

# Temporary Absence Policy

## 1. Policy

Uniting aims to reduce vacancies and under-occupancy of community housing by managing renters' temporary absences from a property.

Temporary absence is when a renter is:

- travelling
- away from the rental property
- in other accommodation like a nursing home, respite, rehabilitation, prison, or remand,

for more than 14 consecutive days or is living in the property for less than three nights a week over an extended period.

Absences cumulatively must not be more than 13 weeks in 52 weeks (12 months), without Uniting approval.

### Uniting will:

- manage Uniting properties to reduce vacancies and under-occupancy
- consider applications from renters for absences from a property
- clearly explain to the renter the requirements for absences
- support renters to rectify issues as early as possible when a tenancy is at risk
- have consistent, fair, and accountable processes, and give renters information about processes that affect their tenancy
- respond to matters in a person-centered and respectful way and consider any factors that may affect the safety or wellbeing of renters and their families
- mitigate as far as possible negative effects of changes of rent policy on renters and households
- meet our legal, regulatory, and contractual obligations.

Depending on the jurisdiction, in this policy:

In this document		Victoria	Tasmania
Renter	shall mean	Renter	Tenant

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to Uniting's community housing tenancies.

## 3. Procedure

### 3.1. Notifying Uniting when a renter is absent

#### A renter must:

- notify Uniting in advance when a renter is, or intends to be, absent from the rental property for more than 14 consecutive days.

Document Name: <i>Uniting Housing – Temporary Absence Policy</i>	Policy Area: <i>Quality, Risk &amp; Compliance</i>	
Document Number: <i>UF-UH-031</i>	Classification: <i>Internal</i>	
Version Number: <i>1.0</i>	Document Owner: <i>General Manager, Housing &amp; Property</i>	
Publication date: <i>10/07/23</i>	Endorsed by: <i>General Manager, Housing &amp; Property</i>	
CMS embedded: <i>n/a</i>	<i>Printed copies of this document are considered uncontrolled.</i>	Page 1 of 3

- notify Uniting in advance when a sole renter is or intends to be living in the property for less than three nights a week.
- **not** be absent from the rental property for more than 13 weeks cumulatively in 52 weeks (12 months) without Uniting’s approval.
- notify Uniting on the **Temporary Absence form**

### 3.2. Managing notifications of an absence

#### Uniting representatives will:

- record and monitor absences in the renter’s file
- consider notifications and other information to determine the length of an absence.
- **not** require notification in advance when it is not reasonably practicable, for example when an intervention order has been issued and the perpetrator or victim of family violence is required to leave the property immediately.
- consider the individual circumstances and may take action to regain possession of the property if it is not possible to sustain the tenancy.
- refer to **Sustaining tenancies policy**
- refer to **Changing needs policy**
- refer to the **Breach of tenancy policy**

## 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

Document Name: <i>Uniting Housing – Temporary Absence Policy</i>	Policy Area: <i>Quality, Risk &amp; Compliance</i>	
Document Number: <i>UF-UH-031</i>	Classification: <i>Internal</i>	
Version Number: <i>1.0</i>	Document Owner: <i>General Manager, Housing &amp; Property</i>	
Publication date: <i>10/07/23</i>	Endorsed by: <i>General Manager, Housing &amp; Property</i>	
CMS embedded: <i>n/a</i>	<i>Printed copies of this document are considered uncontrolled.</i>	Page 2 of 3

## 5. Related documents

Changing Needs Policy  
Sustaining Tenancies Policy  
Breach of Tenancy Policy

Document Name: <i>Uniting Housing – Temporary Absence Policy</i>	Policy Area: <i>Quality, Risk &amp; Compliance</i>	
Document Number: <i>UF-UH-031</i>	Classification: <i>Internal</i>	
Version Number: <i>1.0</i>	Document Owner: <i>General Manager, Housing &amp; Property</i>	
Publication date: <i>10/07/23</i>	Endorsed by: <i>General Manager, Housing &amp; Property</i>	
CMS embedded: <i>n/a</i>	<i>Printed copies of this document are considered uncontrolled.</i>	Page <b>3</b> of <b>3</b>