



Registering for Housing Assistance – important information from Housing ACT

What is Social Housing?

Social housing includes:

- public housing - which is provided directly by Housing ACT;
- community housing - which is provided by community housing organisations that are funded by the ACT Government; and
- affordable housing - where the rent payable is less than the full market rent.

What is Public Housing?

Public housing is government-owned housing rented to eligible low and moderate income earners.

Housing ACT is responsible for acquiring and managing public housing in the ACT. We currently manage about 11,400 dwellings.

What is Community Housing?

Community housing is housing assistance delivered by community organisations to eligible individuals and families. Community housing organisations are funded by the ACT Government.

The community housing organisations collectively manage approximately 225 properties. See the 'What is Community Housing?' Fact Sheet for more information.

Applying for Housing

Housing ACT aims to provide the best solutions to housing need in the ACT.

There are three needs categories:

- Priority Housing;
- High Needs Housing; and
- Standard Housing.



Who is eligible?

To qualify for ACT public housing and community housing you must:

- meet an income test based on household size (See the 'Income Barriers' Fact Sheet for more information);
- have lived in the ACT for at least six (6) months (however this is not a requirement for some community housing organisations);
- not own or have an interest in residential property anywhere in Australia;
- be at least sixteen (16) years of age (however some community housing organisations require applicants to be eighteen (18) years of age);
- be in Australia lawfully;
- not have cash or convertible assets over \$40,000 (excluding ordinary household and personal effects and a car).

How do I apply?

- Collect an Application Kit from Gateway Services, or you can arrange for it to be sent to you.
- Read all of the information provided in the Application Kit before lodging your Application for Social Housing Assistance.
- Lodge the application at Gateway Services where eligibility and needs will be assessed.

Once your application is received, you will be contacted by an officer from Housing ACT to arrange an assessment interview.

Joint applicants are both required to attend the assessment interview. You may also wish to bring a support person, friend, advocate or interpreter with you to the interview. At the interview, we may ask you for additional information that will be used to determine your needs category. See the 'Priority Housing' Fact Sheet for more information.

What supporting documents will I need?

When lodging the Application for Social Housing Assistance please attach any relevant supporting documents about yourself, all dependent children and other members of your household. These documents include:

- **Proof of identity.** You will need to bring proof of identity for each applicant and adult household member (100 points in total), for example:
 - Birth certificate = 70 points
 - Citizenship Certificate = 70 points
 - Visa = 70 points
 - Passport (current or expired less than three years or not cancelled) = 70 points



- Rates notice = 35 points
 - Bills e.g. electricity, telephone (one per company only) = 25 points per bill
 - Credit/debit/ATM card (one per institution only) = 25 per card
 - Tertiary ID card = 40 points
 - Primary/secondary/tertiary institution record within last ten years = 25 points
 - Secondary/tertiary enrolment notice = 25 points
 - Electoral roll = 25 points
 - Public Service employee ID card = 40 points
 - Other government issue ID card (sealed in plastic) = 40 points
 - Government issued licence or permit (e.g. drivers licence) = 40 points
 - Other license of permit e.g. foreign drivers = 25 Points
 - Marriage certificate = 25 points
 - Medicare card = 25 points
 - Registration certificate e.g. car = 25 points
 - Centrelink/Pension card = 40 points
- **Proof of residency in Australia and the ACT.** The following documentation may be provided:
 - a current residential lease for a property in the ACT;
 - a transaction statement showing residential address from a financial institution;
 - a statement from Centrelink (if you are a Centrelink client) detailing residential address history for the previous six (6) months.
 - **Birth certificate or immunisation record for each dependent child;**
 - **Proof of income and assets; and**
 - **Proof of legal custody of dependent children.**

What if I need help to complete my Application for Social Housing Assistance?

If you require assistance to complete your Application for Social Housing Assistance or you would prefer to discuss your situation in person you can request an interview with an Assessment and Support Officer.

