

Eligibility and Allocations Policy

1. Policy

This document defines the eligibility requirements and the process for allocating community housing to eligible applicants.

Uniting Vic.Tas (Uniting) is committed to:

- communicating clearly to applicants and the community about who is eligible for community housing with Uniting.
- promoting sustainable and harmonious communities, housing programs and tenancies when we match applicants to properties.
- acting in a fair, transparent, and equitable manner
- giving appropriate priority to eligible applicants
- considering the health, safety, and support needs of applicants
- matching individual housing needs with available properties
- complying with the [Residential Tenancies Act](#) (Vic) or [Residential Tenancy Act](#) (Tas), and other legislative, regulatory and contractual obligations

Depending on the jurisdiction, in this policy:

In this document		Victoria	Tasmania
Renter	shall mean	Renter	Tenant
Rental agreement	Shall mean	Rental agreement	Tenancy agreement
Housing Register	shall mean	Victorian Housing Register	Tasmanian Housing Register through Homes Tasmania/Housing Connect

2. Scope

This policy applies to all community housing rental properties managed by Uniting.

3. Procedure

3.1 Eligibility and priority criteria

Potential renters for vacant dwelling may be identified from:

- the Housing Register (HR)
- Uniting Homelessness Teams
- other support agencies
- partner agencies
- Project interest registers (new properties)

Document Name: <i>Eligibility & Allocations Policy</i>	Policy Area: <i>Quality, Risk & Compliance</i>	
Document Number: <i>UP-UH-003</i>	Classification: <i>Internal</i>	
Version Number: <i>2.0</i>	Document Owner: <i>General Manager, Housing & Property</i>	
Publication date: <i>29/06/2023</i>	Endorsed by: <i>General Manager, Housing & Property</i>	
CMS embedded: <i>n/a</i>	<i>Printed copies of this document are considered uncontrolled.</i>	Page 1 of 6

Uniting takes most applications from the Housing Register.

Eligibility is defined in the [VHR application categories](#) in Victoria, [Homes Tasmania categories](#) in Tasmania. Uniting applies the same criteria:

- Australian citizenship or Permanent residency
- Residency in the relevant state
- Income eligibility
- Asset eligibility

There are 6 broad categories of priority access on the Victorian HR. In order of priority these categories are:

- Emergency management housing (new and transfer applicants)
- Priority transfers (transfer applicants only)
- Homeless with support (new applicants only):
- Supported housing (new applicants only)
- Special housing needs (new and transfer applicants)
- Special housing needs aged 55 years and over (new applicants only)

3.2 Allocation criteria

Uniting representatives will:

- allocate at least 75% of eligible applicants from the Priority Access categories of the VHR each financial year.
- consider relevant factors in allocating a property to an applicant, including but not limited to:
 - the best use of Uniting resources
 - the sustainability of the tenancy
 - the proposed tenant’s expressed needs and preferences
 - suitable housing size, features, and location
 - proximity to employment, and to social, cultural and community supports.
 - the concentration of public and community housing stock in a particular area
 - the concentration of renters with multiple health, social or economic issues in a particular area or building
 - existing tenancy management issues (or a potential for these to develop)
 - existing neighbourhood tensions or disputes which may be exacerbated if allocations are not sensitively handled.
 - a mismatch of supply and demand which make the property hard to let.
- Use the allocation tool, as appropriate.

Document Name: <i>Eligibility & Allocations Policy</i>	Policy Area: <i>Quality, Risk & Compliance</i>	
Document Number: <i>UP-UH-003</i>	Classification: <i>Internal</i>	
Version Number: <i>2.0</i>	Document Owner: <i>General Manager, Housing & Property</i>	
Publication date: <i>29/06/2023</i>	Endorsed by: <i>General Manager, Housing & Property</i>	
CMS embedded: <i>n/a</i>	<i>Printed copies of this document are considered uncontrolled.</i>	Page 2 of 6

3.3 Nomination rights

Nomination rights refer to agreements between community housing organisations and support providers about the allocation of vacant properties.

