person(s) who will be taking care of the property during the absence period. The Housing Authority will enter into negotiations with the tenant and/or the nominated person in regard to property care and maintenance during the absence period.
11. Department of Veteran's Affairs (DVA) Disability Payments/Pensions. Tenants and other household members receiving a non-assessable DVA disability compensation payment / pension will have their rent assessed using the full rate of the Centrelink benefit they would otherwise be entitled to receive. **Non-assessable DVA disability payment / pensions:** • DVA Disability Compensation Payment - General Rate • DVA Disability Compensation Payment - Intermediate Rate • DVA Disability Compensation Payment - Special Rate • DVA Disability Compensation Payment Extreme Disablement Adjustment	**11.1** Where a non-assessable DVA disability payment / pension is received either as the sole source of income or in combination with a Centrelink pension, the full Centrelink benefit rate (Age or Disability Support Pension - single or partnered rate as appropriate) is assessed for the rent calculation. The DVA disability payment / pension is not assessed. **11.2** The full (not partial) Centrelink benefit rate including the Energy Supplement and Pension Supplement is used for the rent calculation. **11.3** A partner of a non-assessable DVA disability compensation payment /pension recipient who receives a reduced Centrelink pension as their sole source of income will have the full partnered rate of Centrelink pension used for the rent calculation. **11.4** All other assessable incomes including those paid by Centrelink or DVA are included in the rent calculation.
12. Households with an Eligible Co-Resident Carer. An eligible co-resident carer with an assessable income that exceeds the full rate of the Centrelink Carer Payment, will instead be treated as only receiving the full rate of the Centrelink Carer Payment (including the Pension Supplement and Energy Supplement).	**12.1** An eligible co-resident carer will have their income calculated for rent purposes based on the lesser of: • 25% of their total assessable income, or • 25% of the full rate of the Centrelink Carer's Payment • (including the Pension Supplement and Energy Supplement). **12.2** See the Housing for People with Disabilities policy regarding the eligibility of a co-resident carer.

RENT TO INCOME POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
13. Tenants Housing Migrants with Assurances of Support, or Persons Seeking Asylum. A Migrant with an Assurance of Support or a person seeking asylum in Australia who is housed by a tenant is not regarded as being in receipt of a statutory income and rent will be calculated using the total assessable gross income of all other household members.	**13.1** Migrants with assurances of support or persons seeking asylum in Australia are not entitled to statutory benefit from Centrelink and are not to be confused with tenants who are eligible for Centrelink payments but do not apply for them. **13.2** Where the migrant or person seeking asylum in Australia is the partner of a single tenant who is in receipt of a Centrelink benefit, the Housing Authority will assess the tenant at the rate of income for couples, as determined by Centrelink. **13.3** Where a migrant with an Assurance of Support or a person seeking asylum in Australia is housed by a tenant, transfer to alternate accommodation in order to accommodate the increase in family size is not available.
14. Centenarians. An eligible co-resident carer with an assessable income that exceeds the full rate of the Centrelink Carer Payment, will instead be treated as only receiving the full rate of the Centrelink Carer Payment (including the Pension Supplement and Energy Supplement).	**14.1** The requirement for the tenant to advise the Housing Authority of any changes to the income or details of household members will remain. Rent will be calculated using the total assessable gross income of all household members excluding the centenarian (100-year-old person).
15. Changes to Household Members and/or Household Income. Tenants are required to advise the Housing Authority immediately if there is any change to the household composition and/or household income of $10 per week or more by submitting a completed Rent Assessment form.	**15.1** Completed Rent Assessment forms submitted by tenants will be processed immediately by the Housing Authority. **15.2** Any rent increase will be effective from the date that the household income changed.
16. Tenants who do not submit a completed Rent Assessment form when required will be charged market rent.	**16.1** Tenants submitting a completed Rent Assessment form after the due date will have the rent subsidy, if applicable, reinstated effective from the date that the Rent Assessment form was received by the Housing Authority.

RENT TO INCOME POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
17. Backdating of Rent. Rent charges will be backdated where the tenant's weekly household income increased by $10 per week or more and the tenant did not advise the Housing Authority by submitting a completed Rent Assessment form. **18.** The Housing Authority is not liable to repay an overpayment of rent if the tenant does not immediately advise the Housing Authority of a decrease in household income by submitting a completed Rent Assessment form.	**17.1** Rent charges will be backdated to the date that the weekly household income increased by $10 or more. **17.2** Backdating rent charges for a period greater than 3 months must be authorised by a Housing Authority Manager. **17.3** Regional Management will consider the individual circumstances of the tenant and may exercise discretion on compassionate or medical grounds.

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Department of **Housing and Works**

INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY MARKET RENTS POLICY

INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY MARKET RENTS POLICY

The Housing Authority assesses rental payments by two separate processes.

A Rent to Income assessment is based on the tenant's income and not the market features of the property occupied (See Rent to Income Policy).

An Individual Property Market Rent is charged where a tenant is not eligible to have the rent calculated in reference to income and the rent is based on the market features of a property.

Under an Individual Property Market Rent, the market features of a property are assessed by data supplied by the Landgate and reviewed annually.

The Landgate bases the market value of a property, on four property attributes and the location. These are:

1. Dwelling type: Whether the property is a single detached house, a medium density/grouped housing complex or a flat/apartment
2. The number of bedrooms contained in the property
3. Construction Material – Whether the property is brick/masonry or frame construction.
4. The age of the dwelling
5. The locational index. This is based on factors such as the suburb in which the property is locate and is further categorised by region in which the property is located i.e. Metropolitan/Country, Northwest (including Kalgoorlie/Boulder).

If you wish to know the market rent placed on an individual property, contact the Housing Authority's regional or branch office responsible for the management of the accommodation.

