

## Allocations Policy

### 1. Scope

This policy applies to allocation of general and supported housing managed by Homes North.

For affordable housing allocations, please refer to the Homes North Affordable Housing Policy.

### 2. Purpose

The policy is intended to:

- Ensure equitable access to all eligible people seeking housing
- Maintain a transparent, needs based allocations process to all applicants
- Ensure an individual's rights will not be discriminated against on the grounds of ethnicity, gender, marital status, physical and/or intellectual disability or sexual preference as per the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977*
- Meet funding body and regulatory requirements for allocation of Social Housing, and other housing programs
- Facilitate clients with coordinated access to social housing through Housing Pathways (NSW Social Housing waiting list)
- Maximise utilisation of scarce housing resources.

### 3. Housing Allocations

Social housing will be allocated to eligible people from the NSW Housing Register in accordance with Housing Pathways policies. The register includes new applicants for social housing and tenants who have been approved for transfer from both Housing NSW and participating social housing providers. Generally, allocations will be made according to priority, date of application and the suitability of the property available, although on occasions Homes North may need to make an allocation for management reasons.

### 4. Manual Allocations

A manual allocation is when an applicant is selected from the NSW Housing Register that may not have the highest priority on the register.

A manual selection may be made in the following situations:

- For an applicant with specific needs. For example, when a private landlord

requires the return of a leasehold property held by Homes North

- To meet internal or contractual strategic objectives
- To maintain the social cohesion of the community (sensitive allocations).

Manual allocations must be approved by the Senior Housing Manager.

## **5. Supported housing programs – Transitional allocations**

Partner support agencies nominate potential tenants who are linked with support and have an active application on the NSW Housing Register (unless the program specifically exempts applicants from meeting Housing Pathways eligibility). Supported accommodation is provided in properties nominated in agreements between FACS Housing or the Aboriginal Housing Office (and other agreements directly with service providers) and Homes North. Tenants living in the nominated properties managed by Homes North, receive formal support from support providers to help tenants maintain their tenancies and to be able to live independently. All allocations are made in accordance with the specific program guidelines and service agreements between Homes North and the support providers.

## **6. Special housing programs**

Homes North is contracted to manage specific programs from time to time. Homes North will allocate according to the terms of the contract. An example of a long standing current contract is the management of the Aboriginal Housing Office's, Employment Related Accommodation program.

## **7. Properties with specific features**

Properties with specific features will only be allocated to applicants that are able to show a demonstrated need, unless these properties are readily available or are vacant for a prolonged period. Examples of properties with specific features may include:

### **7.1. Modified properties**

Properties which have been modified to cater for people with a disability will be prioritised for applicants/households with a demonstrated need for these features. The applicant or their household member must have documentation from a medical professional or allied health care worker that supports their need for a property with specific features.

## 7.2. Ground Floor Properties

Ground floor or properties with level access will be prioritised for a applicants/households with a demonstrated need for these features. The applicant/household member must have documentation from a medical practitioner which supports their requirement for a ground floor or level access property.

Ground floor properties will also be targeted to seniors where appropriate, to support seniors by allowing them to age in their current home.

## 7.3. Properties with sustainability performance ratings

Tenants who occupy properties which are equipped with energy efficiency measures and/or are designed to meet high performance sustainability ratings may be prohibited from making alterations to the property (for example, voltaics). These properties will only be allocated to applicants who demonstrate a capacity to manage the specific requirements of the property.

Applicants will be notified of any restrictions when they are offered and allocated the property.

## 8. Local allocation strategies (LAS)

In some instances management may determine a local strategy for allocations in a particular complex, area or estate. These strategies may be implemented for vacancies when there are:

- high concentrations of community and/or public housing stock
- high concentrations of tenants with multiple health, social or economic issues
- substantiated tenancy management issues or there is a demonstrated risk of them developing
- existing issues which will be exacerbated if allocations are not sensitively handled
- mis-matches of supply and demand making the property hard to let.

## 9. Properties with designated purpose

Properties with a designated purpose will only be allocated to applicants that meet the program or planning criteria. Properties with a designated purpose include those described in sections 10 and 11.

## 10. Properties subject to State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP -Housing for seniors or people with a disability) 2004

The following applicants are eligible for properties which are subject to the above policy:

- Seniors (people who are aged 55 years or more or 45 years or more for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders) or people who have a disability.
- People who live in the same household with seniors or people who have a disability.
- Staff employed to assist in the administration of and provision of services to housing provided under this policy.

## 11. Pensioner (PPPH) properties

Pensioner (PPPH) properties are designated properties for allocation to:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients who are 45 years of age or over
- Non Aboriginal clients aged 55 years and over

Public housing senior communities are properties in social housing complexes specifically for older people:

- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander clients who are 45 years of age or over
- Non Aboriginal clients aged 55 years and over.

Two person adult households where at least one person is Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander who is over 45 years of age, or one person who is 55 years or over who is not Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander are also included in these categories.

## 12. Entitlements

Properties will be allocated to applicants in accordance with their household size and composition. In order to maximise the utilisation of scarce housing resources and optimise rental income to ensure financial viability, Homes North will allocate properties according to the **minimum** entitlement in the table below where the property is suited to the applicant's household composition. The Senior Housing Manager may approve other allocations outside these criteria if a specific need for additional bedrooms can be demonstrated.

The table below outlines the standard bedroom entitlements for different household compositions:

Household composition	Minimum bedroom entitlement
Single person	Studio/One bedroom
Couple	One bedroom
Single person/couple with one other household member	Two bedroom
Single person/couple with two other household members	Two bedroom
Single person/couple with three other household members	Three bedroom
Single person/couple with four other household members	Three bedroom
Single person/couple with five or more other household members	Four bedroom

Notes: Requests for additional bedrooms due to cultural considerations, enduring medical conditions or disability, where supported by documented evidence, will be considered on a case by case basis. The table below outlines how Homes North will allocate bedrooms for children:

Situation	Homes North response
Children 18 years of age or older	Children 18 years of age or older are considered to be adults when determining the bedroom entitlement
Children of the same sex who are under 18 years of age	Children of the same sex who are under 18 years of age are expected to share a bedroom
Male and female children who are under 18 years of age	Male and female children are expected to share a bedroom until one of the children reaches 10 years of age
Children under the age of 2	Homes North will not allocate an additional bedroom for a child under the age of 2.
Children with special needs	Homes North will allocate an additional bedroom where the tenant/applicant can demonstrate a need for same sex children or children under the age of 10 to have separate bedrooms.

<p>Shared custody/access visits from children</p>	<p>Homes North will consider the children to be part of the household if they stay for 3 days or more per week. Formal documented evidence is required.</p>
<p>Children who may need a separate bedroom in 2-3 years' time</p>	<p>HOMES NORTH will, where possible, consider the future needs for children when allocating a property. Decisions regarding future needs will be made on a case by case basis according to the size and type of housing that is available in the area.</p>

### 13. Offers of housing

Applicants for housing, including transfer applicants are entitled to two reasonable offers of accommodation. The decision regarding allocation of general properties is the responsibility of the local Housing Officer or Senior Housing Manager and is based on information provided by the applicant. If there is evidence of false or misleading information provided by the applicant, it is considered reasonable to withdraw the offer of housing.

In allocating properties, Homes North will consider the information the applicant has provided with their application and the property elements to ensure that the match is appropriate. Through this process, Homes North will ensure that:

- The property being offered is of an appropriate size and bedroom number to ensure there is no under or over-occupancy
- The property location matches the applicant's needs
- The property type and facilities enable the applicant to maximise his/her mobility and independence and alleviates and/or stabilises medical conditions or disabilities wherever possible and increases the wellbeing of the applicant relative to their current housing conditions
- The neighbourhood is considered not to adversely affect the new tenant's well-being; and the new tenant will not adversely affect neighbours
- Any reasons not to allocate a property to a particular individual will be documented and thoroughly reviewed before a final decision is made.

It is not a reasonable offer if the property:

- Adversely affects an applicant/tenants medical condition or disability or

makes it harder for them to stabilise or improve their condition

- Places the applicant/tenant in an area that will put them at risk
- Makes it difficult for the applicants/tenants household to remain together.

### Relevant legislation

- Residential Tenancy Act (2010)

### Related policies

- Transfer
- Eligibility
- Affordable Housing
- Appeals
- Housing Pathways
- Rental Fraud
- Registerable Persons

### National Community Housing Standards

- Standard 1.1 Allocation of Housing

### Policy Information

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