



# Renters' Welcome Pack

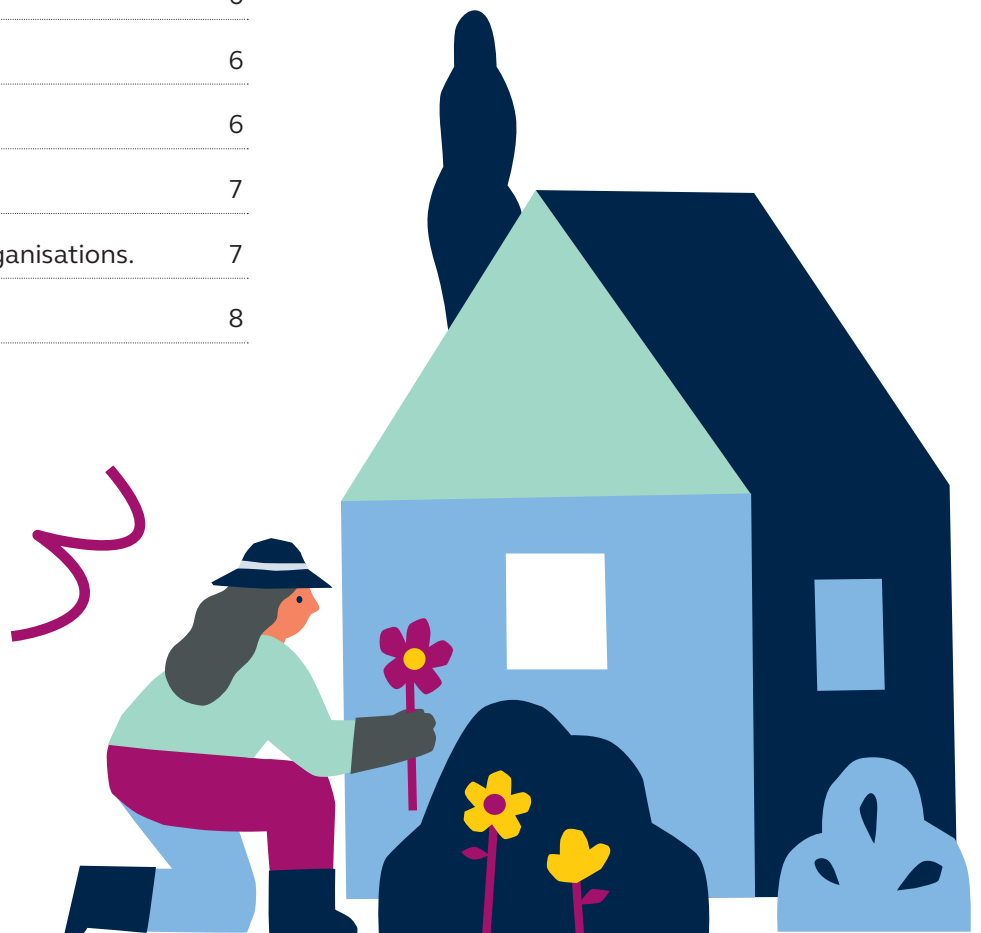
Everything you need to know about  
your new home and tenancy.

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**Uniting**

# Contents

Renter welcome.	3
Renter engagement and community development.	3
Paying your bond and rent.	3
Moving in.	4
Keep the property in good, clean condition.	4
Insurance.	4
Visitors and guests.	4
Pets.	4
Holidays.	4
Tell people you've moved.	5
What happens if I fall behind in paying rent?	5
Utilities and water charges.	5
Keys.	5
Maintenance and repairs.	6
Employee and contractor safety.	6
At the end of your tenancy.	6
Feedback and complaints.	6
Appealing a decision.	6
Disputes with neighbours.	7
Other complaints and advocacy organisations.	7
Our service goals.	8



## Renter welcome.

Welcome to your new home! We hope you enjoy living in your Uniting VicTas housing.

This renter pack and your lease agreement provide important information that you may need during your tenancy.

