

Allocations Policy



Owner:	Tamara Leishman
Version:	4
Endorsed by:	Kate Ogilvie
Issue date:	19 August 2024
Review date:	19 August 2026

1. Purpose

This policy outlines how Women's Housing Ltd (WHL) allocates properties to rental applicants in a timely, fair and transparent manner.

2. Scope

This policy applies to properties in WHL's Community Housing and Rooming House program. This policy does not apply to Transitional Housing properties. For more information about Transitional Housing property allocations, see WHL's THM Policy.

3. Statement of commitment

WHL is committed to promoting successful and sustainable tenancies when allocating applicants to properties. This means WHL will allocate in a manner that is:

- Fair, transparent, non-discriminatory and based on defined criteria
- Matches individual housing needs with available properties
- Complies with contractual and regulatory obligations
- Ensures WHL remains financially viable
- Supports harmonious communities

4. Eligibility

Different properties may have different eligibility criteria, and prospective renters are encouraged to contact WHL on 9412 6868 for specific information relating to particular properties and programs.

4.1 VHR

The Victorian Housing Register (VHR) consolidates all public and social housing applicants into a single register. WHL is a registered participant of the VHR, and rental applicants must have a valid VHR application. Applicants who accept an offer of housing from WHL will be removed from the VHR and this will be considered long-term, permanent housing.

The VHR has its own eligibility requirements and priority categories that applicants will fall under. WHL can allocate renters from both the Priority Access and Register of Interest categories. WHL will allocate 75% of vacancies to Priority Access applicants.

To provide flexibility, potential clients identified or selected by WHL will be able to retrospectively apply to be accepted on to the Register. This means that WHL can accept referrals from partner organisation or direct applications from applicants.

4.2 Target groups

Some properties have more specific targeting models, such as aiming to allocate to older people or people impacted by family violence. Staff can advise about specific target groups when speaking with rental applicants.

WHL aims to allocate 10% of properties to Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander women as part of its Reconciliation Action Plan commitments.

4.3 Affordable housing model

In order to balance WHL's mission with financial viability, some properties will be identified as 'affordable housing' properties. This means WHL will charge up to 74.99% of the market rent, instead of using an income-based rent calculation. This means WHL may have additional income requirements for applicants seeking affordable housing properties, such as proof that the rental amount is sustainable for them.

5. Allocation Criteria

WHL will match applicants to appropriate properties that also ensures the best use of WHL's housing stock and reflects sustainable vacancy management.

WHL will consider the following:

- Suitability of properties for older people or people with disabilities
- Income of the applicant and affordability of the property
- Financial risk to WHL
- Whether the property aligns with the applicant's VHR requirements
- Applicant's connection to the community
- Whether the applicant can live in the property without support
- If the applicant has demonstrated, they can look after the property in accordance with their Rental Agreement and the Residential Tenancies Act 1997
- The personal circumstances of the applicant, including whether they are impacted by family violence
- Whether neighbourhood fatigue is relevant and if the allocation must be sensitive
- Existing tenancy issues or the potential for them to develop
- Current demographic mix of renters at the property

6. How are properties allocated?

When a vacancy arises, the Allocations and Rental Officer (ARO) provides eligible and suitable housing applications to the Tenancy Officer for consideration.

These applications may be sourced from the VHR, support and partner agencies, or sent in directly by applicants using WHL's application form.

The Tenancy Officer will review the applications and determine the most appropriate and suitable applicant based on the above criteria. The Tenancy Officer will interview the applicant to ascertain further information about them and their eligibility and suitability. WHL may seek further consultation with supports or referrals from previous rental providers to assess suitability. This may include requiring supports to complete a risk assessment form. If successful, the Tenancy Officer will confirm the decision to offer a tenancy to the applicant in consultation with the ARO.

Unsuccessful applicants will be informed as soon as reasonably possible. Due to the shortage of properties and high volume of applicants, suitable applicants may not always be successful in their applications. WHL encourages applicants to continue applying as vacancies arise.

7. Fairness and equality

WHL will not unlawfully discriminate against any applicant and will treat all applicants fairly and equally.

If a potential or perceived conflict of interest arises between a WHL staff member and potential applicant, it will be referred to the Line Manager and Operations Manager for consultation. The relevant staff member will not be involved in the allocations process.

Rental applicants who wish to lodge a complaint with WHL about how their application was handled can email reception@womenshousing.com.au for more information, or visit WHL's website at: <https://womenshousing.com.au/>

8. Responsibilities

8.1 Board

To be aware of the policy and to receive and examine reports about long term housing vacancies and allocations

8.2 Chief Executive Officer

- To be aware of this policy.
- To receive summary information about long term housing vacancies and allocations.
- To provide relevant reports and insights to the Board

8.3 Line Managers

- To implement this policy where relevant description.
- To be aware of current government policy requirements.
- To supervise, support and arrange relevant training and resources for relevant staff.
- To provide reports to OM & CEO.

8.4 Staff

To implement this policy where required by position description.

9. Reviewing

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years or when major regulatory or legislative changes occur.

10. Related documents

- WHL Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- WHL Rent Policy
- Rental Agreement
- Victorian Housing Register – Operational Guidelines

11. Relevant legislation

- Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic)
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
- Housing Act 1983 (Vic)