

# Allocation of social housing

## Overview of housing allocations

The full procedures to be used by NCCH when allocating housing are documented in [HOUSING OFFERS AND PROGRAM GUIDELINES FOR HOUSING ALLOCATIONS](#)

### A) Supported housing partnerships

In formal supported housing partnerships, providers of support services can be offered nomination rights to designated properties. In such partnerships, the nomination of those clients will be approved by NCCH in accordance with:

- The principles outlined in Principles for Selection of Housing (below); and
- The terms of the written agreement between NCCH and the support provider

### B) Housing Pathways and the NSW Housing Register

NCCH is a participating social housing provider under Housing Pathways and is bound to follow the prescribed social housing eligibility and allocation policies and processes.

The Social Housing Eligibility and Allocations Policy Supplement for Housing Pathways provides further information to support this document.

### C) Management Allocations

Some discretion is allowed under NCCH policy for the management approval of housing offers that provide for best practice outcomes that:

- Recognises any extreme and extenuating circumstances of clients; or
- Make best use of existing company resources, e.g. transfers of tenants at company convenience
- Meet specific local allocation strategies, as documented by NCCH

### D) Specific Program and Planning Requirements

Some properties managed by NCCH are subject to specific external funding guidelines, which can impact on the tenant selection criteria and processes used. For example, the Social Housing Subsidy Program (SHSP) set minimum household income limits for new tenants. Certain programs, e.g. properties funded under the National Economic and Building Stimulus Plan can require NCCH to meet determined and agreed client targets (e.g. Aboriginality or homelessness).

Properties built according to specific State Environmental Planning Policies can also require the provision of assistance to specific groups, e.g. households with defined income ranges, older people or people with disabilities.

## Housing selection principles

The principles of all tenant selection and housing allocation processes used by NCCH will be:

- All housing is provided to those who have been identified as being in housing need

- The allocation of housing does not discriminate against individuals or families based on the grounds of gender, religion, ethnicity, age, disability, marital status or sexual preference
- NCCH provides an open, consistent and transparent application and allocation system
- There is demonstrated integrity in all the agreed processes in relation to tenant selection and housing allocation, through a series of controls and anti-fraud measures, including the rigorous checking of all housing allocations through NCCH's internal auditing process.
- All housing allocation decisions are clearly documented
- Wherever required, NCCH works closely with support agencies and community organisations to provide a more holistic approach to housing, allowing tenants a greater opportunity to sustain and manage their tenancies
- There is equity of access to all persons seeking community housing
- The resources of NCCH are used efficiently and effectively
- Any conflicts of interest by those involved in the allocation process are declared and effectively managed
- NCCH meets all its legal and external accountabilities

## Promoting successful tenancies

NCCH aims to promote a successful and sustainable tenancy when matching a client to a social housing property. In general, this means matching a client to a property that:

- Is large enough for the client's household, and
- Meets any special needs of the client, so far as these are known, and
- Assists the client to access special support services that they need, and
- Makes the best use of available housing stock in a timeframe that balances the client's need for stable housing with the costs to the housing provider of providing assistance. This includes ensuring that properties with specific features that are in high demand and short supply are only offered to those clients who need them. These features include:
  - Properties suitable for older people, or
  - Properties that have been built or modified to meet the needs of people with a disability, or
  - In some areas, properties on the ground floor, properties with level access, or properties with yards

## Occupancy Guidelines

All allocations of housing to eligible applicants or tenants will be within the agreed occupancy standards of NCCH. This will maximise outcomes for clients whilst also ensuring that the resources of NCCH are used efficiently and effectively.

Table 1: Minimum bedroom entitlements

Household type	Standard bedroom entitlement
Single people	Studio, one or two bedrooms*
Couples	One or two bedrooms *
Single people or couples with one other household member	Two or three bedrooms
Single people or couples with two other household members	Two or three bedrooms
Single people or couples with three other household members	Three or four bedrooms
Single people or couples with four other household members	Three or four bedrooms
Single people or couples with five or more other household members	Four bedroom or, if available, five or more bedrooms. Clients who have a five bedroom household complement will generally be offered a four bedroom property unless a five bedroom property is vacant when the client's turn is reached.

\* NCCH does not generally allocate single detached houses to single people or couples without children

Table 2: Criteria for accommodating children

Situation	NCCH Response
Child is over 18 years of age	The person is considered to be an adult when calculating the minimum bedroom entitlement
Shared bedrooms	Same sex children up to 18 years of age are expected to share a bedroom. Male and female children are expected to share a bedroom until one of the children reaches 10 years of age.
Children can't share a bedroom	NCCH will allocate an additional bedroom where the client has demonstrated a need for same sex children, or children under 10 years of age, to have separate bedrooms. Examples of situations where an extra bedroom could be appropriate include where there is a large age gap between the children or behavioural factors.
Shared custody	The child/children are considered to be part of the household if the client has shared custody of children for 3 days per week or more. Normal bedroom entitlements apply.
Access visits from children	The children are not considered to be part of the household if they visit for less than 3 days per week. The client must demonstrate a need for an extra bedroom to accommodate access visits.
Future needs of children who may need separate bedrooms in 2 or 3 years time	NCCH will take this into account when matching the client to a property if it can. NCCH will make this decision on a case by case basis according to the size and type of housing that is available in the area.

