

# Eligibility and Allocation Policy (Version 2.0)

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## 1. Introduction

Community Housing Limited Group of Companies (CHL) practise clear and transparent processes when allocating properties to tenants. This policy is to establish CHL’s criteria for a person to be considered eligible at the time of allocation and ongoing eligibility defined within CHL or program guidelines.

## 2. Aim

CHL has a selection process that is accountable, meets all legislative requirements, industry standards and guidelines and appropriately matches individual housing needs with available properties. Within this, CHL conforms to agreed federal and state allocation policies as part of maintaining its registration to provide community or social housing in each jurisdiction.

### 3. Principles of CHL Eligibility and Allocation Policy

#### 3.1. INFORMATION TO APPLICANTS

Prospective applicants are provided with clear and detailed information about the eligibility requirements (including income and assets), potential location and features of the accommodations available. An offer letter is provided to each applicant with acceptance timelines for accepting the offer, acknowledging that in the instance the offer is not accepted it will be offered to the next eligible applicant. Language support is also provided when advertising a vacancy if required.

#### 3.2. ALLOCATION AND ELIGIBILITY PRINCIPLES

- All eligibility assessments (of prospective and current CHL tenants) and at the time of allocating housing CHL will comply with National and State laws regarding equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation.
- CHL will adhere to any contractual arrangements that apply to program specific, funding or government stated eligibility criteria as stated in any such agreement. CHL will allocate from waitlists and central registers in appropriate locations and adhere to the agreements surrounding their use for allocation purposes.
- CHL will apply systematic instructions and tools to ensure operational staff carry out their duties using fairness, transparency and in line with required Acts, Regulations and Standards.
- CHL will allocate to specific groups within communities who are at greater financial, cultural and/ or social disadvantage, including people with disabilities, mental health issues, single parents, aged and indigenous people. These cohorts have access to CHL housing as a set proportion of all available housing as per procedural guidelines. This is ensured by set procedural criteria within [State based] allocations procedures and rent setting programs [formulas] applied to CHL housing stock.

#### 3.3. ASSESSING INCOME

The assessment of gross household income is based on the evidence supplied by the tenant or applicant. This evidence includes:

- Centrelink payment information
- Payslips and Notice of Assessment from the Australian Tax Office (ATO)
- Statements from other income sources (e.g.: workers compensation, shares).

CHL must be satisfied that the information provided is a true reflection of the household income including a minimum of:

- 13 weeks of pay slips
- 4 weeks of Centrelink benefits
- Previous year Payment Summary (formerly group certificate) or;
- 3 month Notice of Assessment from ATO or Certified Practising Accountant.

#### 3.4. OTHER ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The following applicants are not eligible to be housed with CHL.:

- Previous tenants of CHL with unattended debts
- Applicants who own realisable residential real estate.

#### 3.5. MATCHING

CHL will endeavour to achieve sustainable housing outcomes via consideration of the individual needs of the tenant and the available dwelling.

### **3.6. DECISION MAKING**

Descriptions of the following procedures clearly set out the steps taken by tenancy staff:

- Decisions on allocations
- Eligibility criteria
- Authorisation of the allocation
- Handling of applications.

## **4. How CHL will achieve these principles in practice—procedural overview**

Documented Work Instruction guidelines are designed to ensure tenancy administration staff are able to assess eligibility and allocate properties to applicants, adhering to policy principles and work practices. These requirements are also necessary to ensure not only future tenants are housed successfully in CHL's long term housing program but also to ensure the future capacity for CHL to sustain tenancies in the long term housing program. Tenancy administration staff undertake program induction, supervision and ongoing staff training. Program development and planning is undertaken on a quarterly and an annual basis and internal compliance and quality reviews are conducted by Corporate Services Department and National Operations to ensure service improvement and compliance with Performance Measures, CHL Policy and Procedures, State Housing Authorities, Industry Benchmarks/Standards and Legislation.

### **4.1. CLARITY OF THE INFORMATION PROVIDED**

All materials and formats used ensure information is easy to read, alternative formats are available and indicated in information. Forms, information documents and advertising materials are reviewed on a regular basis; this includes feedback surveys to our new tenants and annual feedback from surveying our current tenants. Improvement strategies are developed and implemented as needed.

### **4.2. RENT SETTING**

CHL ensures it provides clear and accurate information to tenants and prospective tenants regarding rent costs and other charges if applicable. However, from time to time, a tenant or prospective tenant may feel adversely affected by our decisions regarding our prescribed rental charges. If this situation arises, tenants or prospective tenants are encouraged to raise their concerns with their local CHL office and in case it is needed, utilise CHL's Complaints, Appeals and Feedback System, to ensure that we have taken their concerns into account and to ensure that their rent is fair, and financially sustainable.

### **4.3. DIVERSITY**

CHL is committed to a balanced social mix of households in the community. Each State has aspirational allocation targets to ensure an equitable share of social mix is obtained in line with the companies Vision and Mission. CHL works towards any contract or agreed specified allocation objectives at all times.

### **4.4. TARGETING DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS AND USING ALLOCATION PROCESS**

CHL applies target group ratios to properties it owns in its general property stock to ensure people with social and financial disadvantage will have appropriate consideration and priority. Nomination rights are also applied under various programs to some CHL stock for exclusive use to partner support agencies. Partnership Agreements are reviewed on an annual basis.

Tenancy administration staff follow CHL work Instruction guidelines in undertaking allocation processes. Allocations are made in accordance with State Legislation and contractual requirements. Allocations are overseen by Area Managers/Coordinators to ensure that a tenant who meets the eligibility criteria is suitably housed.

## 5. Related legislation, industry frameworks and standards, CHL policy and procedures

<b>CHL Housing and Homelessness policies</b>
<b>Western Australian, Victorian and National Housing Registrar's guidelines and guidance</b>
<b>State Based Allocations and Applications Procedures</b>
<b>State based Residential Tenancies Legislation and Regulations</b>
<b>State funding and service contracts</b>
<b>Lease documentation as appropriate</b>
<b>Funding deeds (as appropriate)</b>
<b>State Housing Authority Allocations framework (as applicable)</b>
<b>Victorian Housing Register Allocations Framework</b>
<b>Western Australian Community Housing Regulatory Framework – Performance Outcome 1 – Tenant and housing services</b>

## 6. Monitoring and review

This policy should be periodically reviewed and revised. Revisions should be made as and when required. The period between reviews must not exceed two years. The date for review of this policy is on or before July 2019. Training will be provided to each staff member and the board as a component of their induction.

### Review history

Document reference	Date and version	Reason for review	Review frequency	Delegated reviewers	Delegated approver
POLHOUAUSNATELI201702	Version 2.0, July 2017	Scheduled review	Every two years	National Manager	Managing Director National Manager

Previous review history (to be archived)

Document reference	Review	Reason for issue	Reviewer/ s	Writer	Issue date
POLHOUHA05.14.1	Draft	Rent Setting Policy changed and rent setting was previously part of the allocation policy	Vlad S Matthew S Patricia V Steve B	Simon W	23/05/2014

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