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DEBT

RECOVERY

POLICY

DEBT RECOVERY POLICY

PREAMBLE

The Housing Authority pursues debts in accordance with the Residential Tenancies Act 1987. Any monies owing to the Housing Authority result in less funds available to assist needy people waiting for housing assistance. The Housing Authority always prefers to come to an arrangement to repay a debt, rather than take legal action to pursue the matter through the courts.

POLICY	GUIDELINES
1. Applicants with A Debt to the Housing Authority. See Eligibility Policy.	
2. Account Finalisation. All accounts will be finalised within 90 days of vacation of the property.	**2.1** Accounts will have details of the work done and the job order number. **2.2** A letter will accompany the account explaining the appeal process and where to get assistance and information.
3. Tenants In Occupation. Tenants with a debt to the Housing Authority, either current or relating to a previous tenancy or Bond Assistance Loan, will have no maintenance undertaken above what is required under section 42 of the *Residential Tenancies Act 1987*, unless alternative arrangements to repay the debt have been made and are being maintained.	
4. Debts Related to Current Tenancy. Debts related to the current tenancy of the debtor will be pursued according to the requirements of the *Residential Tenancies Act 1987*.	**4.1 Example:** Rental arrears, tenant liability, or water consumption debts incurred during the current tenancy. **4.2** Tenant must enter into an agreement to repay the debt and maintain payments until the debt is cleared. **4.3** Failure to enter into an agreement to repay and maintain payments until the debt is cleared will result in a termination of tenancy under Section 62 of the *Residential Tenancies Act 1987*. **4.4** See also Section 5 to Section 5.1 for reasonable payment arrangements.

DEBT RECOVERY POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
5. Debts Relating to a Previous Tenancy. An arrangement to repay a debt from a previous tenancy is a private arrangement between the Housing Authority and the tenant/applicant debtor and cannot be reflected in the Tenancy Agreement. The client should provide evidence where part of the debt relates to bankruptcy and payments will not be sought.	**5.1** The agreement is reflected in the agreement to repay only. **5.2** Section 62 of the *Residential Tenancies Act 1987* cannot be used to terminate debts from a previous tenancy (See Section 4 to Section 4.4). **5.3** Regional Management will consider the individual circumstances of the tenant and may exercise discretion on compassionate or medical grounds.
6. Debts Relating to a Previous Tenancy at the Same Address. Where a court order has been granted to terminate a tenancy the Housing Authority may, in extenuating circumstances, approve continued occupation under a new tenancy. Any debt for the terminated tenancy must be treated as vacated debt.	**6.1** The tenant is to agree to and maintain a repayment arrangement for the Vacated Debt. **6.2** The Debt Discount Scheme will not apply where a new tenancy agreement has been granted, and the tenant continues to occupy the same property.
7. Statute-Barred Debt. Under the *Limitation Act 2005 (WA)*, the period for a tenancy debt is 6 years. Expiration of the period does not expunge the debt as if it never existed, but once this period has elapsed, the debt becomes "statute-barred" and legal recovery is not permitted. Under the *Bankruptcy Act 1996 (Cth*), when a client declares bankruptcy, the debt becomes "statute-barred", subsequent discharge of the bankruptcy relieves the customer of the legal liability to repay the debt, but it does not expunge the debt as if it had never existed. Repayment of statute-barred debts will not be pursued by the Housing Authority and will not preclude further assistance being offered by the Housing Authority.	**7.1** Repayment of statute-barred debts cannot be actively pursued. **7.2** Statute-barred debts can be reactivated if a client makes a payment or provides the Housing Authority with written acknowledgement that the debt exists. The debt then becomes Written Off Recoverable and standard recovery procedures resume.

DEBT RECOVERY POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
8. Arrears Repayment for Tenants in Occupation. The Housing Authority will act promptly to ensure that arrangements to repay a debt are made with a tenant in occupation, to prevent the accumulation of a large debt.	**8.1** For all debts, the Housing Authority should seek an arrangement so that the combined total of the tenant's arrears and current rent does not exceed 30% of their total assessable household income. Tenants may choose to pay more than 30% of income for the repayment of debt. **Example:** Where the agreed payments are not maintained, contact should be made with the tenant to ascertain why payments have ceased. Discretion should be exercised where there has been a loss of income, for instance due to Centrelink payment cancellation, loss of employment, or a cancellation of maintenance payments. The termination process should recommence once a final warning has been sent to the tenant and continue in the absence of a satisfactory response from the tenant.
9. Debts Relating to a Previous Tenancy at the Same Address. Where a court order has been granted to terminate a tenancy the Housing Authority may, in extenuating circumstances, approve continued occupation under a new tenancy. Any debt for the terminated tenancy must be treated as vacated debt.	
10. Joint Liability of Tenants. All tenants, signatory to the Tenancy Agreement are jointly liable for any debt.	**10.1** Tenants who jointly sign the Tenancy Agreement are jointly liable for any debt from the tenancy. This means that a debt is split evenly between all parties' signatory to the agreement.
11. Minimal Maintenance. See Tenancy Management Policy.	

Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Housing and Works**

DEBT DISCOUNT SCHEME POLICY

DEBT DISCOUNT SCHEME POLICY

PREAMBLE

In recognition that many customers have no other housing options other than public rental housing, the Housing Authority offers customers with a debt, the opportunity to repay a proportion of the monies owing in lieu of the full debt, in order to facilitate earlier re-entry into the public rental housing program. It is also available to customers with a debt to the Housing Authority, wishing to access home ownership in order to facilitate private home ownership.

