

# Eligibility and Allocations Policy

## 1. Policy Statement

Uniting Vic.Tas (Uniting) provides tenancy and asset management services for community housing to Uniting Housing Victoria (Uniting Housing), a Registered Housing Provider.

This policy outlines the approach of Uniting to establish:

- Eligibility for long-term community housing properties owned or leased by Uniting Housing
- The prioritisation and allocation of vacant properties in the long-term community housing portfolio
- Successful and sustainable tenancies and communities through the matching of applicants to suitable properties.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all long-term community housing rental properties managed by Uniting Vic.Tas on behalf of Uniting Housing.

## 3. Policy

Uniting will:

- Only allocate long-term community housing to eligible applicants
- Communicate clearly to applicants and the community as to who is eligible for long-term community housing with Uniting
- Comply with contractual, legal, and regulatory obligations relating to eligibility for long-term community housing
- Act in a fair, transparent and equitable manner.

Uniting is committed to promoting a successful and sustainable tenancy when matching applicants to its properties. This means that Uniting will allocate housing in a way that:

- Gives appropriate priority to households in need of housing assistance
- Considers the health, safety, and support needs of applicants
- Matches individual housing needs with available properties
- Supports sustainable and harmonious communities
- Supports the financial viability of Uniting’s long-term housing programs

Document Name: <i>Uniting Housing Allocations and Eligibility Policy</i>	<i>Printed copies of this document are considered uncontrolled.</i>	
Document Number: <i>UP-UH-003</i>	<i>Policy Area: Quality, Risk &amp; Compliance</i>	
Version Number: <i>1.0</i>	<i>Document Owner: General Manager, Housing &amp; Property</i>	
Publication date: <i>29/11/2022</i>	<i>Endorsed by: General Manager, Housing &amp; Property</i>	<b>Page 1 of 5</b>

### 3.1 Eligibility

The Victorian Housing Register (VHR) is a common register for all applicants for public and community housing in Victoria. Uniting Housing is an approved Participating Registered Agency in the VHR. The VHR eligibility criteria apply to all Uniting Housing long term community housing properties.

Homes Victoria sets eligibility criteria for the VHR)that are set out in the Eligibility Criteria Operational Guidelines - [www.housing.vic.gov.au/social-housing-eligibility](http://www.housing.vic.gov.au/social-housing-eligibility).

To be eligible for social housing you must meet the following criteria:

- Proof of identity
- Australian citizen or Permanent resident
- Victorian resident
- Income eligibility
- Asset eligibility

Further details - [Social housing eligibility | Housing.vic.gov.au](https://www.housing.vic.gov.au/social-housing-eligibility)

All Uniting vacant tenantable dwellings will be offered to applicants from the VHR, who have been approved by Homes Victoria as eligible for social housing . A minimum of 75% of allocations to Uniting long term community housing vacancies will come from the Priority Access categories of the VHR.

Applicants without a current VHR application can provide evidence to Uniting that they meet the VHR eligibility criteria. Uniting will assist such applicants to make a VHR application either through referral to a suitable service or by assisting the applicant to lodge a VHR application.

### 3.2 Eligibility requirements for particular long-term housing programs

Uniting has some long-term community housing dwellings where additional eligibility criteria to the general eligibility criteria apply. This can include, for example, women and families who are impacted by family violence, people aged 55 years and over etc.

### 3.3 Sourcing applicants for long term vacancies

Uniting uses a range of strategies to identify potential households for available vacant dwellings:

- Referrals from homeless support services, within Uniting and external
- Referrals from other housing assistance agencies
- Directly from Victorian Housing Register
- Directly from Homes Victoria where this is a contractual requirement

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The eligibility of the whole household is reassessed prior to an offer of housing being made, and prior to a household signing a lease for a property.

### 3.4 Allocation to available dwellings

Uniting will match eligible applicants to dwellings so that an allocation:

- Is the right size for the applicant’s household
- Has appropriate dwelling features for the household’s needs (e.g., minimal steps or step free access, housing density/proximity of neighbours)
- Is in an area consistent with the applicant’s needs
- Assists the applicant to access employment or any support services that they need
- Makes the best use of housing managed by Uniting
- Encourages a sustainable tenancy
- Meets any particular expressed needs of the applicant so far as they are known, such as modifications for people with a physical disability or mobility impairment, availability of car parking, secure private yard.

Uniting aims to make sure that properties with specific features that are in high demand and short supply are only allocated to those applicants who need them, including:

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

### 3.5 Nomination rights

Where nomination rights apply, Uniting will:

- Establish appropriate arrangements in protocol agreements with referral agencies who have responsibility for nominating applicants for vacancies, to ensure timely and appropriate referrals; and
- Require referral agencies to nominate applicants who have a current VHR Priority Access application.

### 3.6 Supporting sustainable and harmonious communities

Uniting may, to the extent necessary, adopt different strategies in allocation in response to:

- A high concentration of public and community housing stock in a particular area
- A high concentration of renters with multiple health, social or economic issues in a particular area or building
- Existing tenancy management issues (or a potential for these to develop)
- Existing neighbourhood tensions or disputes which may be exacerbated if allocations are not sensitively handled
- A mismatch of supply and demand making the property hard to let.

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### 3.7 Other requirements

Uniting will ensure in making any allocation to long term community housing that it complies with any other regulatory or contractual requirements concerning eligibility and allocation of long-term community housing.

## 4. Definitions

Term	Meaning
<b>Applicant</b>	Means a person who has applied for housing via the Victorian Housing Register (VHR) or, where permitted by this policy, directly to Uniting.
<b>Community housing</b>	Rental housing owned and/or managed by a registered community housing provider.
<b>Homes Victoria</b>	Victorian government housing agency, responsible for setting policy for and managing the Victorian Housing Register and is the statutory authority that owns all public housing land in Victoria, and which is the principal funding body for community housing.
<b>Nomination rights</b>	Means arrangements between Uniting and internal or third-party support providers where the support provider nominates applicants for certain vacant properties.
<b>Priority Access</b>	Applicants on the VHR who have been assessed as having a priority housing need. The Priority Access Categories are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency Management Housing</li> <li>• Priority Transfers</li> <li>• Homeless with Support</li> <li>• Supported Housing</li> <li>• Temporary Absence</li> <li>• Special Housing Needs</li> </ul> Special Housing Needs (Aged 55 years and over).
<b>Public housing</b>	Subsidised rental housing owned and managed by Homes Victoria (Victorian government).
<b>Victorian Housing Register (VHR)</b>	The Victorian Housing Register, the state-wide common application for people seeking public housing and community housing.

## 5. Transparency and accessibility

This policy will be available on the Uniting Vic.Tas and Uniting Housing websites.

If you require this policy in a language other than English, or in accessible format please contact Uniting.

This policy will be fully reviewed within 3 years of the approval date.

## 6. Legislation/Regulations

This policy implements Uniting's obligations under:

- *Housing Act 1983*
- *Residential Tenancies Act 1997*
- *Residential Tenancies Regulations 2021*
- Victorian Housing Register – Performance Standards for Registered Housing Agencies
- Victorian Housing Register – Eligibility Criteria Operational Guidelines
- VHR Policy Framework and Operational Guidelines
- Community housing allocations framework for the VHR
- Legal agreements between Uniting Housing and Homes Victoria relating to the VHR
- Service Level Agreement between Uniting Vic Tas and Uniting Housing

## 7. Related Documents

Allocations and Eligibility procedure

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