

Transfers 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 describes Uniting’s approach to managing requests for housing transfers from Uniting renters. This policy also covers succession of tenancy arrangements, where other household members may take over a tenancy on the death or departure of the primary renter.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Uniting Housing community housing tenancies which include, but are not limited to, tenancies in:

- Properties owned by Uniting Housing (Victoria) and Uniting Vic.Tas for use as long-term or transitional community housing (social and affordable); and
- Properties leased by Uniting Housing (Victoria) from Homes Victoria or other owners for long term, transitional or affordable community housing.

3. Guiding principles

In applying this policy Uniting will ensure:

- All renters are treated with compassion and sensitivity
- We focus on the individual needs and circumstances of renters and how their needs may change over time
- We use fair, consistent and accountable processes and renters are kept well informed about these processes
- We help renters understand their rights and responsibilities under their Residential Rental Agreement
- We are committed to responding to matters which may be family violence related in a manner that is trauma informed and aligns with the Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM)
- We meet our contractual, legal, and regulatory duties and obligations

4. Policy

Uniting may approve requests from renters to transfer to an alternative property within the Uniting portfolio, subject to eligibility criteria, stock availability and program requirements. A renter may also request a transfer to a social housing property managed by another community housing provider or Homes Victoria.

Transfer requests to another Uniting property will be subject to eligibility for transfer and availability of a suitable property. Uniting also needs to manage most transfer

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requests within the Victorian Housing Register (VHR) operating guidelines of Homes Victoria, which allow transfers for priority reasons only.

5. Transfer criteria

Uniting is a participating registered agency of the Victorian Housing Register (VHR).

Renters may be able to apply to Uniting for a transfer to another social or affordable housing property if:

- Changes in the renter household requiring a larger or smaller property, including the need for more bedrooms to reunify a family
- Their home is not suitable to changing needs, e.g. the renter requires significant modifications or needs to accommodate a live-in carer
- The household is experiencing safety issues (e.g. due to family violence, anti-social behaviour)

For a transfer request to a social housing property, renters must meet the social housing eligibility criteria determined by Homes Victoria, including income and asset eligibility criteria and one of the reasons for Priority Transfer. Eligibility criteria is available on the Victorian Housing Register website:

<https://www.housing.vic.gov.au/social-housing-eligibility>

Where a renter is seeking a social housing transfer, Uniting will submit an application for a Priority transfer on behalf of the renter to the VHR. This may include a recommendation for the request to be approved. A transfer application can also be directly submitted to the VHR by the renter. The decision to approve the transfer request to another social housing property is made by Homes Victoria.

For a request to transfer to a Uniting property not managed as social housing (usually affordable rental housing), the renter requesting the transfer must meet the eligibility criteria for that property.

Generally, in order to qualify for a transfer, a renter must be the primary renter on a residential rental agreement for a Uniting managed property and must have had no substantial tenancy breaches for at least 12 months.

Renters requesting a transfer are responsible moving costs including:

- Costs associated with vacating the existing property (e.g. cleaning, rubbish removal)
- Relocation of furniture and belongings
- Service connection fees
- Payment of a bond where applicable

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6. Management transfers

Uniting may also initiate a transfer between homes for an existing Uniting renter. This may occur for several reasons, including:

- The property is in need of significant works to bring it to minimum standards/upgraded and cannot be occupied. The renter occupying the property may need to transfer to a temporary or permanent alternative home.
- The property has become significantly damaged (e.g. fire, storm, flood damage) and is uninhabitable.
- The property is to be demolished or sold
- The property is not owned by Uniting and its agreement with the owner to use the property is ending
- The property has particular features such as extensive disability modifications which are not or no longer needed by the occupants

In these circumstances Uniting will assist the renter to find alternative housing and, in some cases, assist with costs associated with moving to a new home.

7. Succession of tenancy

Succession of tenancy occurs when Uniting agrees to transfer a renter's right to live in a Uniting property to another household member.

The renter is the person who is named on the Residential Rental Agreement, and in whose name the tenancy is held. A household member is any other person who is approved by Uniting to be living in the property and is included in the rent calculation.

A succession of tenancy involves the previous Residential Rental Agreement terminating and a new Residential Rental Agreement being signed by applicants who are determined to be eligible for succession under this policy.

A succession of tenancy request may occur in the circumstances where the primary renter:

- is deceased
- has been incarcerated for a period of more than six months
- is involved in a domestic or family violence order pertaining to the householder that excludes them from residing in the dwelling for a period of 6 months or more
- has been permanently relocated to a residential care facility

Uniting will consider the following factors in determining whether to approve a succession of tenancy

- eligibility for the housing type and housing program
- residing in the property as a declared householder for 12 months or more
- over the age of 16 years

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- is an immediate relative, spouse or carer of the primary renter who has left

8. Definitions

Term	Meaning
Affordable housing	Rental housing where rent is charged at less than market level
Community housing	Rental housing owned and/or managed by a registered community housing provider
Homes Victoria	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.
Management transfer	A transfer required where the renter needs to move because the dwelling is no longer available for reasons such as needing to be upgraded or demolished or the dwelling is to be sold
MARAM	Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework – process for ensuring effective identification, assessment and management of family violence risk.
Residential Rental Agreement	Legal agreement between a rental provider (landlord) and renter (tenant) to rent a home
Social housing	Long term rental housing with subsidised rent, targeted to low-income people and managed by Homes Victoria or a community housing provider
Succession of tenancy	Transfer of a renter's right to live in a Uniting property to another household member
Tenancy breach	Failure to meet a requirement of the Residential Tenancies Act that is classed as a duty provision (a provision which has specific legislative requirements and consequences for either a rental provider or a renter)

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Term	Meaning
VHR – Victorian Housing Register	The VHR is the common waiting list for social housing in Victoria and is where you apply for public and community housing

9. Transparency and accessibility

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

10. Legislation/Regulations

This policy implements the obligations of Uniting under:

- Housing Act 1983
- Residential Tenancies Act 1997
- Residential Tenancies Regulations 2021

11. Related Documents

Eligibility and Allocations Policy

Changing Needs policy and procedures

VHR Operating Guidelines

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