

# Sustaining Tenancies policy

## 1. Policy

Uniting Vic.Tas (Uniting) is committed to:

- the rights of renters
- providing safe, secure, and affordable housing
- sustaining tenancies, particularly of disadvantaged and vulnerable renters who require support to sustain their tenancy
- complying with the [Residential Tenancies Act](#) (Vic) or [Residential Tenancy Act](#) (Tas), and other other legislative, regulatory and contractual obligations.

This commitment is based on the principle that renters have access to the support needed to maintain and enjoy their tenancy.

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
Relevant tribunal	shall mean	Victorian Civil Administration Tribunal (VCAT)	Residential Tenancy Commission (RTC)

## 2. Scope

This information applies to all residential tenancies managed by Uniting.

## 3. Procedure

**Uniting representatives will:**

- consider a renter’s human rights in determining responses
- use fair, consistent and accountable processes
- give renters clear and accessible information about their rights, responsibilities, rents and other charges, status of tenancy and how to provide feedback and make complaints
- work with renters to identify barriers to sustainable tenancies
- understand and respond to a renter's changing needs and circumstances
- have trauma informed practice, and respond appropriately to family violence
- meet contractual, legal, and regulatory duties and obligations
- have housing management policies, procedures and work practices that seek to sustain tenancies and avoid evictions into homelessness, and use eviction as a last resort

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- have good working relationships with a range of key government and community agencies, and formal partnerships or agreements with support services
- use allocation strategies to facilitate sustainable tenancies and work proactively with consumers to identify barriers to sustaining tenancies, and consider requesting a formal agreement with a support agency before approving allocation
- refer renters to appropriate advocacy and other relevant services, as required

### 3.1. Arranging support

**If it becomes apparent during the tenancy that a renter needs support, Uniting will:**

- discuss a range of options with the renter and outline the support services available
- provide available information about a support service
- obtain and record on the renter’s file written consent from the renter before making a referral
- if needed, help the renter with related administration (e.g. referral form or making an appointment with the support service)

### 3.2. Modifications

**If a renter requires modifications to a property to sustain the tenancy, Uniting will:**

- Refer to the **Modifications to Housing Policy**

### 3.3. Hardship

**If a renter experiences financial hardship, Uniting will:**

- Refer to the **Relief Due to Hardship Policy**

### 3.4. Changing needs

**If a renter’s needs have changed to the extent that the sustainability of their tenancy is at risk, Uniting will:**

- Refer to the **Changing Needs policy**
- discuss the renter’s options available to the renter. This may include but is not limited to, considering other housing options or referral to support services.

### 3.5. Breaches of the rental agreement

**Uniting representatives will:**

- refer to the **Breaches of Tenancy Policy**
- treat renters fairly in managing breaches of the rental agreement (such as rent arrears)
- ensure proper consideration of human rights throughout the management of breach processes.
- Only seek an eviction through the relevant tribunal when all other options and measures to sustain the tenancy have been exhausted.

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## 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)

### 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  
 Eligibility and Allocations Policy  
 Rent Policy  
 Rent Arrears Policy  
 Changing Needs Policy  
 Uniting Asset Management Policy

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