



THM HOUSING AND SUPPORT  
PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

JULY 2017

## INTRODUCTION

The Transitional Housing Management Program (THMP) is a Victorian Government funded response for people who are experiencing homelessness and who require a period of supported, stable housing while they seek long term housing, and address any issues that may impact on the stability of future housing options.

Transitional housing provides people with an opportunity to:

- recover from or avoid experiences of homelessness, trauma or family violence
- address support related issues
- develop and implement a plan to achieve stable, long term housing
- learn how to exercise their rights and responsibilities under the Residential Tenancies Act (RTA), and succeed in sustaining a tenancy

Transitional housing tenancies combine short to medium term accommodation, managed under the provisions of the RTA by a registered Transitional Housing Manager (THM), with case management support provided by an accredited support provider.

A central requirement of the transitional housing tenancy is effective, responsive and professional tenancy management. Housing providers need to work in tandem with holistic, targeted and proactive case management provided by accredited support providers.

Transitional housing is a scarce resource, and collaborative and effective work practice is essential for ensuring that is utilised efficiently and fairly, for both those tenants currently utilising the resource and for those many individuals and families who are in need of it

All stakeholders in a transitional tenancy, which includes the tenant as well as the housing and support provider, need to work together towards ensuring that pathways exist for transitional housing tenants to access safe and permanent housing, improve their overall wellbeing and end their experience of homelessness.

The housing and case management support provided by support agencies is critical to tenants moving out of homelessness into stable housing. Moreover, a professional and open relationship between the support and transitional housing provider will optimise positive outcomes for the tenant/client.

The housing and support providers must comply with legislative, accreditation and reporting frameworks to ensure the continuation of quality services to clients/tenants and to manage risks in relation to organisational and individual liability.

## **PURPOSE & AIM**

The aim of this Housing and Support Partnership Agreement is to articulate a shared commitment between support and housing providers to work together in their respective roles to:

- Meet the transitional housing and support needs of households experiencing homelessness.
- Acknowledge that it is the shared responsibility of the tenancy providers, support providers and the tenant, to ensure that a transitional housing tenancy is successful and effective. It is necessary for all three stakeholders in the transitional tenancy to work towards the same outcome, which is stable and permanent housing for the tenant to end their experience of homelessness.
- Create consistency between housing providers and support agencies in how key stakeholders in transitional housing tenancy access, manage and sustain transitional housing tenancies.
- Resolve issues and disputes that arise during the tenancy period.
- Maximise, through defining requirements for support and housing providers, the experience of transitional housing for tenants, so as to ensure that the tenancy supports a pathway out of homelessness for vulnerable people.
- Fulfil the responsibilities and intent of this agreement; and ensure that the tenancy supports a pathway out of homelessness for vulnerable people.

## ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES & KEY REQUIREMENTS

Support Provider	Tenancy Housing Manager (THM)	Tenant
<b>Overview of Roles in the Transitional Tenancy</b>	<b>Overview of Roles in the Transitional Tenancy</b>	<b>Overview of Roles in the Transitional Tenancy</b>
Provide case management and housing support to clients, and provide a high standard of assistance and support to help them achieve a secure and appropriate long term housing outcome. Seek interpreter services to ensure clear communication to tenants wherever necessary throughout the support period	Provide a high quality housing and tenancy management service to residents, and manage the program within funding guidelines to ensure equitable, consistent and transparent access for people who are homeless or those at risk of homelessness.	Work with the support and housing provider towards an outcome which ends your experience of homelessness, improves your wellbeing and achieves goals set out in your case plan developed in partnership with your support provider
<b>Ending the homelessness experience</b>	<b>Ending the homelessness experience</b>	<b>Ending the homelessness experience</b>
Ensure that all clients receive the appropriate support services required for them to maintain their tenancy and avoid a return to homelessness	Provide and manage the tenancies and properties in accordance with the RTA and to the standard required by the Housing Act and relevant performance standards	Being contactable, communicative and collaborative with housing and support providers and working on goals set out in the case plan and housing exit plan
<b>Information Provision</b>	<b>Information Provision</b>	<b>Information Provision</b>
Provide appropriate information and advice to clients as required with regard to their rights, responsibilities and options.	Provide appropriate information to residents as required on their rights and responsibilities under the RTA and their tenancy agreement	Seek information and advice as required on your rights and responsibilities under the RTA and your tenancy agreement.
<b>Communication</b>	<b>Communication</b>	<b>Communication</b>
Provide timely, clear and regular communication with the THM around all issues that may have an impact on the success of a tenancy, e.g. proposed changes to support provision, duty of care and safety concerns neighbourhood issues etc	Provide timely, clear and regular communication with the Support Provider around all issues that may have an impact of the success of a tenancy, e.g. rent arrears, duty of care and safety concerns, neighbourhood issues etc	Remain contactable and respond to communication from both THM & Support Provider, and be proactive in making contact if issues arise in your tenancy or you require additional support.
<b>Housing Access</b>	<b>Housing Access</b>	<b>Housing Access</b>
Provide all information required to enable the prioritisation of eligible clients and allocation of THM properties by THM staff within mandated timelines	Make final allocation decisions for THM properties and inform Support Provider asap	Commit to a case plan, housing exit strategy and an ongoing support relationship with your Support Provider. Provide consent for the support and housing provider to

		communicate regularly about your tenancy Provide all necessary information to enable your transitional housing tenancy to be as successful as possible.
<b>Sign Up</b>	<b>Sign Up</b>	<b>Sign Up</b>
Attend sign-ups and support the prospective resident to understand the roles, responsibilities and expectations attached to a transitional tenancy	Clearly communicate the roles, responsibilities and expectations for the resident, the Support Provider and the THM in a transitional housing tenancy	Attend sign-up ready and prepared to commit to all relevant requirements and responsibilities under the RTA and this document
<b>Tenancy Review Meetings</b>	<b>Tenancy Review Meetings</b>	<b>Tenancy Review Meetings</b>
Attend three monthly Tenancy Review Meetings with the tenant and housing provider	Hold three monthly Tenancy Reviews with the tenant and the support provider.	Attend three monthly Tenancy Review Meetings
<b>Maintenance</b>	<b>Maintenance</b>	<b>Maintenance</b>
Provide support to the tenant to comply with their obligations under their Tenancy Agreement and the RTA, including;  Maintaining the property to a reasonably clean standard,  Reporting required maintenance, Reporting damage  Communicating issues relating to the tenancy or property with the housing provider	Maintain properties to an appropriate standard  Follow up maintenance issues with tenants and contractors in timely way.  Ensure that urgent maintenance is carried out in accordance with the provisions and requirements of the RTA  Assist as far as possible with the provision of alternative housing if the property is uninhabitable.	Report required maintenance to the housing provider asap  Be contactable and available to contractors who need to conduct maintenance.
<b>Contact</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>Contact</b>
Ensure regular (at least monthly) home visits and frequent phone contact with the tenants, and provide feedback to THM as necessary after visits and phone contact.  Provide three monthly housing exit plans to the THM housing provider.  Contact with the THM should be at least monthly, and more	Convey all relevant information about the tenancy as soon as possible to support provider.	Be contactable, available and responsive to regular contacts from housing and support provider