## Local allocation plans and strategies

From time to time, NCCH will develop local allocation plans and strategies, in order to produce optimum outcomes for the communities it serves. This includes the development and implementation of additional guidelines, plans or rules for the allocation of dwellings located in medium density complexes or housing precincts or for single dwellings.

This, at times, may include NCCH approving a management (internal) transfer or making "out-of-guidelines" decisions concerning housing allocations.

All Local Allocations Plans will be documented and approved by the Housing Services Manager.

## Housing Offers

### Housing Pathways and the NSW Housing Register

Generally, a client will receive up to two reasonable offers of housing from their preferred provider. This means that, where a client selects public housing and community housing as their preferred provider, they may receive offers from Housing NSW, any of the participating community housing providers (including NCCH), or a combination of both.

In some cases where a tenant is relocating for management purposes, or when a client has been approved for emergency temporary accommodation, they may receive only one reasonable offer.

### Reasonable Offers, Rejection and Withdrawal of Offers

Refer to Housing Pathways "Accepting, Rejecting and Withdrawing Offers and Suspending Applications"

### Procedure for making housing offers

The Procedure to be followed for making all offers of housing, including the rejection of offers, is documented in [HOUSING OFFERS AND PROGRAM GUIDELINES FOR HOUSING ALLOCATIONS](#)

### Offer Acceptance

If the client accepts an offer, NCCH will expect them to sign the tenancy agreement within a reasonable timeframe of accepting the offer. The generally accepted timeframe is one week, however NCCH can extend the timeframe for a short time if the client requests it and has good reasons for making the request.

NCCH will remove the client from the NSW Housing Register when they have signed a tenancy agreement.

### Reporting and Auditing of Housing Offers

A summary report of all housing allocations made will be prepared for the Chief Executive Officer on a quarterly basis.

The housing offer policies and procedures will be monitored through a series of controls and will be part of NCCH's internal auditing process.



NCCH acknowledges the Bundjalung, Arakwal, Gumbaynggir and Yaegl peoples who are the traditional custodians of the land that comprises the Northern Rivers.

## Right to Appeal

An applicant can appeal a decision made by NCCH regarding:

- The classification of an offer as 'reasonable' when they consider it to be unreasonable;
- The type of property offered if the applicant's needs and circumstances have changed; and
- The removal of an applicant from the waiting list.

## Low Demand Accommodation

NCCH will, occasionally, manage properties which due to their location or poor amenity, may be in low demand by applicants and therefore prove difficult to relet.

Where an applicant accepts an offer of accommodation that is deemed to be low-demand, NCCH will inform the tenant of the option to transfer when a suitable property becomes available. In accordance with NCCH's policies concerning relocation, the tenant must still be eligible for Company housing and clear any debts owing to NCCH prior to any offer of alternative housing being made. If eligible the tenant will be placed on a relocation register.

The classification of a property as low demand accommodation will be made according to the prescribed delegated authority.

## Acceptance of Short-term Accommodation

Where an application has been selected for NCCH's waiting list and the applicant subsequently accepts an offer of short-term accommodation (eg HNSW\* redevelopment stock, supported accommodation with community agency), their application for housing will remain listed on the NSW Housing Register from the date of their original application.

Should the tenancy at the (short-term) property need to be terminated and another short-term property is not immediately available, NCCH will only be able to assist them if there is currently available stock. In accordance with NCCH's policies concerning relocation, the tenant must still be eligible for housing and clear any debts owing to NCCH prior to any offer of alternative housing being made.

## Provision for Urgent and Manual Allocations Due to Extreme and Extenuating Circumstances

An allocation of housing can be made, on an emergency basis, where the extreme circumstances of a client (either a new applicant or existing tenant) are such that it demands an urgent response by NCCH. Allocations of housing under this provision need not be subject to the preparation of a housing offer shortlist and can be made by making a Manual Allocation.

These allocations:

- can only ever be made by and in accordance with NCCH's agreed delegated authorities
- must always be clearly documented and authorised in writing which must include reasons for the allocation being made under this provision

Examples of extreme and extenuating circumstances would include:

- The current residence of the client has been destroyed and is unliveable; or
- There is an imminent and extreme threat to the client or others which would be minimized by an immediate allocation of alternative housing by NCCH
- There is a justifiable management imperative for NCCH for such an allocation to be made.

## Information for Clients

NCCH will ensure that applicants for housing are provided with information about the housing application, assessment and allocation processes. In addition, where appropriate advice about other housing options will be provided.

NCCH will have the following information available for all applicants:

- NCCH Brochure with information about NCCH's purpose and services, including housing allocations policy and information concerning appeals systems
- Application forms for all services available from NCCH.

NCCH will ensure that all information provided is appropriate for its applicants.

## Conflict of Interest

Any NCCH employee involved in the application assessment or housing allocations processes must register any personal or other relationship with a tenant or applicant being considered for housing assessment or allocation.

The employee must withdraw from any involvement in the allocation of housing to that tenant or applicant and must not participate in any way or influence in any way, either implicitly or explicitly, the decision-making process when such a conflict has been declared. A Declaration of Interest Form must be completed and signed by the employee.



*NCCH acknowledges the Bundjalung, Arakwal, Gumbaynggir and Yaegl peoples who are the traditional custodians of the land that comprises the Northern Rivers.*

INFORMATION	
Title	Allocation of social housing
Section	Housing Services
National Regulatory Code Evidence Guideline	Performance Outcome 1: Tenant and Housing Services
National Community Housing Standard	Standard 1.2 Establishing and maintaining tenancies
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