The Uniting Consumer Handbook introduces you to Uniting and contains information about:

- Your rights and responsibilities
- Advocacy and support
- How we manage your private information
- How to provide feedback or make complaints

You can also visit our website: [unitinghousing.org.au](https://unitinghousing.org.au)

If you have any questions or feedback, please contact your Community Housing Officer.

## Renter engagement and community development.

Renter engagement programs and initiatives encourage renters to connect with their communities and give residents access to services and supports in the wider community.

We encourage you to take part in these activities, and in decisions that affect you. We believe it creates a more positive housing experience and improves our service delivery.

## Paying your bond and rent.

You must pay one month rent and a bond of one month rent before you can move in.

You can choose to pay your rent each week or fortnight. You must pay your rent in full, on time and in advance. If you don't do this, you will be in breach of your lease, and we will have to take action.

You can pay your rent through the Centrepay system (for Centrelink recipients), or by automatic bank transfer to the Uniting Bank Account:

Uniting (Victoria & Tasmania)  
National Australia Bank  
**BSB** 083 004  
**Account Number** 631163893

Please use your Family name and first name as reference when making bank payments so we can easily identify your payment. E.g.: Smith, Mary

You can make extra payments any time into this account.

If you have questions about payment options, rent reviews and what happens if you get behind in your rent, contact your Community Housing Officer.

## **Moving in.**

We will give you the keys and the condition report when you sign your lease and pay your bond.

The condition report describes the condition of the property when you move in. Check the report and return a signed copy to us within seven days (in Victoria) or 2 days after you receive it (in Tasmania).

## **Keep the property in good, clean condition.**

You must keep the property in the same condition as described in your condition report, except for fair wear and tear.

You are responsible for any damage caused and will have to pay for the repairs.

You are also responsible for any guests and visitors that come to the property and for anything they do there.

You mustn't make any changes to the property without our permission and let us know if the property needs maintenance or repairs.

We inspect the property every 6-12 months, and if there are any problems at the property.

## **Insurance.**

We insure the building. We encourage you to obtain contents insurance for your possessions. Ask your Community Housing Officer for more information.

## **Visitors and guests.**

You are responsible for visitors to your property. This also means you are responsible for making sure they act according to the rules of your rental agreement.

Some types of property have special rules about visitors, for example about over-night guests, or do not allow visitors. We will explain these rules if you are in this type of property.

## **Pets.**

You must ask us if you want to keep pets at the property. Contact your Community Housing Officer for more information.

## **Holidays.**

Please let us know if you plan to go on a holiday for more than two weeks.

## **Tell people you've moved.**

You may need to tell people or organisations that you've moved. For example:

- Post Office
- Phone Company
- Banks
- Doctors
- Employer
- Electricity/Gas
- The Australian Taxation Office
- Department of Transport
- Electoral Commission
- Superannuation Fund
- Centrelink Medicare
- Schools
- Dentist.

## **What happens if I fall behind in paying rent?**

If you are having difficulty paying your rent, please contact your Community Housing Officer as soon as possible. The sooner we know the sooner we can help you.

We will contact you as soon as possible if a payment is late.

If you do not pay your rent, you will be in breach of your Rental Agreement. We may begin the process to end your lease with us.

## **Utilities and water charges.**

You will need to set up your utilities such as gas, electricity, internet, and phone when you move in. If the property has a separate water meter, you will be responsible for water usage charges.

Uniting Housing staff can help you to connect to all utilities, including water, with Your Porter.

Contact your Community Housing Officer if you need help.

If the property has a separate water meter, you will be responsible for water usage charges. We will notify the water company.

## **Keys.**

Your Community Housing Officer has given you the right number of keys for the property.

If you lock yourself out, you must pay a locksmith so you can get in. The locksmith must not change a lock.

You must replace lost keys. You must also pay for new locks and keys if you don't return all the keys at the end of the tenancy.

## Maintenance and repairs.

If the property needs maintenance or repairs, tell us as soon as you can.

We will tell you if you are responsible for maintaining the item that is not working when you make a maintenance report.

If we are responsible for the repair, we will arrange for repairs to be carried out. We will give your details to the contractor. They will make a time with you to come to your home.

## Employee and contractor safety.

We ask that you help keep workers safe when they visit your home, for example through respectful interactions, restraining dogs during inspections and minimising trip hazards.

