

# Fact Sheet

## ABSENCE FROM PROPERTY



### ARE YOU PLANNING TO BE ABSENT FROM YOUR HOME?

Homes North expects tenants to personally occupy the premises, however we understand there may be reasons for being absent from your home from time to time.

Should this occur there are conditions around absences from your property that you should know.

### ACCEPTABLE REASONS FOR YOUR ABSENCE

- Caring for sick or elderly family members
- Hospitalisation, institutional care, nursing home care or rehabilitation

- Escaping domestic violence, harassment or threats of violence
- Assisting with immigration matters in your country of origin
- Holidays
- Reasons affecting your employment, education or training
- Being incarcerated (in prison)

### ACCEPTABLE PERIODS OF ABSENCE

- An acceptable absence period from your property is up to three months. For absences of six weeks or longer you are required to obtain written approval from Homes North.
- You cannot be absent for longer than 12 months (in total) over a five-year period.

It is advisable to let your Housing Officer know if you will be absent from the property, even if for only a short period of 1 – 2 weeks.

### **HOW TO APPLY FOR AN ABSENCE FROM PROPERTY (6 WEEKS OR LONGER)**

- Complete the Absence from Property Application form, available on the Homes North website, your local office or by email request.
- Obtain written approval from Homes North to be away from the property for more than six weeks before leaving the property.

### **AS A TENANT YOU MUST**

- Inform Homes North that the property will be properly maintained in your absence, mail is collected, the garden is maintained and so on.
- Make arrangements for current rent and non-rent accounts to be paid and for rent and water charges to continue to be paid during the absence.
- Provide documentation to support your absence, for example, passport, airline tickets showing the date of return, letter from respite services, notice of incarceration, and a contact address for both the tenant and if relevant, your agent.

- Obtain approval if other people will be staying in the home while you are away. Only people who are registered on the tenant agreement are allowed to occupy your home while you are absent.
- Nominate a person over the age of 18 years to act on your behalf while you are away

### **FAILING TO UPDATE HOMES NORTH OF YOUR ABSENCE**

If a tenant is absent without approval, or has stayed away for longer than the time approved, Homes North may:

- Charge market rent from the time the tenant's absence is discovered.
- Apply to the NSW Civil & Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) to terminate the tenancy.

#### **NEED TO CONTACT HOMES NORTH?**

Armidale (02) 6772 5133	Glen Innes (02) 6732 3652
Gunnedah (02) 6742 0363	Inverell (02) 6722 5137
Moree (02) 6752 4440	Tamworth (02) 6766 6897
Coledale (02) 6765 8879	<a href="http://www.homesnorth.org">www.homesnorth.org</a>