

RENT EXPLAINED

Factsheet

Homes North is bound by law to charge rent in the following way. The amount is determined by the market rent for your town. You may be eligible for rent subsidies which will reduce the amount you pay.

What is market rent?

Market rent is the maximum rent you will pay for a Homes North property, and is based on how much the property would be leased for in the private rental market. Your lease with Homes North will show the market rent for your property. Homes North will review your market rent each year. Your market rent may change depending upon the current rental market. You will be advised in writing when there is a change to your market rent.

What if I can't afford to pay market rent?

If you cannot afford to pay the market rent, you may apply for a rent subsidy.

What is a rent subsidy?

If you receive a rent subsidy, this means that you will pay less than the market rent. Rent subsidies are available to people on low or moderate incomes, and is based on your capacity to pay rent. To apply for a rent subsidy you must complete a Rent Subsidy Application and provide proof of income for each household member. If you are eligible for a rent subsidy, in most cases, the amount of rent you pay will be approximately 25- 30% of your gross household income plus 100% of the Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA).

What is Commonwealth Rent Assistance?

Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) is an additional allowance paid by the Australian government to people on low incomes who rent privately or in community housing.

How often will my rent subsidy be reviewed?

Homes North reviews rent subsidies every six months. You will be advised in writing when this review will occur and be asked to complete another Rent Subsidy Application at this time. **It is important you complete this Rent Subsidy Application.** If you do not send this completed application back to us we will charge you market rent.

Changes to household circumstances

If you receive a rent subsidy and there is a change in your household circumstances, you must advise Homes North immediately because the amount of rent you pay is based on your total household income. Once you advise Homes North of a change in household income, we will recalculate your rent. We will then write to confirm the amount of rent you need to pay. **If you do not advise Homes North of an increase to your household income, you may be committing rental fraud.** Homes North may cancel your rent subsidy and backdate market rent charges, which may result in a debt.

Tenants are encouraged to immediately advise Homes North of any change to household income to avoid this action.

How often do I need to pay rent?

Your Residential Tenancy Agreement states that you must pay your rent on time. **This has serious consequences that could result in legal action to recover the debt through the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT).**

How do I make rent payments?

Centrepay - is a free bill-paying service for Centrelink customers. It is easy to arrange regular deductions from your Centrelink payment. You can start or change a deduction at any time.

Direct debit / Internet banking - To set up a recurring direct debit transaction, please speak to your bank or financial institution.

In Person - You can pay rent in person at one of our offices, only cash and cheques are accepted.

Please ensure that all rent payments quote your Tenancy Reference number, which can be found on the front page of your lease.

For more detailed information on renting see the Department of Fair Trading website Renting Guide and New Tenant Checklist at: fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/ftw/Tenants_and_home_owners/Renting_a_home.page

A copy of this is also available at the front counter of every Homes North office.

Want to know more?

-  Contact your local office
-  Visit: homesnorth.org.au
- Emergency after hours:
 1300 662 721