Housing ACT staff will meet with applicants in Gateway Services or other suitable venues by arrangement. Applicants wishing to arrange a meeting with an Assessment and Support Officer should contact Housing ACT, Gateway Services on **133 427**.

Will I be allocated a home straight away?

There are always more people wanting public and community housing than there is housing available. Following a formal assessment, eligible applicants are placed on the Social Housing Register and are allocated assistance on a needs basis.



Housing ACT also has a selected number of properties (primarily bedsits and one and two bedroom units in Woden, City and Oaks Estate) through the 'Housing Now' program. For more information about this program please contact Gateway Services.

What if I have an urgent housing need?

If you have an urgent or special housing your application may be considered for Priority Housing. More information on Priority Housing is included in the 'Priority Housing' Fact Sheet.

Do I need to do anything while I am on the Social Housing Register?

If you change your address or telephone number while your name is on the Social Housing Register, it is important to tell us; otherwise we will be unable to contact you.

What if my circumstances change?

If your circumstances change (e.g. household, income or family size), please ask for a review of your needs by Gateway Services. You will need to provide proof of changed circumstances. It is important to advise us of any changes because you may be eligible for different accommodation.

What if I have outstanding debts to Housing ACT or have breached conditions of a previous tenancy?

Housing ACT may refuse to allocate a public housing property if at the point of offer you have a debt from a previous tenancy or breached a condition in a previous tenancy.

How much rent will I have to pay?

For public housing, rent will be calculated at 25% of gross (total) household assessable income, or full market rent, whichever is lower.

Tenants of community housing pay similar rents to public housing tenants (25% of a household's assessable income). Community housing also offers affordable housing where rent is based on 74.9% of market rent.

For information on how rent will be calculated in community housing, please read each organisation's Fact Sheet or contact them directly on:

- Havelock Housing Association – 6257 2277
- Billabong Aboriginal Development Corporation - 6278 4799



- Environmental Collective Housing Organisation (ECHO) - 6262 8275
- Capital Community Housing - 6287 4344
- Tamil Senior Citizens Association - 6286 1709

Can I say where I would like to live?

Yes. Housing ACT has divided the suburbs of the ACT into four (4) regions – Tuggeranong, Woden, City and Belconnen/Gungahlin.

You can nominate which regions you are interested in however applicants are not able to be suburb specific. A map of the regions is available from Gateway Services. If you change your mind while on the Social Housing Register please advise Gateway Services.

Can I decide on the size of accommodation I get?

The number of people in the household determines the size of accommodation you are entitled to. Generally, no more than two (2) people (depending on their ages, gender and relationships) are expected to share a bedroom. See the 'What size property can I be allocated?' Fact Sheet for more information.

What if I need special need housing?

Housing ACT tries to provide housing with appropriate facilities for people with special needs such as a disability. However, it is not always possible to provide such housing in all regions.

What if I disagree with a decision made by Housing ACT?

If you disagree with a decision made by Housing ACT, you may ask for the decision to be reviewed.

Please remember to provide accurate information on your personal and financial circumstances. Withholding information or giving false information may be an offence. See the 'Review of Decisions' Fact Sheet for more information.

Points to remember

- Your registration date is the day Housing ACT accepts your application.
- Eligibility, including income, may be checked at any time while on the Social Housing Register and it will be re-checked before an offer of housing is made.



What if I have nowhere to live?

If you have nowhere to live, Housing ACT can provide information to help you find short-term emergency or refuge accommodation.

Further Information

For more information, contact the Community Services Directorate on 133427 or visit Gateway Services at:

Nature Conservation House
Cnr Emu Bank & Benjamin Way
Belconnen Town Centre
(Open 9:00am to 5:00pm Mon to Fri)

For more assistance on Housing ACT matters, please telephone 133 427.

Accessibility

The ACT Government is committed to making its information, services, events and venues, accessible to as many people as possible.

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If English is not your first language and you require the **translating and interpreting services** – please telephone **131 450**.

If you are deaf or hearing impaired and require the **TTY typewriter service** – please telephone **(02) 6205 0888**.