

Inspection Policy

21 December 2021



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24 April 2019	1	Created for website
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1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to detail the types, frequency and method of property inspections undertaken by Women's Housing Ltd (WHL)

2. Scope

This policy applies to all properties managed by WHL except for rooming house properties.

3. General Information about Inspections

Inspections will be undertaken at all WHL properties in accordance with the Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (the RTA). These inspections allow WHL to check the condition of the property, ensure our responsibilities are being met to maintain the property in good repair and inform plans for cyclical maintenance works.

Additionally, inspections are a chance to ensure the property is being kept clean and free from damage and they provide an opportunity for renters to discuss any issues that they might have with their housing worker.

Please note: if there is any damage, defects or other property issues, renters should report these to WHL as the issues occur, and not wait for the next property inspection to report the issue.

Entry for inspections will always be made in a reasonable manner. WHL will be respectful of each renter's home and privacy and will not stay or permit others to stay longer than is necessary to achieve the purpose of the inspection without the renter's consent.

Renters who wish to be present while the inspection takes place can take the opportunity to discuss any tenancy issues with their housing worker. Renters may also invite their support worker to attend. Renters who do not wish to be home while the inspection takes place are not required to be there.

Renters have a duty to permit WHL staff exercising a right of entry in accordance with the RTA. However, if renters have any concerns about how or when an upcoming inspection will take place, these concerns should be raised with WHL to discuss whether alternative arrangements can be made.

4. Types of Inspections

The most common type of inspection is a general (also called routine) inspection. These occur on a six-monthly basis and allow WHL to document the condition of the property and identify any issues related to the tenancy. At a general inspection WHL will:

- Update information about the condition of the property;
- Confirm if household composition or needs have changed;
- Identify if renters need to be linked with support services;
- Confirm that renters are meeting their obligations under their rental agreement and the RTA.

For renters who are vacating, WHL may also arrange an inspection shortly before the exit date to review the condition of the property and discuss arrangements for ending the tenancy or to show the property to another prospective renter.

Where WHL has reasonable grounds to believe a renter has failed to comply with duties under their rental agreement or the RTA, an inspection may be arranged to investigate issues related to the suspected issue.

Other reasons for inspections include if the property needs to be shown to a lender or if entry is necessary to enable WHL to carry out a legal duty, such as inspecting essential fire safety equipment.

5. Frequency

WHL will conduct general inspections of all properties every six months.

In line with requirements under the RTA, general inspections will not occur more frequently than every six months, however, other inspections may occur more frequently if there is a specific reason for the inspection such as the other examples provided above.

6. Communication

WHL will provide clear information to renters on this policy and will ensure this information is readily available to renters.

Where an inspection is being arranged, WHL will provide written details to confirm the purpose of the inspection and remind renters that they are welcome to be present and to have a support person with them during the visit if they choose.

Should inspections result in the identification of damage that may be the responsibility of the renter, WHL will investigate the matter in line with the Renter Related Damage Policy.

7. Notices of Entry

Unless an arrangement is made with the agreement of a renter to visit the property at a certain date and time, WHL will give renters a written notice of the inspection in the form of a Notice of Entry.

A notice of entry will be provided by post or in person to the renter between the hours of 8am and 6pm.

The notice will provide clear information on why entry is required and the time and date that the inspection will take place.

The minimum notice periods for inspections are outlined below:

MINIMUM NOTICE PERIODS FOR ENTRY		
REASON	NOTICE PERIOD	SECTION OF RTA
General Inspection (after the first three months of the tenancy and not within 6 months of a previous general inspection)	7 Days	S86(1)(f)
Property valuation	7 Days	S86(1)(d)
Inspection with prospective purchaser prior to sale	48 hours	S81(1)(b)
Following a NTV, to allow inspection by prospective renters where the premises are to be re-let	48 hours	S81(1)(a)
Carrying out a duty under the RTA or any other Act	24 Hours	S86(1)(c)
Reasonable grounds to believe the renter has failed to comply with their duty under an Act or the rental agreement	24 Hours	S86(1)(e)

8. Health and Safety

WHL will ensure inspections take place in a manner that does not risk the health and safety of renters. Likewise, renters should ensure that there are no risks to workers carrying out inspections related to their use of the property. For instance, if there is a dog at the property that might cause a risk to a worker visiting the property, the renter should advise the worker of this and keep the dog safely restrained.

9. Legislation and standards

This policy implements the obligations of WHL under:

- Residential Tenancies Act 1997
- Housing Act 1983 (Vic)
- Performance Standards for Registered Housing Agencies

The relevant legal rights and duties in relation to inspections are contained in s85,s86,s87 & s88 of the RTA.

10. Transparency and accessibility

This policy will be available on the WHL website
<https://womenshousing.com.au/tenants/policies/>

11. Related policies

- Allocations in Community Housing Policy
- Allocations of THM Housing Policy
- Renter Communication Policy
- Renter Related Damage Policy
- Managing Squalor and Hoarding Policy
- Managing Abandoned Goods Policy
- Ending Tenancies Policy
- Bond Management Policy
- Renter dispute policy
- Renters rights and participation
- Asset Management Policy
- Asset Communications Policy
- Housing Maintenance Policy
- Planned Maintenance Policy
- Property Handover Policy

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