POLICY	GUIDELINES
1. General. A customer with a debt to the Housing Authority will be offered credit for monies repaid, in order to facilitate earlier re-entry into public rental housing or homeownership, if they participate in the scheme. To be eligible to participate in the scheme the debt must not relate to the current tenancy (The Debt Discount Scheme does not apply to Bond Assistance Loan debts). Applicants/Tenants should be advised of their rights to participate in the Debt Discount Scheme for debts that do not relate to the current tenancy. Where possible correspondence should include reference to the Debt Discount Scheme and application form. Applicants do not need to have a current application for public housing to participate in the scheme. **2.** Any customer with a debt to the Housing Authority, which is currently being repaid, may participate in the scheme, the debt being calculated at the amount owing at the time of participation. (Not available to customers wanting to secure another Bond Assistance Loan or tenants with a debt in their current tenancy).	**1.1** This is not available to tenants with a debt in their current tenancy. (see section 15). **1.2** A debt is an old debt when it is not related to a current tenancy. **2.1 Example:** Original debt $1 000; amount already repaid $500; debt for the purpose of participation in the Debt Discount Scheme $500. The discount will be calculated on the amount owing at the time of participation, not the total debt. **2.2** If you are already repaying a debt you may participate in the scheme. However, the discount will only apply to the amount that remains to be paid at the time you enter the scheme.

DEBT RECOVERY POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
3. Participants will have their application for assistance registered with the date of commencement of participation in the scheme and will receive the benefit of this date when the 50% of the debt has been repaid.	**3.1** A registered application accrues time on the waiting list, but only becomes active after a debt has been repaid
4. If the applicant ceases making payments, or fails to make payments as agreed, the application may be withdrawn. Tenants will be advised in writing giving them 21 days' notice of such a decision and information on the appeal process.	
5. Current Tenants. Tenants with a debt to the Housing Authority may only participate in the Debt Discount Scheme, in order to repay a debt from a previous tenancy/s.	**5.1** The scheme does not apply to debts accumulated in the current tenancy or Bond Assistance Loan debts. **5.2** Debt Discount Scheme is not available to tenants who have had their tenancy terminated by the court and then restored by the Housing Authority at the same address. **5.3** Debt Discount Scheme is not available to the Housing Authority tenants who have been transferred to another tenancy and in doing so, incur a debt.
6. Scheme Details. Participants will qualify for a discount of 50% off their debt; that is a $1 discount for every $1 paid, when 50% of the debt has been repaid.	**6.1 Example**: A debt of $600 – participant will only be required to repay $300 before the debt is considered to have been cleared.
7. Payments must be maintained at the agreed intervals and at the agreed amount if participation is to continue.	**7.1 Example**: Participant agrees to make repayments at $10 per week – $10 is the agreed amount and the interval is a week. **7.2** Payments may be made as a single payment if a participant wishes.
8. The Housing Authority recognises that a customer signing a debt discount scheme application form may still be eligible to follow the appeals or court process.	**8.1** Signing the debt discount form does not necessary constitute agreement to the debt.

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CLIMATE CONTROL POLICY

CLIMATE CONTROL POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
HEATING **1. Housing Authority Installed.** The Housing Authority will install a heating appliance to designated seniors' and disability accommodation within cold winter climate zones as determined by the Bureau of Meteorology. Heating appliances will not be installed in other accommodation types unless the tenant applies for a heating appliance and is assessed for eligibility.	**1.1** The provision of heating appliances is subject to available funding. **1.2** In seniors' accommodation a gas room heater is provided. Where gas is not available an electric heater is provided. **1.3** Priority will be given to applicants with a proven need (e.g. medical) regardless of income source; others will be listed on a wait-turn basis, dependent upon available funds. **1.4** In country areas where there is no reticulated town gas, the use of solid fuel heaters, such as slow combustion stoves, is dependent upon tenant request and regional discretion. **1.5** Designated seniors' accommodation refers to accommodation specifically designated for seniors. • Aged persons units • Bed sitting units • Flats • Apartments • Townhouses • Lodging Houses It does not include seniors living in family accommodation. **1.6** Tenants with a debt to the Housing Authority may be refused the provision of a heating appliance unless alternative arrangements to repay the debt have been made and are being maintained
2. Room Heater Hire. A standard fee of $1.30 per week will apply to all tenants who are required to pay the room heater hire fee for a Housing Authority-installed room heater. All tenants who have a Housing Authority-installed room heater are required to sign a Room Heater Hire Agreement.	**2.1** The room heater hire fee does not apply to seniors living in designated seniors' accommodation. The hire of a room heater is optional. If a tenant does not want to pay the room heater hire fee the Housing Authority will remove the heater from the property (this does not apply to designated seniors' accommodation).

CLIMATE CONTROL POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
3. Tenant Installed. Tenants may apply to install internal heating devices at their own cost.	**3.1** Such tenants may apply for reimbursement when the property is upgraded, or when the tenant reaches turn for assistance on the waiting list for a heating appliance. **3.2** The Housing Authority will only reimburse to the value of, including installation costs; the type of appliance that would have been installed had the tenant waited until the Housing Authority had undertaken the installation. If a tenant installs a heating appliance to a lesser value than that which the Housing Authority would have installed, reimbursement will only be to the value of the installed appliance.
COOLING. **4. Housing Authority Installed.** The Housing Authority will install ceiling fans to properties in the Northwest or Kalgoorlie and remote areas. • The Housing Authority provides higher ceilings heights where ceiling fans are installed. Ceiling fans, Air conditioning apertures and ceiling/wall insulation have been provided to all new construction in the Northwest after 1990. • Design features are considered in all new construction in the Northwest and Kalgoorlie due to the climate changes in those areas.	**4.1** Tenants living in the Northwest or Kalgoorlie and remote areas whose properties are not fitted with Air Conditioning apertures may make application to have an aperture fitted subject to budget funding. The aperture will be installed to the Housing Authority's Maintenance specifications with relevant electrical outlet being installed. **4.2** Tenants are responsible for the fitting and maintenance of their own air conditioning units installed in Housing Authority properties.
5. Insulation. The Housing Authority will install ceiling insulation at any property where the tenant or tenant's partner are aged 80 years or over.	**5.1** Tenants under the age of 80 years may make an application for ceiling insulation. Tenants must demonstrate they require ceiling insulation due to a current medical condition or disability. Medical evidence must be supplied to support the application. **5.2** The Housing Authority has a right to decline an application for ceiling insulation. Future use of the property and household composition will be taken into consideration in determining whether the application will be approved.

