

1. Introduction

Wayss manages a Transitional Housing Management (THM) portfolio on behalf of the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH). The purpose of this policy is to detail the management of Wayss' transitional housing program.

Transitional Housing is a supported short-term accommodation program with access to support services. Residents are provided with housing support that offers advice and planning in the areas where assistance is needed. A key element of transitional housing is that it's a temporary option, and residents must be actively working with their support worker to transition to long term housing.

Wayss is a Child Safe organisation and child safety is at the forefront of our program delivery. Our policies ensure that child safety is a primary part of everyday thinking and practice. All employees, contractors and volunteers have an obligation to ensure we keep children safe from harm and abuse.

We're committed to upholding the rights of all of our stakeholders and creating a workplace that fosters inclusion and diversity. We believe that by bringing our authentic selves to Wayss, we can contribute to building strong teams, cultivating leaders, and creating an organisation that is well-suited for every individual. It's essential to us that we establish an environment where everyone, regardless of their background, can be themselves and feel safe, valued and respected. Regardless of whether you identify as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or LGBTIQ member, are from a culturally and linguistically diverse background, or a person living with a disability, as an individual associating with Wayss, you have the right to participate and engage in an environment that is free from discrimination and bias, and we strive to create a workplace that honours that commitment.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Transitional Housing properties managed on behalf of DFFH by Wayss.

This policy **does not apply** to the following housing programs run by Wayss:

- properties managed by Wayss under the long-term housing program
- properties managed by Wayss on behalf of other property owners where the owner retains responsibility for allocation of housing
- temporary or crisis accommodation

3. Policy Principles

In applying this policy, Wayss will ensure:

- that households in immediate need of housing assistance are appropriately prioritised
- consideration is given to the health, safety and support needs of applicants
- vacant properties are matched with individuals housing needs
- compliance with the *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006* (Vic) by following procedures that consider human rights as outlined in the Charter
- all legal, regulatory and contractual duties are met

4. Transitional Housing Management Program

4.1. Aim of the THM Program

The transitional housing program is subject to guidelines as established by DFFH. The guidelines can be found [here](#). Transitional housing provides short to medium term, subsidised housing to individuals and families during which time all renters must engage with their support provider to secure long term housing options.

The broad aim of the THM program from a housing provision perspective is to:

- provide housing assistance to individuals and families in crisis because of homelessness or impending homelessness
- assist individuals and families in housing crisis to establish and/or maintain appropriate, secure, and sustainable housing through the provision of transitional housing, initial assessment and planning, and support
- provide general transitional housing and Joined-Up Initiative housing in accordance with formalised allocation referral pathways, and through collaboration with Local Area Service Networks via the Resource Register process

4.2. Eligibility for THM

Any household wishing to access transitional housing will have first received an assessment from a homelessness access point service or family violence entry point service in order to be placed on the prioritisation list for access to transitional housing.

The assessment takes into consideration a range of circumstances including the following:

- current accommodation
- other housing options available
- stated and/or observed support needs
- professional support available
- assessment of an individual's situation and level of vulnerability

4.3. Allocation

Transitional Housing Management is not long-term housing and allocations are not made from the Victorian Housing Register (VHR). Allocation of Transitional housing is coordinated through the Local Area Service Networks (LASN's) meaning clients cannot self-refer into a Transitional Housing vacancy. There is no wait list for THM access and allocation occurs generally by way or nomination access, joined up initiatives or advertised vacancies.

Wayss has formal partnership agreements in place with nomination agencies who support renters throughout their tenancy. This support includes development of case plans and regular reviews to achieve a long-term housing outcome.

Nomination Access: Support agencies in each region hold nomination access to specific properties. When a property becomes available, the nominating agency is notified and asked to nominate renter/s into that property.

Joined Up Initiatives/Housing Pathways: The Department has also made properties available to other Departments within government including but not limited to, youth justice, mental health, corrections, drug, and alcohol etc.; these are called "Joined Up Initiatives" (JUI). These Departments

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and/or their partnering support agency have nomination access to specific properties with the THM portfolio.

Advertised vacancies: In each THM portfolio there are properties that are not allocated to a JUI or Support Agency. When these properties become tenatable, they are advertised on the government website or resource register. This allows agencies from the region to nominate into the property.