Where nomination rights apply, Uniting representatives will:

- establish appropriate arrangements in protocol agreements with referral agencies who have responsibility for nominating applicants for vacancies, to ensure timely and appropriate referrals; and
- require referral agencies to nominate applicants who have a current priority access application.

3.4 Identify pending or immediately available vacant dwellings

The Uniting representative will:

- identify and monitor vacated dwellings on the relevant database (Chintaro/CX Housing)
- monitor the status of vacant untenable dwellings each week to ensure that required works are scheduled and progressing. A vacant untenable dwelling is not available when there is outstanding maintenance and cleaning.
- determine an estimated availability date to begin the process of identifying a new renter.
- begin to identify potential renters for the dwelling when the dwelling is expected to be available within 1 month.

3.5 Assess eligibility and process applications

Uniting representatives will:

- in Victoria, refer to the [VHR Guide](#), as required
- select eligible applicants from Homes Victoria, Homes Tasmania or other agency when this is a contractual requirement.
- require the referring agency/worker to complete a Housing Referral Form for a person who is referred from an internal or external source.
- refer enquirers without a current HR application to appropriate support services or state agency to make an application.
- In Victoria, request the VHR fast-track the approval of an application of an eligible and suitable by emailing victorianhousingregister@dhhs.vic.gov.au with the applicant details (full name and date of birth and the online reference number)
- apply additional eligibility requirements for certain housing that have additional eligibility criteria – for example, women and families who experience family violence, people aged 55 years and over.
- exercise discretion to house an applicant with a previous debt or other relevant matters and apply reasonable conditions on an applicant on a case-by-case basis.

Document Name: <i>Eligibility & Allocations Policy</i>	Policy Area: <i>Quality, Risk & Compliance</i>	
Document Number: <i>UP-UH-003</i>	Classification: <i>Internal</i>	
Version Number: <i>2.0</i>	Document Owner: <i>General Manager, Housing & Property</i>	
Publication date: <i>29/06/2023</i>	Endorsed by: <i>General Manager, Housing & Property</i>	
CMS embedded: <i>n/a</i>	<i>Printed copies of this document are considered uncontrolled.</i>	Page 3 of 6

- require applicants who return to Uniting with Uniting rent arrears to enter into a repayment agreement.
- re-assess the eligibility of the whole household before making an offer of housing, and before a household signs a lease for a property.
- record the assessment of eligibility in the applicant’s individual file.

3.6 Make a provisional offer of housing.

When a potential renter from any of the referral or applicant sources is identified, the Uniting representative will:

- carefully consider applications on available information to make a reasonable offer.
- meet the applicant by phone or in person to make a provisional offer of the available dwelling.
- provide information to the applicant about:
 - the location and details of the dwelling, and available date
 - the rental agreement and term of tenancy
 - likely rent payable (depending on confirmation of household income if income-based rent is applicable)
 - likely rent in advance amount (to be confirmed)
 - in Victoria, Consumer Affairs Victoria form - [Statement of Information for Rental Applicants](#)
 - in Victoria, completed [Mandatory Disclosure checklist](#)
 - explain information we need from applicant, e.g., verification of income and identity.
 - Centrelink consents which will be requested – income confirmation.
 - Centrepay, Electronic Verification of Rent
 - dwelling viewing arrangements
 - contact arrangements with Uniting about the offer and sign-up process.
- require the applicant to confirm:
 - that the dwelling features and location are suitable for the household
 - names and ages of household members
 - income type of household members 18 years and over
 - timeframe for providing required identification and income documents.
 - timeframe for confirming acceptance of offer.

3.7 Confirm an offer of housing

The Uniting representative will:

- confirm the offer after receiving evidence of identity and income.
- advise the rent payable and rent in advance amounts.
- make a sign-up appointment and arrange a move in date with the applicant.

