

# Homelessness Supportive Housing Program guideline

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# Homelessness Supportive Housing Program guideline

These guidelines apply to agencies delivering the Homelessness Supportive Housing Program in line with the [Homelessness Supportive Housing Program policy](#), and to the following homelessness support package types:

- Adults
- Domestic Violence
- Youth
- Families

All parties involved work together to maintain safe and supportive accommodation that addresses issues affecting customers' ability to get and keep accommodation.

## 1 Advertising a vacant property

When a property becomes vacant the housing provider:

- organises a Nominations and Assessment Panel, organises panel meetings and makes sure the panel has all the relevant information
- completes a Homelessness Supportive Housing Program vacancy advertisement form and emails it and a Nomination form to the Vacancy advertisement distribution list
- answers questions from interested parties about the property and a potential customer's suitability, for example from support workers
- gathers nominations and provides them to the panel

Vacancy advertisements have a strict 5 working day closing date.

## 2 Nominating a customer

Agency workers nominate customers for a vacant property. You can nominate up to 2 customers for a property.

You're responsible for:

- discussing the aims of the program and all other conditions with the customer before making the nomination
- establishing if the program's appropriate for the customer or if there are other options for accommodation and support
- contacting the housing provider if you have any questions, for example about the customer's suitability for the property
- completing and signing the Homelessness Supportive Housing Program nomination form, and getting the customer to sign it
- returning the nomination form and all supporting information to the housing provider before the closing date
- contacting other agencies the customer works with to check the nomination reflects their information and views

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- maintaining ongoing contact with the customer throughout and actively engaging them in the nomination process
- contacting the customer to tell them about the panel's decision
- explaining the importance of sharing personal information and getting the customer's consent, except if it's warranted under the [Information Sharing Guidelines](#)

Supporting information should include all the below information:

- who's working with the customer, the type of support or assistance provided and for how long
- details about the customer's health or social issues
- information about the nature and seriousness of the customer's condition or situation, including any treatments or supports they receive
- any other appropriate and relevant information relating to their support needs

## 3 Assessing nominations

The Nominations and Assessment Panel consists of representatives from:

- the relevant regional Housing SA office
- a Specialist Homelessness Service
- the Community Housing Provider, if they're the housing provider for the vacant property

The panel assesses nominations and decides who to offer the property to.

Score nominations using the Homelessness Supportive Housing Program assessment matrix. Consider:

- the customer's eligibility for the program
- the customer's vulnerability, for example level and complexity of support required
- any health or social issues that significantly impact the customer's ability to get or keep a tenancy outside the program

Offer the property to the customer with either:

- the highest score
- the moderated highest score when other supporting documentation is taken into account

If you decide not to offer the property to the customer with the highest score, include the reasons for the decision in the Homelessness Supportive Housing Program vacancy panel report and address the following:

- what the identified risks are if they were housed in the property

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- why the risks can't be managed through the program for example tenancy support
- what other resources or community supports have been considered to minimise the risks, and provide evidence why this may not be enough
- why the risks of placing them in the program or property outweigh the benefits
- identify the other options available to the customer

If the customer isn't eligible for public or community housing, the housing provider discusses any special circumstances that may apply with the relevant Specialist Homelessness Service. The Specialist Homelessness Service provides verification of the customer's special circumstances within 7 working days. Don't consider the nomination if verification isn't provided.

## 4 Offering the property

Once the panel chooses a customer, the housing provider:

- completes a Homelessness Supportive Housing Program vacancy panel report
- emails the panel's decision to all nominating agencies

The nominating agencies tell their customers about the panel's decision.

The housing provider makes every effort to house the customer within 2 weeks of the panel's decision.

If the selected customer declines or can't accept the offer, a second customer can be nominated from the same nomination process. If the second customer also declines or can't accept the offer, the housing provider chooses another customer nominated for the property.

The Specialist Homelessness Service providing ongoing support to the successful customer:

- helps them complete the relevant housing provider's registration form
- sends all relevant documents to the housing provider, for example proof of income and identity

## 5 Allocating the property

### 5.1 Housing SA

If Housing SA is the housing provider, the Allocations Officer makes a manual offer in line with the [Allocations guideline](#).

Connect automatically defers any active registration for public housing for 12 months.

The Allocations Officer emails the Contact Centre on [HousingCHCRContactCentre@sa.gov.au](mailto:HousingCHCRContactCentre@sa.gov.au) to advise that the customer's been allocated.