CLIMATE CONTROL POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
Insulation continued.	**5.3** Should an application for ceiling insulation be declined, the tenant may appeal the decision through the Housing Authority Appeals Mechanism. **5.4** Tenants who are not eligible for ceiling insulation under the Climate Control Policy may install ceiling insulation at their own cost. Tenants must receive approval from the Housing Authority before installation. **5.5** Eligible seniors (tenants over the age of 55 years and under 80 years with a demonstrated need due to a medical condition or disability) who are currently residing in family accommodation will be offered a transfer to insulated seniors' accommodation.

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Department of **Housing and Works**

CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND LANGUAGE SERVICES POLICY

CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND LANGUAGE SERVICES POLICY

PREAMBLE

The Housing Authority recognises that a number of applicants and tenants come from backgrounds which have differing cultural and sometimes religious requirements that may affect their housing needs. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people from a culturally and linguistically diverse background are two such customer groups.

POLICY	GUIDELINES
1. Applications to House Extended Family Groups. Applicants who wish to be housed as an extended family group may make application as an extended family group or as separate application units to be housed within the same zone.	**1.1** Upon application applicants must be given information as to the relative waiting times for 4-bedroom (plus) stock and that they may make individual applications for accommodation within the same zone or country town. **1.2** Advice must also be given that it is not always possible to synchronise an allocation of this type, given that different accommodation types/bedroom numbers have different waiting times. **1.3** Aboriginal grandparents have care of grandchildren may be allocated extra bedrooms. This will be defined in the appropriate cultural context and the best interest of the child. For example: where some children stay irregularly, but consistently, with family members. **1.4** Applicants with extended family groups, which include persons without permanent residency status, must accommodate these people within their current accommodation entitlement and will not be entitled to extra bedrooms for the purpose of accommodating these people. **Example:** Migrants with Assurances of Support (see Eligibility Policy). **1.5** Definition of extended family within an Aboriginal context relatives of the family concerned, for whom they could be reasonably expected to take responsibility; that is, parents, children and grandchildren.

CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND LANGUAGE SERVICES POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
2. Interpreter Services All Housing Authority customers are entitled to a professional interpreter to assist them with any transaction with the Housing Authority, in which they require assistance. **Interpreting for The Deaf** • This includes customers who require assistance with AUSLAN Interpreting for the Deaf. Such assistance may be through one of the Housing Authority's regular weekly interpreting services in the metropolitan area, or through an interpreting and translating services.	**2.1** Customers may also ring the Housing Authority from an outside number (such as home) through the Housing Authority's approved interpreting service, with the Housing Authority being responsible for the cost of the call. **2.2** As of December 2010 regular weekly interpreting times are available in some Housing Authority offices. **2.3** To assist customers with language difficulties, all Housing Authority letterhead paper is endorsed on the reverse side with a message in various different languages.
3. Any **Aboriginal** customer will be serviced by an Aboriginal employee where one is employed in the office concerned, on request.	
4. Any customer unable to attend a Housing Authority office due to distance or disability may ring toll free numbers or ring Head Office and have their call transferred to the desired office, free of charge.	**4.1** Contact Details • **Head Office toll free**: 1800 093 325 • **Switchboard**: 08 9222 4666 • **Maintenance Line** (including after hours) toll free: 1300 137 677 • **Email:** generalenquiries@dohw.wa.gov.au • **Teletype (TTY) phone service:** 08 9476 2446
5. Transfer. Tenants who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander can request a transfer to an alternative public housing property due to cultural reasons associated with a death in the tenancy.	**5.1** See Priority Housing Need Policy.
6. Any tenant wishing to transfer to accommodate members of extended family may be able to use this reason to transfer. Refer to Priority Housing Need Policy.	

CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND LANGUAGE SERVICES POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
7. Debt to the Housing Authority. In all instances the general conditions relating to a debt to the Housing Authority will be applicable.	**7.1** See Eligibility Relating to Applicants with a Debt to the Housing Authority Policy.
8. Access to Properties by Maintenance Workers. Maintenance workers who are required to enter premises to conduct maintenance repairs or inspections are to enter subject to the conditions set out in the Maintenance Policy.	**8.1** If a tenant insists for any reason a worker/contractor remove their shoes before entering the premises the worker/contractor is entitled to refuse to enter the premises to carry out the work.

Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Housing and Works**

‘GRANNY FLAT’ AND ADDITIONAL ACCOMMODATION FOR EXTENDED FAMILY MEMBERS POLICY

‘GRANNY FLAT’ AND ADDITIONAL ACCOMMODATION FOR EXTENDED FAMILY MEMBERS

PREAMBLE

The Housing Authority will consider the provision of a ‘granny flat’ or the provision of an additional bedroom or bathroom for the housing of extended family, under certain conditions.

The criteria will include:

- The relationship of the extended family members to be housed, to the tenant
- The eligibility of the extended family members to access public rental housing in their own right and why they have not already done so
- Whether the tenant or extended family members to be housed have a debt to the Housing Authority, or other tenancy breaches
- The viable housing options that exist for extended family members
- Subject to budget and program commitments

The type of accommodation able to be supplied will depend on a number of planning and construction factors such as the size of the block, general property access, age and construction type of the house concerned and the general economic viability of the project.