Document Name: <i>Eligibility & Allocations Policy</i>	Policy Area: <i>Quality, Risk & Compliance</i>	
Document Number: <i>UP-UH-003</i>	Classification: <i>Internal</i>	
Version Number: <i>2.0</i>	Document Owner: <i>General Manager, Housing & Property</i>	
Publication date: <i>29/06/2023</i>	Endorsed by: <i>General Manager, Housing & Property</i>	
CMS embedded: <i>n/a</i>	<i>Printed copies of this document are considered uncontrolled.</i>	Page 4 of 6

- inform the HR - in Victoria, record the offer on the VHR system against the property – refer to the [VHR Guide](#) in Victoria
- record the applicant and household member details as Clients on the relevant database (Chintaro/CX Housing).

3.8 Accept an offer of housing and sign-up

The tenancy offer is accepted when the new renter signs the rental agreement.

The Uniting representative will:

- inform the HR - In Victoria, record the tenancy offer on the HR as “accepted” (refer to [VHR Guide](#), in Victoria).
- refer to Starting a Tenancy Policy

3.9 Decline applications

Uniting may decline an application, and social housing applicants may refuse up to two reasonable offers.

It is NOT a considered a refusal of a reasonable offer when an applicant declines an offer because their circumstances have changed, or information was not known when making the offer and the housing is no longer suitable.

The Uniting representative will:

- record a refusal of a reasonable offer – in Victoria: on the VHR register. (refer to [VHR Guide](#), in Victoria)
- inform the applicant if Uniting declines an application for housing, and the reasons for that decision, and the applicant’s rights to appeal the decision.
- maintain complete and accurate records in the applicant’s individual file.

4. Legislation/Regulations

National

Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)

Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)

Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)

National Rental Affordability Scheme Act 2008 (Cth)

National Rental Affordability Scheme Regulations 2020 (Cth)

Tasmania

Community Housing Providers National Law (Tasmania) Act 2013 (Tas)

Family Violence Act 2004 (Tas)

Document Name: <i>Eligibility & Allocations Policy</i>	Policy Area: <i>Quality, Risk & Compliance</i>	
Document Number: <i>UP-UH-003</i>	Classification: <i>Internal</i>	
Version Number: <i>2.0</i>	Document Owner: <i>General Manager, Housing & Property</i>	
Publication date: <i>29/06/2023</i>	Endorsed by: <i>General Manager, Housing & Property</i>	
CMS embedded: <i>n/a</i>	<i>Printed copies of this document are considered uncontrolled.</i>	Page 5 of 6

Victoria

- Housing Act 1983 (Vic)*
- Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic)*
- Residential Tenancies Regulations 2021 (Vic)*
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)*
- Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (Vic)*
- Public Health and Wellbeing (Prescribed Accommodation) Regulations 2020 (Vic)*
- Noise (Residential) Accommodation Services*
- Environment Protection (Residential Noise) Regulations 2018 (Vic)*
- Environment Protection Act 2017 (Vic)*
- Environment Protection Regulations 2021 (Vic)*
- Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM)
- Charter of Human rights

5. Related Documents

- Relief due to Hardship Policy
- Rent Policy
- Rent Arrears Policy
- Changing Needs Policy
- Uniting Asset Management Policy
- [VHR Guide](#)
- [Statement of Information for Rental Applicants](#)
- [Mandatory Disclosure checklist](#)

Document Name: <i>Eligibility & Allocations Policy</i>	Policy Area: <i>Quality, Risk & Compliance</i>	
Document Number: <i>UP-UH-003</i>	Classification: <i>Internal</i>	
Version Number: <i>2.0</i>	Document Owner: <i>General Manager, Housing & Property</i>	
Publication date: <i>29/06/2023</i>	Endorsed by: <i>General Manager, Housing & Property</i>	
CMS embedded: <i>n/a</i>	<i>Printed copies of this document are considered uncontrolled.</i>	Page 6 of 6