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The Contact Centre checks if the customer's registered for community housing. If they are:

- defer the registration for 12 months
- update the customer's contact details in the Community Housing Customer Register

## 5.2 Community housing

If a Community Housing Provider is the housing provider they:

- record the panel's decision in the Community Housing Customer Register
- register the customer for community housing or update an existing registration
- select the support package type as 'Homeless (Specific target group)' for example adult, family, DV, youth
- select the specific Specialist Homelessness Service providing the support
- update the customer's preferred areas to include the area the property's in

The housing provider emails the Contact Centre on

[HousingCHCRContactCentre@sa.gov.au](mailto:HousingCHCRContactCentre@sa.gov.au) with all of the below information:

- the customer's registration number
- the property address
- the customer's profile type, for example registered 'Homeless Youth with support'
- a request to change the customer's category to Category 1+

The Contact Centre:

- changes the customer's category to Category 1+ in the Community Housing Customer Register
- records in the category override notes 'Supportive housing outcome referred by (specific Community Housing Provider)'
- emails the Community Housing Provider to confirm the customer's category has been changed

The Community Housing Provider:

- creates the property shortlist and selects 'Supported' tenancy type
- enters housing type as 'Supported'
- enters support package type as 'Homeless (specific target group)'
- doesn't apply the homeless filter

The Community Housing Provider records the offer in the Community Housing Customer Register using the 'Make offer' screen:

1. Select 'Make offer' to registrant.
2. In 'offer details' and select 'yes' for limited tenure.
3. Enter a tenancy expiry date.

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4. Click the 'generate offer' button.
5. Once it's confirmed that the customer has accepted the offer, click the 'accept offer' button.
6. Click the 'housed' button, and the 'confirm housed registrant' button.
7. Email the Contact Centre to advise that the customer's been allocated.

Because 'limited tenure' has been selected the customer continues to have a registration status of 'lodged' and will be available for future shortlists. If you don't want them to appear in shortlists, defer their registration.

The Contact Centre checks if the customer is registered for public housing, and:

- confirms the customer's details match
- updates their contact details through 'Update Contact Details'
- defers the registration for 12 months and updates the list entry in Connect using the deferral reason of 'short term lease'
- records a note of the Community Housing Provider's name using Allocation Officer comments
- follows up on any debt the customer may owe to Housing SA in line with the [Account management procedures](#) and in consultation with the Specialist Homelessness Service

## 6 Allocations conference

Before the customer moves into the property, the housing provider organises an allocation conference with the customer's Specialist Homelessness Service and any other support agencies. It's preferable for the customer to attend, but it can be done without them.

The allocation conference brings all agencies together to negotiate and formalise all case and tenancy management details. Discuss:

- transferring case management responsibilities, if appropriate
- coordinating appropriate supports and household goods, for example fridge, bed
- developing and reviewing the case management plan, including defining the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved
- any issues that may threaten the customer's ability to maintain their tenancy, and putting strategies in place to manage them

## 7 Case management plans

The customer must agree to a case management plan with their Specialist Homelessness Service before their tenancy begins.

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The case management plan is confidential between the customer and their Specialist Homelessness Service worker, and usually contains sensitive personal information. It identifies the:

- customer's needs and issues
- resources available and actions to be taken
- customer's goals and outcomes
- strategies that will be used to help the customer maintain the tenancy and transition out of the program

Continually review case management plans in collaboration with all parties involved. Include any tenancy or property concerns raised by the housing provider.

## 7.1 Joint case conference

Hold joint case conferences at least once every 6 months, or as required.

At the case conference:

- agree on who will be the lead worker
- set an agenda with all the issues to be discussed
- develop an implementation plan that sets out who's responsible for taking particular actions, and when

Regularly review the implementation plan. Be flexible, and change strategies based on experience.

## 7.2 Customer refuses to engage

If a customer is reluctant or difficult to engage, actively pursue their engagement by using assertive case management. Aim to:

- build and stabilise their trust, rapport and confidence in you
- give them the best chance of engaging and successfully completing the program

If the customer stops engaging or refuses to engage, develop a suitable exit strategy with the customer and their housing provider. Identify alternative, safe and appropriate accommodation options.