There are several considerations when allocating an advertised property to a resident that include but are not limited to:

- allocation policies for the region
- initial assessment for individuals and families
- target groups assigned to properties
- age/gender room ratios

Each THM comes with a target group set by the Department. Targets include but are not limited to family violence, youth, Aboriginal housing, CALD (multicultural), mental health, Youth Justice, Alcohol and other Drug (AoD), Corrections Victoria etc. There are also general targets with no specific identified group.

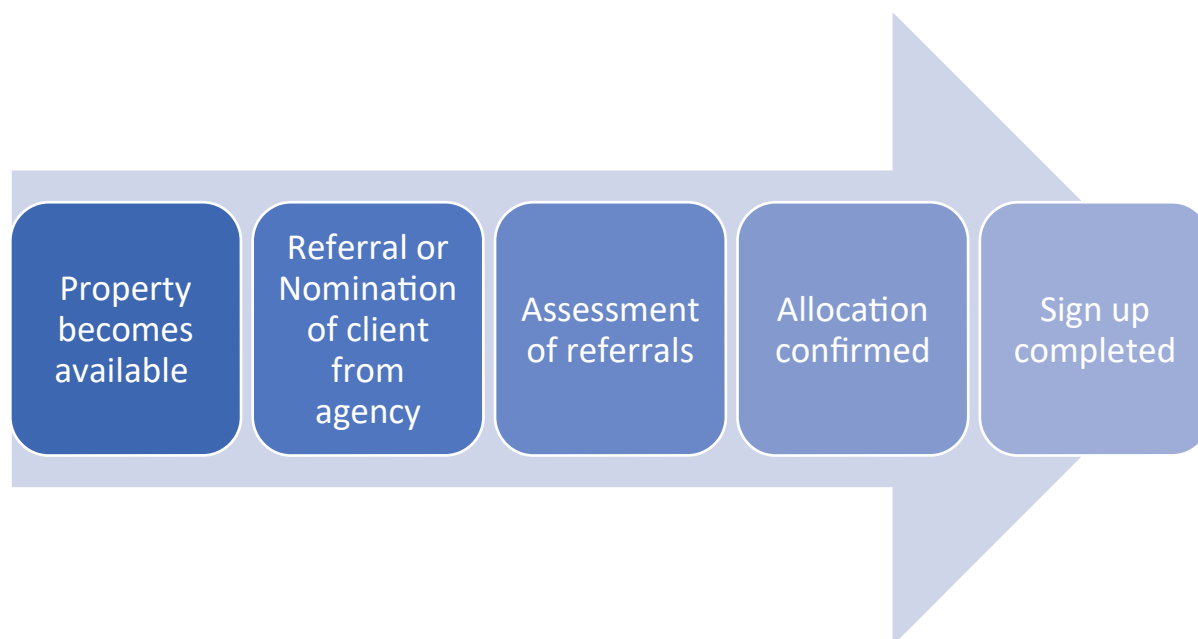
Allocation of non-Nominated THM Properties

Where a property does not have nomination access, Wayss will advertise the property on a government resource register with a closing time/date. Homelessness Services send through referrals in the form of initial assessments for consideration.

Applications are assessed based on the best match between the applicant/s circumstances, property target, room ratio and the considerations outlined above. All applicants are notified of the outcome via their referring agency. A time is arranged to sign up the successful applicant to the property and the supported tenancy commences.

Process Map for THM Allocation Process

The following chart outlines the process and considerations in THM allocations. These keys steps are consistent across different types of allocations, however, as outlined above, there may be some additional steps or variation.



4.4. Rent Calculation

Rent is calculated as per the **Rent Setting Policy**. Renters in transitional housing are NOT eligible for Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA).

4.5. Period of Tenure

Transitional Housing is not permanent housing as per the Homelessness Services Guidelines. THM is classified as shorter-term housing, generally with a fixed term rental agreement of 18 months. All renters must sign a Residential Rental Agreement and are expected to be working with a Housing Support Worker on their long-term housing goals throughout the tenancy.

4.6. Housing Exit Plans

The housing exit plan describes the renters' long term housing goals and the various steps that will be taken to achieve them. Exit plans are an integral part of a renter's successful transition to long term housing.

The renters support worker is expected to provide Wayss with a completed Tenancy review form and exit plan within 1 month from the start date of the tenancy. Thereafter these will be reviewed at 6 monthly intervals. This exit plan also forms the basis of ongoing housing reviews.