frequently where required		
<b>Support Provision</b>	<b>Support Provision</b>	<b>Support Provision</b>
<p>Work regularly with the resident to progress the case and housing plans</p> <p>If support needs of the tenant change or intensify to the point that a new support agency is required then:</p> <p>make the necessary referrals, continue support until the new support agency is able to pick up the tenant and notify the THM of all prospective changes as early as possible</p> <p>Notify THM asap of any reduction in or withdrawal of support, for whatever reason, including funding issues.</p>	<p>Work collaboratively with Support Provider as required</p>	<p>Be contactable, available and responsive to regular contacts from THM and Support Provider.</p> <p>Do everything necessary to ensure progression of your case and housing plans.</p>
<b>Tenancies at Risk</b>	<b>Tenancies at Risk</b>	<b>Tenancies at Risk</b>
<p>Attend VCAT hearings and all meetings associated with conflict resolution processes.</p> <p>Participation in these processes is undertaken in a spirit of seeking a collaborative solution aimed at supporting the tenant to maintain their tenancy with respect to the responsibilities of the RTA and Partnership Agreement.</p> <p>Assist tenant to follow up through actions mandated by the conflict resolution processes.</p> <p>Arrange and attend Case Conferences as required</p>	<p>Commit to resolving tenancy and property issues with the housing and support provider and wherever possible avoiding an outcome which constitutes a return to homelessness.</p> <p>Undertake clear communication of issues and expectations to support provider and tenant.</p> <p>Attend VCAT hearings and all necessary associated meetings associated with conflict resolution.</p> <p>Attend Case Conferences as required</p>	<p>Be contactable and communicable with both the housing and support provider around tenancy issues.</p> <p>Be a good neighbour; respect the rights of others in the neighbourhood work to resolve issues proactively and collaboratively avoid threatening and intimidating behaviours avoid excessive noise manage waste and respect communal areas</p> <p>Be upfront about issues relating to the property, including paying rent and problems with neighbours</p> <p>Work on solutions with THM and Support Provider.</p> <p>Work with Support Provider to adhere to the provisions of conflict resolution processes</p>

Planned Exits	Planned Exits	Planned Exits
<p>Assist and support the tenant to identify and achieve their most realistic long term housing option, taking into account:</p> <p>the requirement of the THM program to maximize throughput through THM properties, commensurate with sustainable long term housing outcomes;</p> <p>the limited availability of Public Housing properties, particularly one bed roomed and 4+ bed roomed stock;</p> <p>the availability of private rental brokerage and other programs to assist people into sustainable private rental.</p> <p>Support the resident to return all the keys to the THM within three business days of signing a long term housing tenancy</p> <p>Ensure the resident leaves the THM property clean and free of rubbish and personal possessions so that it can be made available to a new client asap.</p>	<p>Monitor progress on the Housing Exit Plan</p> <p>Ensure that the transitional property is turned over quickly to create a responsive system for those waitlisted</p>	<p>Participate actively in the Housing Exit Plan. Being available and contactable during the process and providing relevant information as and when required.</p> <p>Participate actively in searching for private rental accommodation or other realistic long term housing options, as defined in the exit plan.</p> <p>Contribute to the completion and lodgment of all relevant housing applications</p> <p>Returning the keys to the THM property to the THM or Support provider within three business days of signing a long term housing tenancy.</p> <p>Ensure the property is left clean and without any damage. Remove all rubbish and personal items so that a new resident can move in promptly.</p>

**COMPLIANCE**

If any stakeholder during the transitional housing tenancy is no longer able to meet the terms of the Housing and Support Partnership Agreement they must advise their partner agencies or residents tenants as soon as possible and ensure that another relevant and appropriate stakeholder, who can comply with the terms of the Agreement, is engaged. Where a support provider is no longer able to meet the terms of the Agreement, they must continue to provide support to the tenant until a new provider is engaged.

At all times both the housing and support providers must make decisions which aim to preserve the tenancy and ensure that its aims of ending the homeless experience for the tenant and accessing permanent housing options are progressed.

Ending the tenancy, or withdrawing support, is to be the last possible option and exhaustive and demonstrable attempts must have been made in all cases towards a client-focused outcome that aims to end the experience of homelessness.

If dispute arises about terms and conditions specified within the Partnership Agreement that cannot be satisfactorily addressed at the agency level, then the matter can be progressed to the DHHS Community Programs – Housing team for guidance.

**AGREEMENT**

**I have read and understood the Housing and Support Partnership agreement and agree to comply with all roles, responsibilities and key requirements.**

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**THM Manager Name**

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**THM Manager Signature**

**Date:** -----

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**Support Provider Manager Name:**

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**Support Provider Manager:**

**Date:** -----

**Support Provider & Program Name:**

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