POLICY	GUIDELINES
1. Exclusive Use A property, which has an extension or ‘granny flat’ addition to house extended family members, will be retained for the exclusive purpose of housing large family units.	**1.1** Any reduction in the size of the family whereby the additional accommodation is no longer required, will mean that the remaining tenant/s will be required to transfer to alternate accommodation for which they are eligible. **1.2** This is the same requirement as for the housing of people with a disability, where purpose-built or modified accommodation is provided.
2. Eligibility Tenants applying for a ‘granny flat’ or extension to house extended family must have had no significant breaches of tenancy for a minimum of 12 months.	**1.3** On occupation of the extended family the current tenancy will be finalised and a new tenancy at the same address commenced.
3. Extended family members to be housed must be eligible for Housing Authority assistance on all criteria.	**3.1** See Eligibility Policy.
4. Occupation. Members of an extended family are regarded as full members of the household and their income is calculated as part of the gross household income for the purpose of a rental assessment.	**4.1** See Rent to Income Policy.

Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Housing and Works**

HOUSING FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES POLICY

HOUSING FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES POLICY

PREAMBLE

For assessment under this policy, a disability is defined as being:

a) attributable to an intellectual, psychiatric, cognitive, neurological, sensory or physical impairment or combination of those impairments; and
b) is permanent or likely to be permanent; and
c) may or may not be of a chronic or episodic nature; and
d) results in:
- a substantially reduced capacity of the person for communication, social interaction, learning or mobility; and
- a need for continuing support services.

The principles underlying the Housing Authority's policy for housing people with disabilities include:

- people with disabilities have ready access to a range of low-cost housing options
- people with disabilities have access to appropriately designed and located housing which meets the individual's needs
- the needs of people with disabilities should be understood and acknowledged by all Housing Authority staff.

This policy acknowledges there are a number of constraints faced by people with disabilities in accessing housing including:

- lack of accessible housing
- the cost of modifications
- additional costs of living expenses e.g. transport, delivery of goods etc.
- the need for support services.

Housing Options for People with Disabilities

The Housing Authority offers a number of housing programs, including mainstream rental housing, along with a number of community housing programs that are managed by the Housing Programs Directorate of the Housing Authority.

Some of these options are specifically for people with disabilities, such as the Community Disability Housing Program (CDHP) and the Access Home Loan scheme. Note: the CDHP is managed by the Housing Transitions Team.

Applicants need to have legal capacity or a substitute arrangement and have an understanding of the responsibilities and obligations when signing a tenancy agreement.

More information about all these programs is available on the Housing Authority's website www.dohw.wa.gov.au or contact your nearest Housing Authority region or branch office.

HOUSING FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES POLICY

POLICY GUIDELINES

Mainstream Public Rental Housing

To be assisted under this program, applicants must meet:

- Housing Authority eligibility criteria; and
- Have a current application listed on the Housing Authority's waiting list either on a wait turn or priority basis.

The Housing Authority will consider a client's housing need and requirements based on the information that is provided.

Community Disability Housing Program

People with support needs due to disability and/or mental illness often face major barriers that prevent them from obtaining rental housing within the community.

This program represents an additional resource that's aim is to further support people who are assessed as having a significant and complex disability or mental illness, who require ongoing support to live as independently as possible within the community. Whilst providing an alternative to unsuitable housing arrangements, such as institutional care or care by elderly parents unable to cope, or no housing arrangements (i.e. homeless).

The Housing Authority provides the housing, which includes single independent units, shared group-homes, cluster units and other contemporary housing models.

Other agencies such as The **National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA)**, The **Mental Health Commission (MHC**) and The **Insurance Commission of Western Australia** (ICWA) fund the support services or contract with non-government organisations to deliver the services. Eligibility criteria apply (Refer to the Eligibility Policy).

The housing is mainly provided to a non-government organisation or regional housing association who provide property and tenancy management services. This arrangement is secured under a head lease agreement between the organisation and the Housing Programs Directorate.

This program is managed by the Housing Transitions Team and is available Statewide. More information is available on the Housing Authority's website www.dohw.wa.gov.au.

HOUSING FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES POLICY

POLICY GUIDELINES

Access Home Loan Scheme (home ownership)

The Access Home Loan Scheme is a shared-equity loan, structured to assist people with disabilities to buy or build their own home or modify an existing home to meet their disability needs. The Housing Authority will own an equity share in the home, until such time the applicant can buy the remaining share.

To be eligible applicants must meet the Housing Authority's definition of disability (see s1.2 Eligibility for Housing Authority Assistance) and have an income that is within the income limits set by the Housing Authority.

Other borrowing criteria must be satisfied, and applicants will need to have sufficient financial resources and sufficient income to repay a home loan.

Enquiries can be directed to the Manager Access Home Loans. More information is available on the Housing Authority's website www.dohw.wa.gov.au.

HOUSING FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
1. Eligibility for Housing Authority Assistance. For assistance under this policy, applicants must satisfy the Housing Authority eligibility criteria for a person with a disability.	**1.1** See also Eligibility Relating to the Income of Applicants Policy. **1.2 Eligibility Criteria** For eligibility under this policy, a disability is defined as being: a) attributable to an intellectual, psychiatric, cognitive, neurological, sensory or physical impairment or combination of those impairments; and b) is permanent or likely to be permanent; and c) may or may not be of a chronic or episodic nature; and d) results in: • substantially reduced capacity of the person for communication, social interaction, learning or mobility; and • a need for continuing support services. **1.3 Medical Evidence** Medical or paramedical information is required to support the application. Written medical or paramedical evidence provided should: a) confirm the nature of the disability and its permanency or probable permanency, and b) state how the disability affects the applicant's housing requirements, and c) outlines the need for continuing support services. **1.4** An Occupational Therapist assessment may need to be completed to determine the housing needs and property requirements for a person with a disability. **1.5** The household member with a disability may require specific housing design features and housing within close proximity to appropriate services, networks or support arrangements.