4.7. Housing Reviews

Housing reviews (including Routine Property Inspections) and exit planning are undertaken regularly to discuss the current tenancy and exit plan towards securing long term housing. Housing reviews provide renters with an opportunity to raise any concerns they have in relation to their tenancy and to discuss their progress towards achieving their anticipated long term housing outcome. Housing reviews also provide Tenancy & Property Managers and the renter with an opportunity to discuss the tenancy to date, reinforce conditions of the tenancy and highlight any tenancy issues.

Generally, a housing review will cover:

- any changes in household circumstances
- engagement with support
- exit options - private rental etc.

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- routine inspections & maintenance
- refusal of housing offers
- rent payments, rent review and/or rent arrears
- complaints and feedback (if applicable)
- issue of a Notice to Vacate for end of fixed term tenancy

Housing reviews will also take into account relevant factors, such as:

- whether there is a critical ongoing need for transitional housing
- whether exit from transitional housing is impacted due to no suitable alternative options available
- status of any VHR application for priority access to public housing

4.8. End of a THM Tenancy

Wayss has an obligation to ensure that transitional housing is being appropriately utilised to enable the most effective response to homelessness. The documented housing review and exit planning discussions will be considered at each decision-making point along with:

- THM program guidelines
- any exceptional circumstances

Any decision to issue a notice to vacate for the end of fixed term rental agreement will be discussed with the renter and support worker. Eviction will only be considered after all other avenues to resolve tenancy issues have been exhausted, and only after consultation with support workers. Refer to the **Evictions Policy** for further information.

Refusal of a long-term housing offer

THM renters who refuse offers of long-term public or community housing, that meets their needs and where there are no extenuating circumstances for the renter in relation to the offer, will be expected to enter into an alternative agreed exit plan; this may place the tenancy at risk with the current rental agreement coming to an end at the end of the initial fixed term.

4.9. THM Journey Map

The following chart outlines a THM journey. These key steps are consistent across all THM properties, however, as outlined above, there may be some additional steps or consideration of exceptional circumstances.



4.10. Moving out of the Transitional Property

Where a renter receives an offer of long-term housing or is planning on moving out of the THM, they are required to advise Wayss of the planned moving date. Renters should leave the property in a clean condition, free of personal belongings. It is expected all furniture supplied will remain in the property.

4.11. THM Furniture and Appliances

Wayss transitional properties are provided with basic furniture and appliances. These should remain in the property at the end of the tenancy. In addition, Wayss supplies a welcome pack of kitchen goods to all renters.

4.12. Repairs and Maintenance

Wayss will respond to urgent and non-urgent repairs in line with the Residential Tenancies Act.

Please note that most of the time repairs and maintenance are the responsibility of Homes Vic as they are generally the owner of the property. As a result, Wayss has limited control over maintenance works and timeframes however will continue to follow up with Homes Vic where maintenance is not attended to.

Notifying Wayss of repairs and maintenance

Renters must notify Wayss of any repairs and/or maintenance required at the property. During business hours, renters are to contact their housing officer for both urgent and non-urgent repairs.

After Hours Urgent Repairs

For urgent and/or emergency maintenance required after hours renters are to contact the Housing Call Centre on 13 11 72. Typically, urgent/emergency works include electrical wiring faults, burst hot water services, blocked sewerage or severe roof leaks.

Please refer to the **Maintenance, Repairs and Renter Recharge Policy** for further information.

5. Review

Wayss will review this policy every three years or sooner if there are legislative changes, or Wayss receives feedback or complaints about service delivery that may impact on this policy.

6. Related Resources

6.1. Standards and Frameworks

Department of Human Services Standards

Homelessness Services Guidelines and Conditions of Funding May 2014

Performance Standards for Registered Housing Agencies

Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

6.2. Legislation

Housing Act 1983 (Vic)

Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)

Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)

Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic)

Residential Tenancies Amendment Act 2018 (Vic)

6.3. Wayss Related Policies and Documents

Arrears Management and Hardship Policy

Client Privacy Policy

Eligibility and Allocations Policy

Evictions Policy

Inspections Policy

Maintenance, Repairs and Renter Recharge Policy

Rent Setting Policy

7. Change History

Date	Version	Summary of changes	Approver
05/04/2023	1.0	Initial re-draft using CHIA template	General Manager, Homelessness and Housing
24/04/2023	1.0	Draft Approved	CEO