We know that some tenants may prefer that visitors remove shoes. However, for the safety of our staff and contractors, we require our workers to wear shoes at the property.

## At the end of your tenancy.

When you finish your tenancy, you must return all the keys and leave the property in good condition, except for fair wear and tear.

We will check the condition of the property. We will send you a copy of the final Exit Condition Report within 14 days of the end of your tenancy.

## Feedback and complaints.

You can give us your feedback or make a complaint by:

- Talking to a Uniting worker
- Calling **03 9192 8100**
- Sending an email to **consumerfeedback@unitingvictas.org.au**
- Going to the Uniting website: **unitingvictas.org.au/feedback/**
- Writing to:  
Feedback and Complaints  
Level 4,  
130 Lonsdale Street  
Melbourne VIC 3000

## Appealing a decision.

You can also appeal a decision we have made about matters including but not limited to:

- Eligibility and access to a program or housing
- Rents, charges, fees and refunds
- Breach action

You should lodge the appeal as soon as possible but within 90 days after the decision took effect. On a case-by-case basis, Uniting may decide not to consider appeals which are received 90 days after the decision took effect.

## Disputes with neighbours.

Common disputes between neighbours can include issues about:

- noisy or wandering pets
- excessive noise
- overhanging trees
- parking across driveways.

Disputes about illegal activity, like theft or violent behaviour, are Police matters, or matters for other authorities. You should inform them first, and then let us know what has happened. Uniting cannot intervene in these matters.

In most instances your best option is to discuss your issue with your neighbour and to try to sort out the problem in an informal way as soon as possible.

## Other complaints and advocacy organisations.

In Victoria
Office of Housing Registrar <b>T</b> 1300 650 172 <b>www.housingregistrar.vic.gov.au</b>
Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) <b>T</b> 03 9628 9800 <b>www.vcat.vic.gov.au</b>
Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria (DSCV) <b>T</b> 1300 372 888 <b>www.disputes.vic.gov.au</b>
Consumer Affairs Victoria <b>T</b> 1300 558 181 <b>www.consumer.vic.gov.au</b>
Tenants Victoria <b>www.tenantsvic.org.au</b>
In Tasmania
NRSCH <b>T</b> 03 6166 3628 <b>www.nrsch.gov.au</b>
Ombudsman Tasmania <b>T</b> 1800 001 170 <b>www.ombudsman.tas.gov.au</b>
Consumer Affairs Tasmania <b>T</b> 1300 654 499 <b>www.consumer.tas.gov.au</b>
Tenants' Union of Tasmania <b>www.tutas.org.au</b>

## Our service goals.

Service and response time or frequency
<b>Application processing</b> We will write to applicants about the result of an application within 7 days of our receiving the completed application form
<b>New renters pack</b> New occupants receive a welcome pack when they sign a contract or rental agreement. The Welcome pack includes important information about Uniting, and an occupant's rights and responsibilities
<b>New renter survey</b> We ask for feedback about a new occupant's experience within six months of moving in.
<b>Contact person</b> We assign a Community Housing Officer (CHO) when the contract or Rental Agreement is signed.
<b>Phone calls</b> If staff are unavailable, callers should leave a message with clear contact details and the name of the staff member. We will contact the caller within 2 working days.
<b>Emails</b> We answer emails that require a response within 2 working days
<b>Newsletters</b> Newsletters have information about Uniting, our policies, and community activities. We send 4 newsletters each year
<b>Appeals and complaints</b> We give information about giving feedback, making a complaint or appealing a decision. We acknowledge receiving a complaint within 7 days. We will give a formal response within 28 days
<b>Repairs and maintenance</b> Uniting carries out Repairs and maintenance in line with legislation. We will meet those requirements.
<b>Repairs and maintenance quality checks and feedback</b> Uniting inspects the quality of a sample of repairs and maintenance. We will seek feedback on 30% of all maintenance requests.
<b>Property inspections</b> Uniting does at least 1 routine inspection each year of all Uniting Housing properties in line with legislation.
<b>Organisation feedback</b> At least every two years, Uniting will seek feedback about residents' experience to inform improvement, and report results internally and to the Housing Registrar.