



## **Servants Community Housing Limited**

ABN: 86 623 370 034

## **Inspection Policy**

## Purpose

Servants Community Housing undertakes various inspections of the properties it manages to ensure residents' rooms, communal and staff spaces comply with the safety and quality standards required of community housing providers under the regulatory authority. We also inspect our properties to identify potential maintenance issues as part of our ongoing maintenance program.

All inspections will be conducted by a staff member to:

- determine whether any urgent or routine repairs are required,
- ensure properties are being maintained to the standard outlined in the tenancy agreement,
- assess whether damage has been caused by a resident and if so, assess whether this damage was intentional or accidental,
- assess whether the room continues to meet the needs of the resident.

Where a resident has requested any alterations, these will be checked during the inspection, taking into account:

- the requirements of the resident,
- the cyclical maintenance due on their room,
- the condition and standard of their room.

When undertaking inspections, a staff member will record the matters of concern to residents, in addition to looking at all standard areas of room maintenance. They will also use previous room condition reports, for reference and maintenance records.

We are committed to our Inspection Policy being aligned with the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

## Definitions

*Staff member* - the CEO, Tenancy Manager, Housekeeper, Operations Manager or Facilities Manager

## Policy

This policy establishes the approach of Servants to fulfil its responsibilities to undertake room inspections. This policy applies to all properties managed by Servants under all relevant programs.

The policy covers the following types of inspections:

- **Prospective resident inspections:** where an applicant for housing is shown the premises prior to an offer for housing being made
- **General inspection:**

- A general inspection will take place on every resident's room by a staff member. The purpose of these inspections is to identify any concerns regarding damage to the room, hygiene, or safety concerns.
- If a room is found to be substandard for any reason, a breach of duty notice will be sent detailing the issues found, identifying areas that require improvement.
- A staff member will then arrange any follow up inspections that are required.
- General inspections will occur twice per annum.
- **Council health inspections:**
  - Each year the Boroondara Council will conduct a health inspection on each room and property. This is conducted by a council health officer in conjunction with a staff member.
  - The purpose of these inspections is to ensure that the facilities provided by Servants are at an acceptable condition, as well as to ensure that each resident is maintaining a healthy environment to live in.
- **Maintenance inspections:** where the room is inspected once per annum in order to check for any damage to properties or to observe needs for long term maintenance.
- **Fire safety checks:** where the premises are inspected by fire safety officers yearly, to check all fire detectors and sprinklers.
- **Other inspections:** where the room is inspected by regulatory authorities as required by law (e.g. Consumer Affairs).
- **Pre-exit resident inspections:** where the room is inspected before the resident has vacated the room
- **Post-exit resident inspections:** where the room is inspected after the resident has vacated the room.

## Notice for entry

Servants respects the privacy and autonomy of all residents, particularly when it comes to their rooms and private spaces. To that end we commit to giving residents written notice, as per the tenancy agreement and Residential Tenancies Act (RTA), before an inspection.

The notice will provide the following information:

- Why entry is required (i.e. to enable a staff member to carry out a duty under the RTA, the tenancy agreement or any other part of the RTA including if a staff member has reasonable grounds to believe that the resident has failed to comply with his or her duties under the RTA or the tenancy agreement).

See the below for the amount of notice Servants is required to give for various inspections.

<b>Inspection reason</b>	<b>Amount of notice</b>
Entry is required to carry out a duty under the RTA	At least 24 hours
Entry is required to show the premises to another prospective resident	At least 48 hours
Room inspections	At least 24 hours

A staff member will only arrange to enter the premises between 8am and 6pm on any business day.

It is expected that the resident will be present at the date and time agreed. A staff member will enter the premises with a duplicate key to undertake the inspection if the resident is not home.

However, there are some examples of when entry is required, and advanced notice may not be possible:

- For urgent repairs
- For welfare checks, if there is reason to believe the resident is seriously unwell or in danger and needs assistance
- During emergency evacuations

## **Related policies**

Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy  
Complaints and Appeals Policy  
Maintenance and Repairs Policy

## **Legislation and standards**

This policy implements the obligations of Servants under:

- Residential Tenancies Act 1997
- Housing Act 1983 (Vic)
- Guidelines for Registered Housing Agencies published by DFFH  
<https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/guidelines-registered-housing-agencies>
- Performance Standards for Registered Housing Agencies

## **Transparency and accessibility**

This policy will be available on the Servants Community Housing website  
<https://www.servants.org.au/policies-procedures/>

## **Review**

This policy was written in April 2019 and was reviewed August 2022. It is scheduled to be reviewed in August 2023.