



Eligibility and Allocation Policy

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1. Introduction

Aboriginal Community Housing (Vic) Limited (ACHVL) practises clear and transparent processes when allocating properties to customers. This policy is to establish ACHVL's criteria for a person to be considered eligible at the time of allocation and ongoing eligibility defined within ACHVL or program guidelines.

2. Aim

ACHVL has a selection process that is accountable, meets all legislative requirements, industry standards and guidelines and appropriately matches individual housing needs with available properties. Within this, ACHVL conforms to agreed federal and state allocation policies as part of maintaining its registration to provide community or social housing in each jurisdiction.

3. Scope

This policy applies to each member of Aboriginal Community Housing (Vic) Limited (ACHVL).

4. Principles of ACHVL Eligibility and Allocation Policy

4.1. Information to customers

Prospective customers are provided with clear and detailed information about the eligibility requirements (including income and assets), potential location and features of the accommodations available. An offer letter is provided to each customer with acceptance timelines for accepting the offer, acknowledging that in the instance the offer is not accepted it will be offered to the next eligible customer. Language support is also provided when advertising a vacancy if required.

4.2. Allocation and eligibility principles

- All eligibility assessments (of prospective and current ACHVL customers) and at the time of allocating housing, ACHVL will comply with National and State laws regarding equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation, as well as the Victorian Housing Register Eligibility Framework.
- ACHVL will adhere to any contractual arrangements that apply to program specific, funding or government stated eligibility criteria as stated in any such agreement. ACHVL will allocate from waitlists and central registers in appropriate locations and adhere to the agreements surrounding their use for allocation purposes
- ACHVL will apply systematic instructions and tools to ensure operational staff carry out their duties using fairness, transparency and in line with required Acts, Regulations and Standards
- ACHVL allocates housing to specific groups within communities who are at greater financial, cultural and/ or social disadvantage, including people with disabilities, mental health issues, single parents, aged and indigenous people. Where programs allow, ACHVL seeks to allocate a set proportion of all available housing to such groups

4.3. Assessing income

The assessment of gross household income is based on the evidence supplied by the customer. This evidence includes:

- Centrelink payment information
- Payslips and Notice of Assessment from the Australian Tax Office (ATO)
- Statements from other income sources (e.g. workers compensation, shares)

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ACHVL must be satisfied that the information provided is a true reflection of the household income including a minimum of:

- 13 weeks of pay slips
- 4 weeks of Centrelink benefits
- Previous year Payment Summary (formerly group certificate) or;
- 3 month Notice of Assessment from ATO or Certified Practising Accountant

4.4. Other eligibility criteria

The following customers are not eligible to be housed with ACHVL:

- Previous customers of ACHVL with unattended debts
- Customers who own realisable residential real estate
- Primary customer not an Australian citizen or permanent resident

4.5. Matching

ACHVL will endeavour to achieve sustainable housing outcomes via consideration of the individual needs of the customer and the available dwelling.

4.6. Decision making

ACHVL believes that a sustainable tenancy starts with a quality allocation of housing for a suitable customer. Documented operational processes and guidelines are designed to ensure housing services staff are able to effectively assess eligibility and allocate suitably matched properties to customers, while adhering to policy principles and adopting a leading practice approach.

Decisions are made with care and diligence and with consideration of the program and/or contractual requirements under which the property may be managed.

Decisions that consider both the eligibility and the suitability of a customer and a property are necessary to ensure not only future customers are housed successfully in ACHVL's housing programs, but also to ensure the future capacity for ACHVL to sustain tenancies in them.

Housing Services staff undertake in-depth program induction, supervision and ongoing training.

4.7. Creating sustainable tenancies

Working within program guidelines and legislative requirements, ACHVL will use allocation strategies to facilitate sustainable tenancies. During application, eligibility assessment and allocation processes, ACHVL will work proactively with customers to identify any barriers to sustaining tenancies, and will take customers' needs, preferences and tenancy skills into account in making allocations. Where applicable, ACHVL will also take into account the needs and preferences of other household members.

At the establishment of a new tenancy, ACHVL will work proactively with customers to ensure that they understand their rights and responsibilities, the features of their property, how rent is calculated, how to contact ACHVL and what they can expect of ACHVL during their tenancy. ACHVL will maintain engagement with new customers throughout the tenancy establishment phase to help them settle into their property and community and if/where required engage with support providers.

4.8. Clarity of the information provided

All materials and formats used ensure information is easy to read, alternative formats are available and indicated in information.

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Forms, information documents and advertising materials are reviewed on a regular basis; this includes feedback surveys to our new customers and annual feedback from surveying our current customers. Improvement strategies are developed and implemented as needed.

4.9. Diversity

ACHVL is committed to a balanced social mix of households in the community. ACHVL has a commitment to helping build connected, thriving communities and seeks to empower its customers through its approach of creating an equitable and sustainable social mix within its portfolios, in line with the company's Vision and Mission. ACHVL always works towards any contract or agreed specified allocation objectives.

4.10. Targeting demographic groups and using allocation processes

ACHVL applies target group ratios to properties it owns in its general property stock, that are not subject to existing requirements with government and/or other stakeholders, to ensure people with social and financial disadvantage will have appropriate consideration and priority.

Nomination rights are also applied under various programs to some ACHVL stock for exclusive use to partner support agencies. Partnership Agreements are reviewed on an annual basis.

Tenancy and Housing Services staff follow ACHVL operational guidelines in undertaking allocation processes.

Allocations are made in accordance with State Legislation and contractual requirements. Allocations are overseen by Coordinators/Managers to ensure that customers who meet the eligibility criteria are suitably housed.

4.11. Customer feedback and appeal of decisions

ACHVL welcomes its customers to query any decisions it makes and/or ask questions about our work practices. If a customer wishes to provide feedback to ACHVL and/or believes a decision made by ACHVL is incorrect, they can lodge customer feedback and/or an appeal using the ACHVL Customer Feedback Policy or the ACHVL Appeals Policy.

5. Related legislation and documentation

5.1. Standards

Performance Standards for Housing Providers issued by the Victorian Housing Registrar

Department of Human Services Standards: Section 1 - Empowerment

5.2. Legislation

Housing Assistance Act 1996 (COM)

Housing Act. 1983 (VIC)

5.3. Residential tenancy acts

Residential Tenancies Act. 1997 (VIC)

5.5. Codes, frameworks and agreements

The National Affordable Housing Agreement

OOH, Homelessness Assistance Program Guidelines and Conditions Funding 2006-2009 (VIC)
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Consumer Charter for Community Managed Housing and Homelessness Services
Victorian Housing Act 1983 (Vic) and associated
The Human Rights and Responsibilities Charter Act 2006 (VIC)

5.6. ACHVL related policies and processes

ACHVL Housing and Homelessness Policies and Procedures
ACHVL Customer Promise

6. Monitoring and review

This policy should be periodically reviewed and revised by the Board of each member of ACHVL. Revisions should be made as and when required. The period between reviews must not exceed two years. The date for review of this policy is on or before March 2024. This policy remains valid until such time that a new version is published.

Review history

Document reference	Date and version	Reason for review	Review frequency	Owner	Approver
	Version 1.0, March 2022	New policy	Every two years	National Manager Operations	National Manager Operations Managing Director

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