

# Eligibility and Allocations Policy

## 1. Policy

This document defines the eligibility requirements and the process for allocating community housing to eligible applicants.

Uniting Vic.Tas (Uniting) is committed to:

- communicating clearly to applicants and the community about who is eligible for community housing with Uniting.
- promoting sustainable and harmonious communities, housing programs and tenancies when we match applicants to properties.
- acting in a fair, transparent, and equitable manner
- giving appropriate priority to eligible applicants
- considering the health, safety, and support needs of applicants
- matching individual housing needs with available properties
- complying with the [Residential Tenancies Act](#) (Vic) or [Residential Tenancy Act](#) (Tas), and other legislative, regulatory and contractual obligations

Depending on the jurisdiction, in this policy:

In this document		Victoria	Tasmania
Renter	shall mean	Renter	Tenant
Rental agreement	Shall mean	Rental agreement	Tenancy agreement
Housing Register	shall mean	Victorian Housing Register	Tasmanian Housing Register through Homes Tasmania/Housing Connect

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all community housing rental properties managed by Uniting.

## 3. Procedure

### 3.1 Eligibility and priority criteria

Potential renters for vacant dwelling may be identified from:

- the Housing Register (HR)
- Uniting Homelessness Teams
- other support agencies
- partner agencies
- Project interest registers (new properties)

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Uniting takes most applications from the Housing Register.

Eligibility is defined in the [VHR application categories](#) in Victoria, [Homes Tasmania categories](#) in Tasmania. Uniting applies the same criteria:

- Australian citizenship or Permanent residency
- Residency in the relevant state
- Income eligibility
- Asset eligibility

There are 6 broad categories of priority access on the Victorian HR. In order of priority these categories are:

- Emergency management housing (new and transfer applicants)
- Priority transfers (transfer applicants only)
- Homeless with support (new applicants only):
- Supported housing (new applicants only)
- Special housing needs (new and transfer applicants)
- Special housing needs aged 55 years and over (new applicants only)

### 3.2 Allocation criteria

#### Uniting representatives will:

- allocate at least 75% of eligible applicants from the Priority Access categories of the VHR each financial year.
- consider relevant factors in allocating a property to an applicant, including but not limited to:
  - the best use of Uniting resources
  - the sustainability of the tenancy
  - the proposed tenant’s expressed needs and preferences
  - suitable housing size, features, and location
  - proximity to employment, and to social, cultural and community supports.
  - the concentration of public and community housing stock in a particular area
  - the 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 which make the property hard to let.
- Use the allocation tool, as appropriate.

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### 3.3 Nomination rights

Nomination rights refer to agreements between community housing organisations and support providers about the allocation of vacant properties.

#### Where nomination rights apply, Uniting representatives 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 priority access application.

### 3.4 Identify pending or immediately available vacant dwellings

#### The Uniting representative will:

- identify and monitor vacated dwellings on the relevant database (Chintaro/CX Housing)
- monitor the status of vacant untenable dwellings each week to ensure that required works are scheduled and progressing. A vacant untenable dwelling is not available when there is outstanding maintenance and cleaning.
- determine an estimated availability date to begin the process of identifying a new renter.
- begin to identify potential renters for the dwelling when the dwelling is expected to be available within 1 month.

### 3.5 Assess eligibility and process applications

#### Uniting representatives will:

- in Victoria, refer to the [VHR Guide](#), as required
- select eligible applicants from Homes Victoria, Homes Tasmania or other agency when this is a contractual requirement.
- require the referring agency/worker to complete a Housing Referral Form for a person who is referred from an internal or external source.
- refer enquirers without a current HR application to appropriate support services or state agency to make an application.
- In Victoria, request the VHR fast-track the approval of an application of an eligible and suitable by emailing victorianhousingregister@dhhs.vic.gov.au with the applicant details (full name and date of birth and the online reference number)
- apply additional eligibility requirements for certain housing that have additional eligibility criteria – for example, women and families who experience family violence, people aged 55 years and over.
- exercise discretion to house an applicant with a previous debt or other relevant matters and apply reasonable conditions on an applicant on a case-by-case basis.

