

1.0 Launch Housing Allocation of Long Term Housing Policy

2.0 Identification Grid

Date first approved: 30/4/2019	Date of effect: 29 March 2021
Date last amended: 29 March 2021	Date of Next Review: 29 March 2023
Policy Owner: GM Keeping Housing	Portfolio: Keeping Housing
Content Owner (Author): GM Keeping Housing	

3.0 Purpose

This policy outlines the approach of Launch Housing to establish:

- The prioritisation and allocation of applicants to vacant properties in its long-term rental housing portfolio.
- Successful and sustainable tenancies and communities through the matching of applicants to properties.

4.0 Definitions

DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services.
Applicant	Person who has applied for housing via the VHR or, where permitted by this policy, directly to Launch Housing.
Director of Housing	Victorian government statutory authority that owns all public housing land in Victoria and which is the principal funding body for community housing.
Nomination rights	Refers to arrangements between Launch Housing and third party support providers where the support provider nominates applicants for certain vacant properties.
Priority Access	Applicants on the VHR who have been assessed as having a priority housing need. The Priority Access Categories are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Emergency Management Housing •Priority Transfers •Homeless with Support •Supported Housing •Temporary Absence •Special Housing Needs •Special Housing Needs (Aged 55 years and over)
Public Housing	Properties owned and managed by DHHS.
Targeted Social Housing	The properties that are considered Targeted Social Housing under agreements between Launch Housing and the Director of Housing.
VHR	The Victorian Housing Register is the state-wide common application for people seeking public housing and community housing.

5.0 Policy Scope

This policy applies to all long-term rental properties owned or managed by Launch Housing, with the exception of the following housing programs managed by Launch Housing:

- properties managed by Launch Housing under the Transitional Housing program;
- properties managed by HomeGround Real Estate;
- temporary or crisis accommodation.

5.1 Policy Statement:

5.1.1 Launch Housing will:

- only allocate long-term housing to eligible applicants;
- communicate clearly to applicants and the community as to who is eligible for long-term housing with Launch Housing;
- comply with its contractual, legal and regulatory obligations relating to eligibility for long-term housing; and
- act in a fair, transparent and equitable manner.

5.1.2 Launch Housing is committed to promoting successful and sustainable tenancies when matching applicants to its properties. This means that Launch Housing will allocate housing in a way that:

- gives appropriate priority to households in greatest need of housing assistance;
- considers the health, safety and support needs of applicants;
- matches individual housing needs with available properties;
- supports sustainable and harmonious communities;
- supports the financial viability of Launch Housing's long term housing programs.

5.2 Specific requirements for particular long-term housing programs

5.2.1 Launch Housing has some long-term rental housing programs where additional eligibility criteria to the general eligibility criteria apply. This can include, for example women and families who are impacted by family violence.

5.3 Approach to allocation

5.3.1 Under the VHR's allocations framework, Launch Housing is required to meet an annual Priority Allocations Target. This requires Launch Housing to allocate 75% of vacancies in Targeted Social Housing to Priority Access applicants in each financial year. As not all of Launch Housing's properties are Targeted Social Housing, this Target is adjusted so that Launch Housing can make allocations across its portfolio in order to meet the Target.

5.3.2 Launch Housing will implement procedures to monitor its performance against the Priority Allocations Target regularly to ensure that Launch Housing complies with its obligations.

5.4 Sourcing applicants

5.4.1 Launch Housing will first seek suitable applicants from the VHR. Where a suitable applicant being considered for a vacancy does not have a current VHR application but is eligible for social housing under the VHR, Launch Housing will ensure that such applicants complete a VHR application at the time of making an offer of housing.

5.4.2 Launch Housing will assess all applicants before making an offer of housing to determine suitability for a particular vacancy (and eligibility if the applicant does not currently have a VHR application). If Launch Housing declines to offer an applicant housing, it will inform the applicant accordingly.

5.5 Nomination rights

5.5.1 Where nomination rights apply, Launch Housing 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 that referral agencies nominate applicants who have a current VHR Priority Access application.

5.6 Property Allocation

5.6.1 Launch Housing will match applicants to properties to ensure an allocation:

- is the right size for the applicant's household;
- is in an area consistent with the applicant's needs;
- assists the applicant to access employment or any support services that they need;
- makes the best use of housing stock owned or managed by Launch Housing;
- encourages a sustainable tenancy;
- meets any particular expressed needs of the applicant so far as they are known, such as modifications for people with a physical disability or mobility impairment, availability of car parking or room for carers.

5.6.2 Launch Housing aims to make sure that properties with specific features that are in high demand and short supply are only allocated to those applicants who need them, including:

- properties that are suitable for older people;
- properties that have been built or modified to meet the needs of people with a disability;
- properties on the ground floor;
- properties with level access;
- properties with a yard/garden.

5.6.3 Launch Housing will ask applicants to provide reasonable evidence to substantiate any particular requirements, if this is not contained in a VHR application.

5.7 Supporting sustainable and harmonious communities

Launch Housing may, to the extent necessary, adopt different strategies in allocation in response to:

- a high concentration of public and community housing stock in a particular area;
- a high concentration of tenants with multiple health, social or economic issues in a particular area or building;
- existing tenancy management issues (or a potential for them to develop);
- existing neighbourhood tensions or disputes which may be exacerbated if allocations are not sensitively handled; and
- a mismatch of supply and demand making the property hard to let.

6.0 Responsibilities

General Manager Keeping Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure the policy is updated as per the regular policy review cycle or if there are changes to the compliance environment.
Group Manager and Co-ordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implement this policy and monitor staff adherence to the policy.
Tenancy Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Responsible for the application of, and adherence to, this policy.

7.0 Relevant Legislation & Standards

- Housing Act 1983 (Vic)
- Performance Standards for Registered Housing Agencies
- Legal agreements between Launch Housing and the Director of Housing relating to the VHR
- DHHS Victorian Housing Register Operational Guidelines

8.0 Supporting Documents and Implementation Tools

- Launch Housing Eligibility for Long Term Housing Policy
- Launch Housing Tenancy Transfer Policy
- Launch Housing Client / Tenant Complaints and Appeals Policy

9.0 Version Control Information

Version Control	Date Effective	Approved By	Summary of Amendment
V1.0	April 2019	GM – Keeping Housing	New document
V1.1	29/3/2021	GM – Keeping Housing	Amended terminology as per RTA changes