



Environmental Collective Housing Organisation important information from Housing ACT



What is the Environmental Collective Housing Organisation?

The Environmental Collective Housing Organisation (ECHO) is a not-for-profit association providing affordable rental housing in Canberra's inner north for people on low to moderate incomes.

In 2007, two tenant-managed community housing providers amalgamated and ECHO was formed. ECHO builds on the former organisations' experience, strengths and resources to ensure that inner north tenant-managed housing remains a viable and vibrant option for people in housing need.

ECHO's Aims:

- To provide secure, affordable housing in Canberra's inner northern suburbs for people who are disadvantaged in the housing market by a low income or other factors, and who want to be part of a tenant-managed organisation.
- To build a supportive community that encourages co-operation, contributes to the elimination of poverty, and promotes the wellbeing of individuals and groups.
- To ensure housing remains accessible to low income earners in the inner northern suburbs of Canberra.
- To develop ecologically sustainable practices and infrastructure for tenants.
- To co-operate with and assist other bodies with similar goals, especially those in our local community.
- To provide a successful model of tenant-managed housing that can be duplicated by other groups in need of housing.

What accommodation is offered by ECHO?

ECHO currently manages thirty properties in Canberra's inner north. Properties range from 1 to 5 bedrooms.

ECHO also offers a variety of group-share properties which are targeted at different groups and household compositions. For more information on group-share options contact ECHO.



Prospective tenants should be willing to participate in tenant-managed housing and support ECHO's aims and objectives.

ECHO offers both income-based (25% of an individual's assessable income) and affordable (74.9% of market rent) rental options.

Who can apply?

To be housed with ECHO you must:

- have been approved and referred to ECHO by Housing ACT (HACT) after undergoing an eligibility assessment;
- become a member;
- attend an interview where applicants are able to ask questions to be sure that ECHO is an appropriate housing option for them;
- be able to demonstrate a capacity to live in tenant managed housing;
- be willing to participate in, and contribute to, the running of ECHO;
- be compatible with the ECHO community of tenants;
- sign an Occupancy or Tenancy Agreement (depending on which accommodation option you are offered).

How much will it cost?

To be housed with ECHO you must agree to pay:

- two weeks rent paid in advance; and
- an annual \$5 membership fee.

What is tenant managed housing?

Tenant-managed housing co-operatives are managed by voluntary tenant members who provide the role of the 'landlord'.

ECHO provides opportunities for tenants to be involved in the management of the organisation and encourages participation. This maximises individual satisfaction with the housing provided by ECHO and helps the organisation to deliver services that meet the needs of tenants and communities.



How can I get involved?

ECHO encourages the involvement of its tenants in the social activities, daily management and long term planning of ECHO's services. ECHO ensures that tenants are well informed and have the opportunity to participate in decisions concerning the management of ECHO and its tenancies.

Tenants are kept well-informed of the operations and policies of ECHO through regular newsletters and by ensuring that policies and procedures are fully explained wherever necessary and made available in a detailed manual.

Tenants are required to attend general meetings at least twice each year. Tenants are also encouraged to be a member of one of ECHO's subcommittees or on the ECHO Management Committee, from time to time. Committee meetings are currently held monthly, general meetings every two months and strategic planning meetings every two years.

Tenants are also provided the opportunity to:

- provide feedback about the organisation's Policies and Procedures;
- provide input into formal consultations or advisory committees;
- make decisions about the management of the tenant's own complex or dwelling;
- make decisions about policies and activities of ECHO through membership of sub-committees and the Management Committee;
- provide formal written feedback through satisfaction surveys, evaluations and suggestion boxes.

ECHO aims to ensure that the rights of all tenants are respected and that the interests of all members are taken into account when decisions are made.

How can I contact ECHO?

If you would like further information about ECHO please contact:

Environmental Collective Housing Organisation
PO BOX 775
DICKSON ACT 2602

Phone: 02 6262 8275

Email: echo@pcug.org.au

Web: www.echousing.org.au



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

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