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- require applicants who return to Uniting with Uniting rent arrears to enter into a repayment agreement.
- re-assess the eligibility of the whole household before making an offer of housing, and before a household signs a lease for a property.
- record the assessment of eligibility in the applicant’s individual file.

### 3.6 Make a provisional offer of housing.

**When a potential renter from any of the referral or applicant sources is identified, the Uniting representative will:**

- carefully consider applications on available information to make a reasonable offer.
- meet the applicant by phone or in person to make a provisional offer of the available dwelling.
- provide information to the applicant about:
  - the location and details of the dwelling, and available date
  - the rental agreement and term of tenancy
  - likely rent payable (depending on confirmation of household income if income-based rent is applicable)
  - likely rent in advance amount (to be confirmed)
  - in Victoria, Consumer Affairs Victoria form - [Statement of Information for Rental Applicants](#)
  - in Victoria, completed [Mandatory Disclosure checklist](#)
  - explain information we need from applicant, e.g., verification of income and identity.
  - Centrelink consents which will be requested – income confirmation.
  - Centrepay, Electronic Verification of Rent
  - dwelling viewing arrangements
  - contact arrangements with Uniting about the offer and sign-up process.
- require the applicant to confirm:
  - that the dwelling features and location are suitable for the household
  - names and ages of household members
  - income type of household members 18 years and over
  - timeframe for providing required identification and income documents.
  - timeframe for confirming acceptance of offer.

### 3.7 Confirm an offer of housing

**The Uniting representative will:**

- confirm the offer after receiving evidence of identity and income.
- advise the rent payable and rent in advance amounts.
- make a sign-up appointment and arrange a move in date with the applicant.

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- inform the HR - in Victoria, record the offer on the VHR system against the property – refer to the [VHR Guide](#) in Victoria
- record the applicant and household member details as Clients on the relevant database (Chintaro/CX Housing).

### 3.8 Accept an offer of housing and sign-up

The tenancy offer is accepted when the new renter signs the rental agreement.

#### The Uniting representative will:

- inform the HR - In Victoria, record the tenancy offer on the HR as “accepted” (refer to [VHR Guide](#), in Victoria).
- refer to Starting a Tenancy Policy

### 3.9 Decline applications

Uniting may decline an application, and social housing applicants may refuse up to two reasonable offers.

It is NOT a considered a refusal of a reasonable offer when an applicant declines an offer because their circumstances have changed, or information was not known when making the offer and the housing is no longer suitable.

#### The Uniting representative will:

- record a refusal of a reasonable offer – in Victoria: on the VHR register. (refer to [VHR Guide](#), in Victoria)
- inform the applicant if Uniting declines an application for housing, and the reasons for that decision, and the applicant’s rights to appeal the decision.
- maintain complete and accurate records in the applicant’s individual file.

## 4. Legislation/Regulations

### National

*Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)*

*Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)*

*Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)*

*National Rental Affordability Scheme Act 2008 (Cth)*

*National Rental Affordability Scheme Regulations 2020 (Cth)*

### Tasmania

*Community Housing Providers National Law (Tasmania) Act 2013 (Tas)*

*Family Violence Act 2004 (Tas)*

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**Victoria**

- Housing Act 1983 (Vic)*
- Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic)*
- Residential Tenancies Regulations 2021 (Vic)*
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)*
- Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (Vic)*
- Public Health and Wellbeing (Prescribed Accommodation) Regulations 2020 (Vic)*
- Noise (Residential) Accommodation Services*
- Environment Protection (Residential Noise) Regulations 2018 (Vic)*
- Environment Protection Act 2017 (Vic)*
- Environment Protection Regulations 2021 (Vic)*
- Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM)
- Charter of Human rights

**5. Related Documents**

- Relief due to Hardship Policy
- Rent Policy
- Rent Arrears Policy
- Changing Needs Policy
- Uniting Asset Management Policy
- [VHR Guide](#)
- [Statement of Information for Rental Applicants](#)
- [Mandatory Disclosure checklist](#)

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