

Starting a Tenancy

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to explain the policy for starting a new tenancy at Bridge Housing.

Scope

This policy applies to all tenants of Bridge Housing.

Policy overview

Bridge Housing is a social and affordable housing landlord with a commitment to service delivery. Bridge Housing ensures that all tenants understand their rights and responsibilities when starting a tenancy and signing a Residential Tenancy Agreement with Bridge Housing.

Bridge Housing provides both fixed term and periodic tenancies in accordance with the *Residential Tenancies Act 2010* through a range of programs. These include the General Housing Program, Transitional Housing Program, Affordable Housing Programs, Housing for Older People and Social Housing Subsidy Program.

Policy

Each tenant will sign a Residential Tenancy Agreement which complies with the *Residential Tenancies Act 2010*. The Residential Tenancy Agreement will be signed by both the tenant and the housing manager with the rights and responsibilities of both parties (Bridge Housing and the tenant) explained.

The tenant can choose a support person to assist them during the starting a tenancy process. Each tenant will receive a Starting a Tenancy Kit to assist in their tenancy with Bridge Housing. This kit will include:

1. A copy of the NSW Fair Trading New Tenant Checklist. This will be in the tenant's first language wherever possible
2. A signed Residential Tenancy Agreement
3. A Property Condition Report
4. Non-rent Authorisation Form
5. A copy of Bridge Housing's Appeals and Complaints Leaflet

6. Sign Up Declaration – Tenant Information Form
7. Consent to Exchange Information Form
8. Centrelink Deduction Consent and Multiple Deduction Scheme Form
9. Bond Lodgement Form
10. Copy of Keys Received Form
11. A copy of the Bridge Housing Tenant Handbook providing general information on Bridge Housing and its policies, how to appeal and complain and contacts for legal and financial advice

General Social Housing Program

As a Community Housing Provider, the majority of Bridge Housing's tenancies are leasehold and capital properties offered as part of its General Social Housing Program. Eligibility is determined through Housing Pathways www.housingpathways.nsw.gov.au, the NSW common access system for social housing.

Transitional tenancies

Where the tenant is signing an agreement for transitional housing, Bridge Housing will ensure that the tenant understands that this tenancy is for a fixed term, is temporary and offered in partnership with a support agency. Formal correspondence with the tenant will confirm this.

Tenants in transitional tenancies will be aware of the need to find accommodation once the fixed term Residential Tenancy Agreement ends. The Housing Pathways applications of tenants in transitional housing remain live on the NSW Housing Register in recognition of the temporary nature of the tenancy.

Affordable Housing Programs

Bridge Housing provides properties for moderate income, working households through its Affordable Housing Programs. This is a small but growing part of our housing portfolio and includes:

- Properties owned or managed by Bridge Housing

under a range of funded programs - Social Housing Subsidy Program or Nation Building Economic Stimulus Program (NBESP) Leveraging Targets

- Properties offered in partnership with local councils, mainly through Waverley Council. These programs usually have local authority conditions such as connection to the area.

Tenants pay a discount from market rent – usually 20-25% below the assessed market rent which is higher than the usual rent paid, 25% (plus 100% CRA) for social housing properties.

- Residential Tenancy Agreement
- Property Condition Report
- Key Receipt Form
- Non-rent Authorisation Form
- Sign Up Declaration – Tenant Information Form
- Consent to Exchange Information Form
- Tenant Advisory Group Leaflet

Housing for Older People Programs

These properties are for people over the age of 60 years. These programs usually have local authority conditions such as connection to the area as well as age. Allocations to these properties will only be made to eligible households.

Complaints and appeals

If a tenant is not satisfied with a service provided by Bridge Housing or does not agree with a decision it has made, they can ask for a formal review. To do this, the tenant can complete either an **I want to complain** form or an **I want to appeal** form, details of which appear in the Bridge Housing Complaints and Appeals Policy. This policy and information leaflet is available from Bridge Housing's office or can be downloaded from our website www.bridgehousing.org.au.

If a tenant is unhappy with the outcome of an appeal to Bridge Housing, they can lodge a second level appeal with the Housing Appeals Committee. The Housing Appeals Committee is an independent agency that reviews certain decisions made by staff of Community Housing organisations and Housing NSW. For information on the Housing Appeals Committee call 1800 629 794 or go to www.hac.nsw.gov.au.

Related documents

Legislation

- *Residential Tenancies Act 2010*
- *Residential Tenancies Regulation 2010*

Documents supporting this policy

Tenant sign up kit:

- Tenant Sign Up Checklist
- NSW Fair Trading New Tenant Checklist
- Bond Lodgement Form
- Tenant Handbook

Translation Service

English

If you need help to understand this letter please contact the Telephone Interpreters Service on 131-450 and ask them to contact on 9699-6055 for you at no cost. You can also come to the Bridge Housing office and ask for assistance in your language.

Simplified Chinese

如果您理解这封信有困难, 请拨打电 话传译服务 131450 要求电话传译 服务替您拨打 Bridge Housing, 电话 9699-6055。这项服务是免费的。您也可以到 Bridge Housing 的办公室来。要求用您的语言来协助您。

Spanish

Si necesita ayuda para entender esta carta, por favor comuníquese con el Servicio Telefónico de Intérpretes al 131450 y solicite que lo contacten sin cargo con Bridge Housing al 9699-6055. También puede dirigirse a las oficinas de Bridge Housing y solicitar asistencia en su idioma.

Russian

Если для понимания содержания этого письма Вам необходима помощь, свяжитесь, пожалуйста, с Телефонной переводческой службой по номеру 131450 и попросите соединить Вас с Bridge Housing по номеру 9699-6055. За соединение платить не нужно. Кроме того, Вы можете лично посетить офис Bridge Housing и попросить об услугах переводчика.

Greek

Εάν χρειάζεστε βοήθεια για να κατανοήσετε την παρούσα επιστολή, παρακαλώ επικοινωνήστε με την Υπηρεσία Τηλεφωνικών Διερμηνέων στο 131-450 και ζητήστε τους να επικοινωνήσουν με το 9699-6055 για εσάς χωρίς καμία χρέωση. Μπορείτε επίσης να επισκεφθείτε το γραφείο Bridge Housing και να ζητήσετε βοήθεια στη γλώσσα σας.

Vietnamese

Nếu cần người giúp để hiểu thư này xin quý vị liên hệ với Dịch Vụ Thông Ngôn Điện Thoại số 131450 và nhờ họ liên lạc với Bridge Housing qua số 9699-6055 cho quý vị một cách miễn phí. Quý vị cũng có thể đến Văn Phòng của Bridge Housing và xin giúp đỡ bằng ngôn-ngữ của quý-vị.