## 8 Managing the tenancy

Tenancies are managed in line with the housing provider's policies and in collaboration with the customer and their Specialist Homelessness Service. This includes:

- handing over keys to the customer
- setting, charging and reviewing rent
- reviewing the conditions of the tenancy
- managing tenancy or property issues, including antisocial behaviour

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Aim to help the customer successfully maintain their tenancy, and engage appropriate strategies to minimise tenancy and property issues.

## 8.1 Tenancy at risk

Customers shouldn't become homeless when they leave the program.

If their tenancy is at risk, for example because of property damage, neighbourhood issues, the housing provider addresses the issue with the customer. Once the matter is resolved no further action is needed.

If the tenancy is still at risk, meet with the customer's Specialist Homelessness Service to:

- share relevant information
- assess the risks to the tenancy and determine what strategies could be used
- discuss if anyone else, for example another support worker, should be involved

Potential strategies could include:

- carrying out a property inspection
- increasing the frequency of home visits by the housing provider and the Specialist Homelessness Service
- listening to the customer's views and exploring alternative accommodation and support options
- identifying and engaging other key partners for example family member, other supports
- holding a [joint case conference](#)

Record any actions taken, and send the customer a letter outlining the actions to be taken or consequences if issues can't be resolved.

## 8.2 Ending the tenancy

Refusing to engage in a case management plan isn't grounds to end the tenancy.

Ending a tenancy is a last resort, and can only be done if the tenant is breaking the conditions of their lease agreement.

The housing provider can take action to end a tenancy in line with their agency's policies provided all the below conditions are met:

- you've told the Specialist Homelessness Service of your intention to end the tenancy
- the Specialist Homelessness Service agrees the customer has been given all reasonable opportunities to address and resolve the issues
- all attempts have been made to preserve the tenancy using assertive case management
- all other strategies for example joint case conferences, have failed



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If the customer's tenancy is going to end, the Specialist Homelessness Service helps them find alternative housing so they don't exit into homelessness.

The housing provider reactivates and updates any registration of interest in housing the customer has, for example updating contact details. Determine if the customer needs a Housing Needs Assessment.

## 9 Leaving the program

The program offers support to customers for as long as they need it.

When the customer leaves a program property, their Specialist Homelessness Service develops a suitable exit strategy to make sure they don't become homeless.

This includes helping them find, apply for and secure safe, appropriate and affordable long-term accommodation, for example renting privately.

The housing provider can provide advice about the housing options available to the customer.

The customer may be eligible for:

- [help paying bond or rent](#) into private rental accommodation
- [help and advocacy](#) finding and securing a private rental property through the Private Rental Liaison Program
- buying a home through the [Affordable Homes Program](#)
- renting [public, Aboriginal or community housing](#)

If the customer's lease agreement ends before other accommodation has been secured, the housing provider may offer short term lease agreements in three month blocks until alternative accommodation's found.

### 9.1 Registering interest in public and community housing

When the customer leaves the property, consider registering their interest in public and community housing as part of the exit strategy, if they haven't already registered.

If a customer's registration of interest in community housing is reactivated while they still have an active lease agreement with Housing SA, the Community Housing Provider emails the Contact Centre with details of the customer's tenancy status. The Contact Centre refers the issue to the relevant regional Housing SA office for review.

If the customer leaves the program for long-term public housing, the housing provider withdraws the deferred registration of interest in community housing from the Community Housing Customer Register using 'Supportive housing customer exiting program - long term housing secured'.

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## 10 Transferring properties in or out of the program

Community Housing Providers can assign any property in their portfolio to the program.

Regional Managers are responsible for making sure the overall number of Housing SA's housing outcomes for the program remains constant in their region.

## 11 Related information

### 11.1 Controlling documents

This guideline is based on and complies with:

- [Homelessness Supportive Housing Program policy](#)

### 11.2 Other documents and resources

- [Supportive Housing Program](#) - [www.housing.sa.gov.au](http://www.housing.sa.gov.au)
- Housing programs - Olé
- [Information Sharing Guidelines](#)
- [Allocations guideline](#)
- [Account management procedures](#)
- Homelessness Supportive Housing Program vacancy advertisement form
- Homelessness Supportive Housing Program vacancy panel report
- Homelessness Supportive Housing Program nomination form
- Homelessness Supportive Housing Program assessment matrix

### 11.3 Date this guideline applies from

15 May 2020

### 11.4 Version number

7

### 11.5 Disclaimer

This guideline can be changed, withdrawn or replaced at any time.