



dhcs | ACT

# Reshaping public housing in the ACT

## **In April 2007 changes were announced to public housing policy.**

These changes will allow Housing ACT to better support Canberrans who have urgent housing requirements.

The changes relate to tenants who:

- have a sustainable household income that exceeds \$80,000 gross per year  
or
- occupy homes with two or more spare bedrooms.

This brochure explains these changes, as well as the procedures being established to ensure they are implemented fairly and take full account of individual circumstances.



## **Tenants with incomes exceeding \$80,000 per year**

Tenants with incomes exceeding \$80,000 per year will be offered the opportunity to purchase their current home, or consider buying or renting in the private market.

Before making any offer, it is important to establish if a tenant can maintain this level of income. To do this, incomes will be monitored over two years, commencing on 1 July 2007. Tenants would then have a further year to consider their options.

Next year a 'shared equity' scheme will be introduced to financially assist tenants moving to home ownership. The scheme will allow tenants to purchase their property in partnership with the ACT Government.

## **Tenants with two or more spare bedrooms**

Tenants with two or more spare bedrooms may be asked to move to another suitable ACT dwelling.

Options would be discussed with tenants and Housing ACT would meet reasonable relocation costs.

The assessment of spare bedrooms will commence in 2008 with dwellings containing four or more bedrooms.

## Exploring options now

We encourage tenants who are already thinking about home ownership to contact us and work through the options. Similarly tenants who have more bedrooms than they require may be interested in moving to a smaller property this year, subject to the availability of a suitable dwelling.

We have an existing 'Sale to Tenant' program that allows tenants to purchase their own home and we also have a policy to prioritise transfers for tenants wishing to move to a smaller dwelling.

## Policy guidelines

The changes will be phased in over a number of years and will be implemented in a just and reasonable way. We are very sensitive to the fact that tenants may have lived in their homes for many years. For these people especially, buying a home or moving residences is a significant life event. We realise that for some people home ownership, or moving to another property, may not be sensible or appropriate.

Policy guidelines will be developed to ensure that the individual needs of tenants are fully considered. Issues to be taken into account include: length of time in their current home; their age; their on-going housing and support needs—including part time custody arrangements—and the availability of suitable alternative accommodation.

These policy guidelines are very important. Tenants are urged to attend one or more of the forums being held to assist their development.

The dates, times and location of these forums are outlined below.

## Policy consultation forums

| Venue  | Date           | Time         |
|--|----------------|--------------|
| Griffin Centre, Room 9<br>20 Genge, Canberra City<br>Phone: 6249 6542                    | 13 August 2007 | 7:00–9:00pm  |
| Canberra Labor Club,<br>Chandler Street, Belconnen<br>Phone: 6251 5522                   | 16 August 2007 | 2:00–4:00pm  |
| Tuggeranong Community Centre<br>Room 1,<br>Cowlshaw Street, Greenway<br>Phone: 6293 6500 | 22 August 2007 | 9:30–11:30am |
| Griffin Centre, Room 1<br>20 Genge, Canberra City<br>Phone: 6249 6542                    | 23 August 2007 | 9:30–11:30am |
| Tuggeranong Community Centre<br>Room 1,<br>Cowlshaw Street, Greenway<br>Phone: 6293 6500 | 27 August 2007 | 6:00–8:00pm  |
| Hellenic Club of Canberra Ltd<br>Matilda Street, Philip<br>Phone: 6281 0899              | 28 August 2007 | 7:00–9:00pm  |
| Hellenic Club of Canberra Ltd<br>Matilda Street, Philip<br>Phone: 6281 0899              | 30 August 2007 | 9:30–11.30am |

If you require more information or wish to discuss home ownership or moving to a smaller property, please ring, in the first instance, T: 13 DHCS (13 34 27).

**John Hargreaves** MLA  
ACT Minister for Housing  
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