

RENEWING OUR STREETS & SUBURBS

COMMONWEALTH RENT ASSISTANCE FACT SHEET



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT IS COMMONWEALTH RENT ASSISTANCE?

Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) is a non-taxable payment from the Australian Government to people in receipt of an eligible Department of Human Services (Centrelink) payment who are paying rent in the private market (including non-government organisations such as community housing providers). Public housing tenants are not eligible to receive CRA because they pay rent to a government housing authority.

WILL I BE ELIGIBLE FOR CRA WHEN MY LANDLORD IS A COMMUNITY HOUSING PROVIDER?

You may be eligible for CRA when a community housing provider becomes your landlord. Eligibility depends on your individual circumstances, such as your household income, and the rent you are charged. The majority of tenants receiving a Centrelink or Department of Veterans' Affairs payment are likely to be eligible for CRA. Your community housing provider will provide further information about your eligibility for CRA.

WHAT HELP WILL I GET TO APPLY FOR CRA?

Your new community housing landlord will assist with the application process prior to the transfer to make it as simple as possible for tenants. More information will be provided by your community housing provider and there is no need for tenants to contact Centrelink.

WILL I NEED TO REAPPLY FOR CRA IF MY RENT CHANGES FOR ANY REASON: E.G. IF THERE IS A GENERAL RENT INCREASE, OR IF MY INCOME CHANGES?

No, you do not need to reapply for CRA if your rent changes. However, if your rent, income or the make up of your household changes, you will need to advise both Centrelink and your community housing provider, as changes to your circumstances may affect both your rent and CRA payments. You must advise Centrelink of any change to your circumstances within 14 days of the change happening.

WHAT IF I AM ELIGIBLE FOR CRA BUT CHOOSE NOT TO APPLY FOR IT?

The amount of rent you will be charged will be based on the amount of CRA your household is entitled to receive, even if an application for CRA is not made.

WILL MY RENT INCREASE IF I AM ELIGIBLE FOR CRA?

Yes, your rent will increase if you are eligible for CRA. If you are eligible for CRA and your tenancy is managed by a community housing landlord your rent will increase by the amount of CRA for which you are eligible.

However:

- ▶ your rent will only increase by the new amount of CRA your household receives
- ▶ your 'after-rent income' will be the same as if you had stayed with Housing SA – refer to the following example.

Example

Please note the rate of CRA paid may vary according to individual circumstances.

Housing SA Tenant (per fortnight)		Community Housing Tenant (per fortnight)	
Income: (Aged Pension Single)	\$794.80*	Income: (Aged Pension Single)	\$794.80*
Income charged as rent: (25% of income)	\$198.70	Income charged as rent: (25% of income)	\$198.70
Public housing tenant not eligible for CRA		CRA received:	\$130.40*
Total rent charged: (income charged as rent)	\$198.70	Total rent charged: (income charged as rent + CRA)	\$329.10
'After Rent' Income:	\$596.10	'After Rent' Income:	\$596.10

*Rates current at March 2016.

WILL MY RENT INCREASE IF MY HOUSEHOLD IS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR CRA?

If your household is not eligible for CRA, your rent will only increase if there are any other increases to your household income, the same as would occur with Housing SA.

COULD SOMEONE BE ASKED TO PAY MORE THAN THE MARKET RENT FOR THEIR PROPERTY, IF THEIR HOUSEHOLD BECOMES ELIGIBLE FOR CRA?

No, you will not be asked to pay more than the Market Rent for your property if your household is eligible for CRA. The maximum 'income charged as rent' that a tenant can be charged is the Market Rent for the property.

I PAY MY RENT NOW USING EASYPAY – WILL THIS CHANGE?

While EasyPay is not available to community housing tenants, your community housing provider can help arrange for your rent to be paid automatically from your Centrelink payment to your community housing landlord via Centrepay, which is very similar to EasyPay. Your community housing provider may also offer other payment options. More information about your payment options will be available from your community housing provider.

AS PART OF THE
RENEWING OUR STREETS
AND SUBURBS INITIATIVE

RenewalSA
people ▾ partnerships ▾ progress



Government of
South Australia

HOW CAN TENANTS GET MORE INFORMATION?

For more information about
Commonwealth Rent Assistance contact:



Housing SA
Contact Centre
131 299



[www.sa.gov.au/
communityhousing/transfers](http://www.sa.gov.au/communityhousing/transfers)