



- Domestic and family violence
- Housing assistance
- Your right to privacy at NCCH
- Transfers
- Your legal rights as a renter
- Property improvements
- Household violence and property damage
- Working with our community

Domestic and family violence includes any behaviour in an intimate or family relationship, which is violent, threatening or controlling, causing a person to live in fear.

Domestic and family violence occurs across all groups and cultures and is a key cause of homelessness.

North Coast Community Housing (NCCH) is committed to supporting the victims of family violence and to do what we can to reduce the effects of such violence on people in our local communities.

NCCH assists people in our communities who are experiencing domestic or family violence by providing affordable housing assistance. Also there are ways that we try to assist any of our tenants who are experiencing or are at risk of these behaviours.

Housing assistance

NCCH assists persons who experience domestic violence, through facilitation of Housing NSW products and with an assessment for a priority allocation of social housing.

Our main priority will be the safety and wellbeing of you and your children.

We can:

- Assist you to find somewhere to stay tonight if you are homeless
- Refer you to support services for crisis housing;
- Assist you to apply for *Private Rental Subsidy - Start Safely* through Housing NSW, to give some monetary relief until you are back on your feet.

Domestic violence line

If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence, you can call the Domestic Violence Hotline on **1800 656 463** (TTY: 1800 671 442).

This service is available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week

- Assess you for the Housing Register and for priority status, so that you may be housed sooner;

In most cases you must be eligible for social housing, be escaping family or domestic violence and be homeless (or at risk of homelessness).

If you need housing assistance, contact us in person, by telephone or via email to find out if you are eligible for assistance and what evidence you need to provide.

Your right to privacy at NCCH

NCCH takes your right to privacy very seriously and the information you provide to us cannot usually be shared with anyone outside of our organisation. NCCH staff are not allowed to share any information at all, including your whereabouts, with anyone else.

If you would prefer, it is your right as a client of NCCH to have an advocate or support person or family member act on your behalf. However, we must have your written authority to speak to another person who intends to represent you. A *Disclosure Consent* form is available from our website or from any of our local offices.

The *Crimes (Family and Domestic Violence) Act 2007* allows NCCH to provide information to others where that information might lessen a serious threat of violence against our client. In such situations we would always try to gain our client's consent before doing so.

Sometimes we are legally required to provide information about our clients:

- if we receive a Court subpoena to do so; or
- where we are required to report concerns about the protection of children.

The [NCCH Privacy Statement](#) provides more information about our privacy rules.

Lismore Branch

Level 1
107 Molesworth Street
PO Box 145,
Lismore NSW 2480
P: (02) 6627 5300
F: (02) 6622 4261

Tweed Branch

Units 9 & 10
2 Blundell Boulevard
PO Box 6423,
Tweed Heads South NSW 2486
P: (07) 5523 5800
F: (07) 5513 0337

Grafton Branch

119 Pound Street
PO Box 948,
Grafton NSW 2460
P: (02) 6642 9100
F: (02) 6643 2569

info@ncchc.org.au

ACN: 002-685-761
ABN: 97 002 685 761

Transfers

As a tenant of NCCH, you can apply for a transfer to alternate accommodation. Under the [Housing Pathways](#) system, there are clear grounds for a priority transfer when you are being harassed or where you are at risk of violence.

You will need to complete an application form. It is likely that you will be asked to provide evidence, so that we can establish grounds for a priority transfer.

Any application will be treated confidentially and sensitively.

If you are approved for a priority transfer, you will be assisted with alternate social housing in the allocation zone that you have nominated.

Your legal rights as a renter

People renting properties in NSW who are victims of violence have some special legal rights. This might allow you to take certain steps to improve your safety. These rights include:

- You do not need the consent of the landlord to change your locks, as you would normally need to have. You must provide your landlord with a copy of the new keys, but the landlord is then prevented from providing a copy of the keys to anyone who has been excluded from the property by an Apprehended Violence Order (AVO);
- If you have been granted an AVO, the final decision made by a magistrate terminates the tenancy of anyone excluded by the AVO. This means that, if the AVO is granted against a co-tenant, the agreement simply transfers into your name only

- If the agreement is not already in your name, you can ask your landlord to have the agreement put in your name. If the landlord refuses, you have the right to apply to the NSW Civil & Administrative Tribunal for an order to do this
- You have the right to terminate your agreement early, without penalty.

As a tenant of NCCH, we would always support your right to have these protections put in place to assist you.

Property improvements

NCCH would consider any reasonable request to modify your property, if you are currently at risk of violence.

This might include:

- Additional locks or measures to improve the general security of your home;
- Landscaping or other changes that help to more easily see and identify intruders

NCCH can work with the Police or with any other service that may be assisting you, to make sure you get the changes that you need to keep you safe.

Household violence and property damage

NCCH tenants are responsible for the cleaning, repair or replacement of items which is not the result of fair wear and tear. Tenants will be charged for the cost of those repairs that are a result of:

- a purposeful act;
- neglect or negligence; or
- accidental damage

Tenants are also generally held responsible for any damage caused by other residents or by visitors.

Where property damage is the result of domestic violence, NCCH generally considers this to be an exclusion to our policy.

Where the damage is the result of the criminal actions of a third party and our tenant could not prevent it from occurring, and then the tenant is generally not charged for the cost of repairs.

However, where the perpetrator of the violence is a joint tenant under the residential tenancy agreement, we would normally charge the full remedial costs.

If such an incident occurs in your home, we encourage you to contact our staff at the local NCCH office. We would want to ensure that you do not get charged for any repair that you could not reasonably prevent.

Working with our community

NCCH is actively involved in its community with work that is centred on the prevention of violence and also support for those who experience domestic and family violence:

- We have formal supported housing partnerships with local community agencies, aimed at providing transitional housing (with support provided by trained caseworkers) for victims of domestic violence;
- We are part of the new reforms which are set to improve the way government agencies and non-government organisations respond to and prevent domestic and family violence across NSW. This is called [It Stops Here](#).

Any questions?

If you have any questions about the information in this Fact Sheet, or on any other housing related matter, please contact your local NCCH office.