HOUSING FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
Eligibility for Housing Authority Assistance continued.	**1.6** Persons with HIV/AIDS experiencing an associated medical condition or disability due to the illness must have their housing needs assessed under this Policy. **1.7** Applicants with funded support "packages" may be eligible for referral to the Community Disability Housing Program (CDHP). Enquiries can be directed to the Housing Transitions Team. **1.8** In country areas the Regional Manager or the Manager, is responsible for the co-ordination of mainstream rental housing services for people with disabilities. Enquiries for the Community Disability Housing Program (CDHP) should be referred to the Housing Transitions Team.
2. Cash Asset Limit for People with Disabilities. The cash asset limit for people with disabilities is $100 000. This cash asset limit is subject to the following conditions: • Cash asset is defined as lump sum cash or investment, which is easily accessible to a person to be used for any purpose. Cash may be received in a number of ways including inheritance, compensation payout, gift or savings. Please see compensable application criteria (see s2 and s3 Eligibility Policy). • Those applicants assisted through accommodation options such as group homes or cluster strata title developments for the purpose of sharing accommodation supports, provided through the Community disability Housing Program, are exempt from the Cash Asset Limit.	**2.1** Cash or investment which is invested in a trust account for the sole purpose of purchasing care needs and/or generating an income will not be considered for determining the assessable cash asset limit. **2.2** All applicants with a disability, who have in excess of $100 000, will have their application referred to the Manager Customer Service or Regional Manager for assessment for eligibility. **2.3** Care costs and/or amount invested for the sole purpose of generating an income can be deducted from the cash assets amount. • Such cash asset must be invested in a trust managed account by a trustee or supported accommodation service for the sole purpose of purchasing care to enable and sustain independent living. • The assessable income is not to be reduced to a level less than the current Disability Support Payment for the purpose of setting rent. **2.4** All decisions regarding eligibility based on cash asset limit can also appealed, subject to appeal conditions.

HOUSING FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
3. Privacy and Confidentiality. Housing Authority staff will be sensitive and respect privacy and confidentiality at all times is in accordance with the Housing Authority's Privacy, Confidentiality and Duty of Care Policy. **4. Income Eligibility** Housing Authority staff will be sensitive and respect privacy and confidentiality at all times is in accordance with the Housing Authority's Privacy, Confidentiality and Duty of Care Policy.	**3.1** Applicants may: • Bring others (e.g. friend/advocate) with them during any contact with the Housing Authority, and • Have a support agency act on their behalf. **4.1** Assessment of income for eligibility will be consistent with general policy (see Eligibility Relating to Income of Applicants Policy). **4.2** Where an applicant requires a live-in carer and this is the principal place of residence of the carer; the carer's income shall not be assessed for the purposes of eligibility but will be for rent assessment. **4.3** A carer is an individual who provides personal care, support and assistance to another individual who needs it because that other individual: • Has a disability; or • has a medical condition (including a terminal or chronic illness); or • has a mental illness; or • is frail and aged. **4.3.1** An individual is **not** a carer in respect of care, support and assistance he or she provides: • Under a contract of service or a contract for the provision of services, • in the course of doing voluntary work for a charitable, welfare or community organisation, or • as part of the requirements of a course of education or training. **4.3.2** An individual is not a carer merely because he or she: • Is the spouse, de facto partner, parent, child or other relative of an individual, or is the guardian of an individual; or • lives with an individual who requires care.

HOUSING FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
Income Eligibility continued.	**4.4** Paramedical or Medical evidence will support the need for a client to have a carer and on what basis (full or part time, night only etc.) **4.5** Compensable applicants (those who derive all or part of their income from the interest on compensation payouts) will be assisted provided their yearly income assessment, less the cost of care and support services related to their disability, does not exceed the Housing Authority's income limits. Applicants in this category would need to produce documentary evidence of their: • Daily/yearly care costs from a registered care agency, and • Income for assessment.
5. Rent Assessment. Rent assessment will be consistent with general Housing Authority policy (see Rent to Income Policy).	**5.1** Rent will be calculated on 100% of assessable income of tenant, partner and co-tenants and any non-dependent householder, including live-in carer. **5.2** Where the equivalent of full-time care is shared between 2 or more carers, rent will be assessed on the average assessable income of the carers.
6. Co-Resident Carers. A co-resident carer is defined as someone who lives with a person with a disability to provide ongoing care and uses that property as their principal place of residence who would otherwise live elsewhere if they were not the carer for that person.	**6.1** Evidence that shows the co-resident carer provides or will provide care to a person with a disability as determined by Centrelink, a medical expert, a NDIS plan or a support agency. **6.2** See Rent to Income Policy, regarding the calculation of rent for households with an eligible co-resident carer.

HOUSING FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
Income Eligibility continued. **7.** The following relationships are ineligible for the co-resident care assessment: • A carer who is a tenant or co-tenant in the property, • A carer in a marital or de facto relationship with the person they are providing care for, or • A parent or legal guardian providing care to a child with a disability who is under 18 years of age.	
8. Exclusive Use. All properties that have been fully converted or purpose built to meet the needs of a person with a disability are to be used exclusively for customers with a disability.	**8.1** Accommodation that has been purpose built for a person with a disability, and which subsequently becomes permanently vacant should be allocated to a person with similar housing requirements e.g. to a person who requires wheelchair access. **8.2** The decline of any valid offer (see Allocations Policy about valid offers and declines) will be assessed at the discretion of the Regional Office. **8.3** If there is no applicant with a disability on the waiting list who requires the vacated property, the accommodation may be let on a 3-month lease at the discretion of the Manager Client Services or Manager Housing Services or senior manager (or equivalent) or otherwise utilised for 3 months. **8.4** Where the person with a disability no longer resides in a purpose built or extensively modified property, the remaining householders may remain in the property for up to 12 months before they will be required to transfer.
9. Ducted Air Conditioning. Tenants with a disability causing the loss of ability to control body temperature, may provide and install ducted air-conditioning to their tenancy at their own expense.	**9.1** The Housing Authority will be sensitive in addressing issues of relocation with remaining householders.

