



Policy

Changes to a Household

Purpose

This policy explains Bridge Housing's approach when there is a change in the number of people living in a household.

Scope

This policy applies to tenants who live in a social housing property that is owned or managed by Bridge Housing and all its related entities (we, our, us).

Policy Overview

Tenants are allocated properties and charged rent based on their household size and income.

Tenants are required to advise us if there are any changes in their household (if someone joins or leaves the household) and provide updated details of the change, including revised income.

It is a condition of the residential tenancy agreement that a tenant advises of any household change within 21 days of the change occurring.

Visitors

Tenants can have a visitor for up to 28 days at any one time. A visitor is not required to pay rent during this time. If a visitor remains part of the household after 28 days, tenants are obligated to let us know within 21 days of the date of the change occurring.

Change in Household Members

We acknowledge that that from time to time, people come and go from households for a variety of reasons and income can change.

Tenants are responsible for informing us of any change in their household within 21 days by completing an [Application for a Rental Subsidy](#) form. When a tenant fails to do so, they are breaching the conditions of their Residential Tenancy Agreement.

If a person leaves the household the tenant will need to provide us with either a signed and witnessed statutory declaration, or a copy of the new lease agreement for the household member that's leaving.

If a person joins a household, the tenant will need to complete an [Additional Person Information Form](#).

When we are advised of the change, we will assess and review the suitability of adding an additional person to a household and write to the tenant to let them know the outcome. Additional household member requests will be approved in most circumstances, except when it leads to overcrowding or the change in household doesn't match the property size or type.

Additional household members are not automatically entitled to succession of tenancy if the tenant leaves the property. More information on eligibility criteria can be found in our [Succession of Tenancy Policy](#).

Changes in income and rent

In instances where there is a change in the household, and we approve the change; we will recalculate the tenant's rent and water charges and update the household details for the tenancy.

Details of how this will change your rent and water charges can be found in our [Rent Policy](#) and [Water Charging Policy](#)

Breaches of the Residential Tenancy Agreement

By signing the Residential Tenancy Agreement, tenants agree that they understand their rights and responsibilities under the [NSW Residential Tenancies Act 2010](#). If a tenant fails to provide details of any changes of those living in their household, they are in breach of their residential tenancy agreement.

If this occurs, we, as the landlord, can apply to the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) for a breach order against the tenant for exceeding the occupancy of the property as listed in the agreement.

Failing to disclose changes may also result in cancellation of a rent subsidy – this may be backdated, and the debt placed on the tenant's rental account. More information on rent subsidy non-disclosure can be found in our [Rent Policy](#).

Other situations that can lead to breaches of the Residential Tenancy Agreement (RTA) and NCAT action include:

Unauthorised occupants

An unauthorised occupant is a person living in one of our properties who has not been identified as a member of the household. If a tenant has an additional occupant living in their property and has not informed Bridge Housing or refuses to add the person to the household, they are breaching the conditions of their Tenancy Agreement.

Behaviour of Household Members and Visitors

Under the Residential Tenancy Agreement, it is the tenant's responsibility to ensure all household members and visitors respect the right of their neighbours to peaceful enjoyment of their property, not allow their property to be used for illegal purposes or cause nuisance to other neighbours. Landlords, under *the Residential Tenancies Act 2010* are unable to intervene if a tenant wants a member of the household removed. In such instances, tenants should report this matter to NSW Police.

Subletting

We do not allow tenants to sublet, take in boarders or set up a share house in their social housing property.

Illegal Occupants

In instances where the tenant has officially left the property and another person remains in the premises, we will apply for a possession order through the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) under section 95 of the NSW Residential Tenancies Act 2010.

Squatting

A squatter or trespasser is a person who occupies a Bridge Housing owned or managed property without our consent or the consent of the tenant.

The NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) has no jurisdiction in this situation as there is no landlord and tenant relationship between Bridge Housing and the squatter.

In such instances, we will contact the local NSW Police and request that they remove the squatter/s from the property in accordance with the [Inclosed Lands Protection Act 1901 \(NSW\)](#).

Appeals and Review of Decision

Tenants can appeal some decisions made under this policy.

If a tenant is not satisfied with a service we have provided or does not agree with a decision we have made, they can ask for a formal review. Our [Compliments, Complaints and Appeals Policy](#) outlines the many ways for tenants to make an appeal. This policy, and a helpful information brochure, is available from our office or they can be downloaded from our website www.bridgehousing.org.au.

If a tenant is unhappy with the outcome of the appeal, 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 and Resources

Type	Title
Legislation	<u>NSW Residential Tenancies Act 2010</u>
Legislation	<u>Residential Tenancies Regulation 2019</u>
Legislation	<u>Inclosed Lands Protection Act 1901 (NSW)</u>
Policy	<u>Succession of Tenancy Policy</u>
Policy	<u>Rent Policy</u>
Policy	<u>Water Charging Policy</u>
Policy	<u>Compliments, Complaints and Appeals Policy</u>
Form	<u>Additional Person Information Form</u>
Form	<u>Application for Rental Subsidy Form (PDF)</u>
Form	<u>Application for Rental Subsidy Form (online)</u>

English

If you need help to understand this letter please contact the Telephone Interpreters Service on 131450 and ask them to contact on 8324 0800 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 8324 0800。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 8324 0800. 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 8324 0800. 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 131450 και ζητήστε τους να επικοινωνήσουν με το 8324 0800 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 8324 0800 cho quý vị một cách miễn phí. Quý vị cũng có thể đến Văn Phòng của Bridge Housing và xin giúp đỡ bằng ngôn-nghữ của quý-vị.

Arabic

إذا احتجت إلى مُساعدة في فهم هذه الرسالة رجاء الاتصال مع خدمة الترجمة الالهاتفية على رقم 131450 واطلب منهم أن يتصلوا لك بمكتب على رقم 8324 0800 بدون تكلفة عليك. ويُمكنك أيضاً الحصول إلى مكتب Bridge Housing وطلب المساعدة بلغتك.