



## Property Size Guidelines – important information from Housing ACT

### What size property can I be allocated?

#### Background

Housing ACT has guidelines to ensure the equitable and flexible allocation of properties. In deciding which properties are allocated to eligible applicants, Housing ACT is obliged to take the following issues into account:

- the availability of different sizes and types of dwellings in various locations; and
- the reasonable accommodation needs of the applicant; and
- the preferences expressed by the applicant.

### Will my children have to share a room?

Generally, no more than two (2) children are expected to share a bedroom and children of different genders are generally not expected to share a bedroom.

Also, where there is a large age gap, e.g. seven (7) years between children of the same gender, they would generally not be expected to share a bedroom.

### What if I have child contact arrangements?

Applicants with child contact arrangements may seek an extra bedroom for this purpose. A request for an additional bedroom will be considered in line with the Housing Size Guidelines.

### Older Persons' Accommodation

Both Housing ACT and some community housing organisations have accommodation options which cater to the needs of older people.

You may be offered this accommodation if you are old enough to be eligible for an Age Pension or receive a Service Pension.



## