



RENT POLICY



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RELATED DOCUMENTS	Eligibility and Allocation Policy Non-Rent Charges Policy Termination of Tenancy Policy Market Program Policy

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1. Purpose

- 1.1. This policy provides information about how rent is calculated and the six-monthly periodic rent review process for social housing properties managed by Hunter Community Housing (HCH).

2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy applies to setting rent for tenants living in community housing managed by HCH.
- 2.2. This policy does not apply to housing managed by HCH through the market program. Refer HCH Market Program Policy.

3. Policy Statement

- 3.1. HCH will apply a consistent and transparent rent setting approach which aims to ensure affordable outcomes for tenants and comply with contractual obligations for setting rents.
- 3.2. For community housing programs that are governed by a contract between HCH and the NSW state government, HCH sets rent in accordance with the NSW Community Housing Rent Policy published by the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ).
- 3.3. For affordable housing programs that are governed by a contract between HCH and the NSW state government, HCH sets rent in accordance with the NSW Affordable Housing Guidelines.
- 3.4. For tenants with disabilities in supported independent living or specialist disability accommodation rent is set in accordance with guidelines issued under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), where applicable.
- 3.5. For other housing programs that are governed by a contract between HCH and government such as the National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS), HCH will set rents in accordance with relevant legislation.
- 3.6. HCH aims to manage housing that is affordable and sets rents at no less than 25% of gross household income plus any Commonwealth Rent Assistance a tenant is eligible for up to a maximum level no higher than the market rent applied to a property.

4. Principles

- 4.1. Tenants will be informed about housing assistance eligibility and special conditions applicable to their tenancy at the time an offer of housing assistance is made.
- 4.2. Tenants will be informed about how their rent is calculated, how to make rent payments and the rent review process at the time they sign an agreement with HCH.
- 4.3. A tenant must pay the rent under their residential tenancy agreement.
- 4.4. HCH will:
 - 4.4.1. not require a tenant to pay more than 2 weeks rent in advance under a residential tenancy agreement

- 4.4.2. not knowingly appropriate rent paid by the tenant for the purpose of any amount payable by the tenant other than rent.
- 4.4.3. apply rent increases in accordance with the residential tenancy agreement and Residential Tenancy Act 2010 (NSW).
- 4.4.4. provide tenants with the required notice prior to applying a rent increase.
- 4.5. Tenants receiving rent subsidies must inform HCH of changes to their income and other circumstances as soon as practical after the change has occurred. Rent subsidy fraud occurs when a tenant has made a false representation of facts about themselves or their household; whether by intentionally withholding information or providing misleading statements.
- 4.6. Tenants experiencing difficulties with rent due to a change in circumstances may apply for hardship assistance.

5. Appeals and Internal Review

- 5.1. If a tenant or resident disagrees with a decision HCH has made in relation to their rent or eligibility for a rent subsidy they should firstly speak to HCH.
- 5.2. If a tenant or a resident remains dissatisfied with a decision or outcome an appeal can be submitted in accordance with the HCH Appeals Policy.

6. Responsibilities

- 6.1. The General Operations Manager - Housing is responsible for implementation of this policy.
- 6.2. Staff are responsible to ensure they have read, understood, and comply with the policy.
- 6.3. The Diocese Governance Department is responsible for managing the review process and publication of this policy.

7. Document Review

- 7.1. This document will be reviewed from time to time to ensure currency.

REVISION NO.	PREPARED/REVISED BY AND DATE	AMENDED SECTION	AMENDMENT DESCRIPTION	APPROVED BY AND DATE
1.0	Brie Challice, Business Analyst / Julie Barnett, Manager Risk and Resolution 30/05/2022	New policy	Created	HCH Board 24/06/2022