HOUSING FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
Ducted Air Conditioning continued.	**9.2** The air-conditioning unit must be installed according to manufacturer's specifications and must comply with the Housing Authority's Improvements and Additions Policy. **9.2** The air-conditioning unit must be installed according to manufacturer's specifications and must comply with the Housing Authority's Improvements and Additions Policy. **9.3** Installation must be undertaken by a qualified installer and at no cost to the Housing Authority. **9.4** The tenant or agency renting the property is responsible for all operating costs and maintenance. **9.5** When the property becomes permanently vacant it will be allocated to a person with similar housing needs. If the Housing Authority is unable to locate a client with similar disability needs the Housing Authority's policy on mobility vacants will apply. **9.6** The Housing Authority will not reimburse the tenant for any cost of the associated with the purchase or installation of ducted air conditioning unit either during the tenant or following vacation. **9.7** The ducted air conditioning unit must be left in good repair and operational when the tenant vacates the property. Any repairs required to return it to satisfactory condition will be charged to the vacating tenant as tenant liability.

Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Housing and Works**

WATER CONSUMPTION POLICY

WATER CONSUMPTION POLICY

PREAMBLE

The Housing Authority will pay the Water Corporation directly for water consumption charges in all tenancies. The tenant is responsible for reimbursing the Housing Authority for this payment. Tenants will pay the Water Corporation directly for any infringements of the State's permanent water efficiency measures including breaches of the sprinkler ban and watering roster.

POLICY	GUIDELINES
1. Tenant Responsibilities Tenants are responsible for the payment of all water consumption charges incurred during the period of occupancy of a Housing Authority tenancy.	**1.1** All tenants will receive an account from the Housing Authority. **1.2** Water consumption proportioning may be considered if a leak or leaks have been reported to the Housing Authority.
2. Tenants are responsible for the payment of all infringement notices issued by the Water Corporation during the period of occupancy of a Housing Authority tenancy.	
3. Water Consumption Debt to the Housing Authority. Any water consumption charge paid on behalf of the tenant by the Housing Authority will be debited to the tenant's rental account. The tenant must reimburse the Housing Authority within six weeks of receipt of the account.	**3.1** The tenant must reimburse the Housing Authority in full within six weeks or by affordable instalments as agreed to by the Housing Authority in line with 30% of assessable income.
4. Vacation of a Housing Authority Tenancy. Upon the vacation of a tenancy a special water meter reading will be arranged.	**4.1** The cost of the reading is borne by the Housing Authority. **4.2** The reading will be noted on the outgoing Property Condition Report.
5. Density Accommodation. Where accommodation has a master meter only, the Housing Authority will apportion the cost of water consumed among all residents on a simple ratio basis.	**5.1** Consumption/Apportionment Entitlement: • **Bedsitter** = .75 • **1-bedroom** = 1.10 • **2-bedroom** = 1.60 • **3-bedroom** = 2.10 • **4-bedroom** = 2.60 From these values, an individual occupant's share of the total account will be calculated on a simple ratio basis.

WATER CONSUMPTION POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
Density Accommodation continued.	**5.1 continued.** **Example:** Total bill for complex = $200. The complex is comprised of four units. • 1 x Bedsitter unit • 1 x 1-Bedroom unit • 1 x 2-Bedroom unit, and • 1 x 3-Bedroom unit The apportioned account is then calculated as follows: Consumption entitlement/5.55 x $200. • 1 x Bedsitter unit = $27.03 • 1 x 1-Bedroom unit = $39.64 • 1 x 2-Bedroom unit = $57.66 • 1 x 3-Bedroom unit = $75.67

Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Housing and Works**

FRAUD MANAGEMENT POLICY

FRAUD MANAGEMENT POLICY

PREAMBLE

The Housing Authority has specific eligibility criteria in order that applicants may qualify for public rental housing and Bond Assistance Loan. The Housing Authority has a statutory obligation to ensure that recipients are eligible for assistance and remain eligible. Some criteria are set by the Federal Government, and some are set by the Housing Authority. Both criteria may change from time to time.

To be eligible for all types of assistance an applicant must be eligible according to criteria relating to income, assets and property ownership, age, citizenship, residency status and be able to prove their identity to the Housing Authority's satisfaction.

Should the Housing Authority discover that an applicant or tenant has deliberately misled the Housing Authority as to their eligibility for assistance, the Housing Authority will take action.

One of the Housing Authority eligibility criteria is that applicants and tenants must not own property or land. This is due to the fact that it is considered that any person who owns property or land should use this asset to house themselves and not utilise a unit of public housing or loan funds. However, the most common instance of fraud that occurs for the Housing Authority is the discovery that an applicant or tenant is the owner of property or land.

The Housing Authority views this deception seriously and any tenant or applicant for public rental housing who gives false information as to property ownership or who acquires property after their application or tenancy will have their tenancy or application reviewed and the appropriate action taken. However, it must be noted that some applicants and tenants are given permission by the Housing Authority to retain property or land for a short period and in extenuating circumstances, in order to have time to sell.

The Housing Authority will undertake a check through Landgate, the State Authority data base, of any applicant or tenant of whom suspicions exist as to the ownership of property. As well, the Housing Authority will undertake 'spot' audits of a sample group of applicants and tenants through the Landgate data base, on a quarterly basis.

In all instances of fraud, the Housing Authority reserves the right to take civil or criminal action.

