

Housing Allocation Policy

Purpose

Servants Community Housing Limited aims to work with local support agencies to help make finding affordable, long term housing easier for individuals at risk of homelessness. One key component in building strong connectedness and a sense of community in our houses is to take the allocation process very seriously.

We are aware that our houses vary in location, culture and layout. These factors may contribute to particular houses being more suitable to some applicants over others. The requirements of individual applicants will be taken into consideration during the application process, and applicants are encouraged to let the Servants staff know of any factors that would contribute to their housing needs.

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

Definitions

Staff member - the CEO, Tenancy Manager, Housekeeper, Operations Manager or Assets Manager

Policy

Servants works to achieve sustainable housing outcomes by considering the individual needs of the tenant and the available dwelling.

It is important to note that Servants does not follow a 'first in first served' policy. This is because:

- some applicants are in greater need than others due to financial strain or have a more immediate housing need
- some rooms and houses are best suited to particular residents

To ascertain if an applicant is suitable for a room with Servants, we take the following things into consideration:

- a. Eligibility of the applicant
- b. Current housing need of the applicant (individual circumstances)
- c. Victorian Housing Register Priority Status
- d. Availability of rooms and the suitability of the property for the individual
 - i.e. disability access, location proximity to support services

a. Eligibility of the applicant

All applicants need to check the eligibility criteria to ensure they are eligible to be housed by us. We have a selection process that is accountable, meets all legislative requirements, industry standards and guidelines, including the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

Our eligibility principles and requirements allow us to maintain the culture of respect, dignity and hope across all houses.

[Click here to view the eligibility criteria.](#)

b. Current housing need of the applicant

Some applicants have a greater need for housing with Servants due to various factors including financial strain, disruption of previous living arrangements or safety. Individual circumstances of applicants will be discussed with staff during the application interview. The urgency of housing will be discussed at this time and applicants are advised to raise any factors contributing to their housing need. A support worker or advocate is encouraged to attend this interview.

c. Victorian Housing Register Priority Status

Servants requires each applicant to be on the Victorian Housing Register (VHR) waiting list in order to be approved for housing with us. If an applicant is not on the list, Servants can assist the applicant with applying for the list. All new residents will be taken off the VHR once they have moved in. Residents can then re-apply to go back on to the VHR if they still wish to be considered for a public housing unit in the future as a priority transfer.

[Click here to find out more information about applying for social housing.](#)

d. Availability of rooms and the suitability of the property for the individual

All houses operated by Servants are largely run with the same protocols and procedures, however there are slight differences between properties. An applicant may have special requirements for their accommodation based on medical, social or other factors. For example, an applicant who uses a wheelchair will not be allocated to a house that does not have sufficient ramps or lifts.

If an applicant has other needs that require a specific type of accommodation or accommodation in a specific location they must substantiate this need.

Table 1: Information required to substantiate housing needs

This table outlines the information required by Servants Community Housing to substantiate specific housing needs.

Situation	Information required
<p>A specific location is required for an applicant for a particular reason.</p> <p><i>For example, for access to cultural supports or a work place.</i></p>	<p>Documentation substantiating the need for the specific location.</p>
<p>A particular living arrangement is unsuitable due to a medical condition or disability.</p> <p><i>For example, sharing a bathroom with another resident or having a room located up or down a flight of stairs.</i></p>	<p>Documentation that demonstrates that this type of property will adversely affect the applicant's health including a medical assessment from the applicant's health care professional and a report or letter from a health care worker or a support agency.</p>

Note: Three of the four houses operated by us do not allow any alcohol on site. At one house alcohol is allowed to be consumed by residents in their own rooms, but not in any communal spaces. In light of this, prospective residents need to be aware of this and mention their housing preferences, if any, in their interview. This will impact their housing allocation.

Servants provides breakfast and dinner. Dietary requirements will be catered for if a medical certificate is provided or for ethical or religious reasons.

Related policies

[Complaints and Appeals Policy](#)

[Eligibility 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 DHHS](#)
- Performance Standards for Registered Housing Agencies

Transparency and accessibility

This policy will be available on the Servants Community Housing website

www.servants.org.au/policy.

Review

This policy was written in April, 2019. It is rescheduled for review in April, 2021.