See also **Tenant Eligibility Policy.**

FRAUD MANAGEMENT POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
1. Applicants for Public Rental Housing Applicants must answer all questions relating to their eligibility for assistance, truthfully and to the best of their knowledge and provide all necessary documentation required by the Housing Authority to prove their eligibility.	**1.1** In cases where false/misleading information is detected, the determining factor will be whether the customer answered truthfully and to the best of their knowledge.
2. Before an allocation has been made, any applicant who has provided false or misleading information, the Housing Authority will have their application withdrawn and will have to reapply for housing assistance and undergo a further eligibility check.	
3. After an allocation has been made, the Housing Authority will consider any false or misleading information provided during the application and allocation process, as a breach of tenancy.	
4. Rent Assessment. On allocation, applicants must complete the rent assessment form truthfully and to the best of their knowledge and supply the relevant documentation provided by the Housing Authority. The Housing Authority will consider any false or misleading information provided as a breach of tenancy.	**4.1** See 1.1.
5. The tenant's income will be reviewed annually to determine continuing eligibility, and the tenant must answer all questions truthfully and to the best of their knowledge and provide documentation required by the Housing Authority. The Housing Authority will consider any false or misleading information provided as a breach of tenancy.	

FRAUD MANAGEMENT POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
Fraud Management continued. **6. Bond Assistance Loan(BAL).** The BAL is a non-interest-bearing loan to applicants by the Housing Authority for the purpose of payment of a rental bond to acquire private rental accommodation and if any false or misleading information is provided with the application the loan will be recalled immediately, and criminal charges may be instigated.	

Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Housing and Works**

REFURBISHMENT OF OCCUPIED PROPERTIES POLICY

REFURBISHMENT OF OCCUPIED PROPERTIES POLICY (INCLUDING RE-DEVELOPMENT AND REFURBISHMENT PROGRAMS)

PREAMBLE

The aim of the Re-Development and Refurbishment Programs is to develop older public housing estates to create a more attractive living environment.

Where refurbishment programs are progressing as per the agreed plan and tenants do not wish to move from their property (and the policy is that they do not have to) then they will have their property upgraded to a similar level to all other properties being refurbished, i.e. it should include improvements to lift the amenity level of the property.

This strategy is to reward tenants, who meet their tenancy obligations. Where tenants have not looked after their property within these developments, they should be managed in accordance with the Tenant Management Policy. However, if considered necessary, some upgrading can be done to encourage tenants to bring their property up to a satisfactory standard.

The Project Manager is to work around the tenant, if possible, and with the tenant, negotiate the amount of work, timeframes and alternatives. The preferred option may be to temporarily transfer the tenant and their belongings whilst work is being carried out.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- Move to alternative refurbished property, with the option to return to their property when refurbishment is completed, if they so desire.
- Provision of portable facilities on site.
- Provision of sewerage facilities on site.
- Free rent period (regional discretion) if the tenant remains in occupation

REFURBISHMENT OF OCCUPIED PROPERTIES POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
1. Refurbishment Occupied Properties The upgrading of such properties is to be within budget and program. Refurbishment of any property where monies spent will be greater than $25,000 requires the approval of the Executive Director Service Delivery.	**1.1 The Housing Authority will:** • Pay all removal and furniture storage cost • Clearly articulate the work required and timeframes • Manage the project to ensure satisfactory workmanship and completion on time • Offer the tenant the choice of colours/materials etc. (within the Housing Authority's specifications standards) • Keep the tenant informed of progress (negotiated with tenant) • Ensure the contractor secures the property • Carry out a Property Condition Report, (see s7.8 Allocation Policy and s10 Transfer Policy), on both properties and arrange a new Tenancy Agreement for the temporary tenancy, with similar action on return to the substantive tenancy. Rent will be charged only on one property. • Ensure that building rubble and rubbish is cleared from site after completion of refurbishment and any related damage to the property is made good. **1.2 The Housing Authority will not:** • Take responsibility for damages/loss to furniture and belongings during removal or for items left (locked up) at the premises. Items removed by designated removalist and/or stored in an off-site designated storage area/s already have insurance liability. • Maintain the lawns and gardens during the refurbishment work, as this is the tenant's responsibility (regional discretion on extra costs), unless the tenant has relocated, in which case the Housing Authority will maintain the lawns and gardens.

REFURBISHMENT OF OCCUPIED PROPERTIES POLICY

POLICY	GUIDELINES
Refurbishment Occupied Properties continued.	**1.3 The Tenant will:** • Pay rent and water consumption costs as normal during the period (regional discretion on extra costs including rent-free period). • Clearly articulate the work required and timeframes

DOCUMENT HISTORY

For further information, please contact:
Owner: Housing Operational Practice and Support
Division: Housing Services
Telephone: 1800 176 888
Email: Enquiries@dohw.wa.gov.au

Date	Reason	File Ref No	Author	Date Published
September 2026	Reformatted Rental Policy Manual. Amendment to Eligibility Relating to Property Ownership and Other Residences clause 15. Changed sentence to reflect "Up to Three Years". Eligibility relating to the Income of Applicants: Income Eligibility Limit tables updated with new values effective 14 September 2026.	A56786163	Morgyn Dowling Senior Operational Improvement Officer	14 September 2026
March 2026	Tenancy Management Policy – Removed references to 'succession' and 'taking over' a tenancy where the tenant is deceased. Cultural Diversity and Language Services Policy – Removed clause 7 regarding succession to a tenancy for extended family members. Rent to Income Policy – Updated to reiterate that guideline 4.4 also applies to partners and non-dependant householders, aged 16 years or over.	A56786163	Bradley Walker Senior Operational Improvement Officer	28 March 2026
March 2026	Eligibility relating to the Income of Applicants: Income Eligibility Limit tables updated with new values effective 16 March 2026.	A56786163	Natalie Browton Manager Housing Operational Practice	16 March 2026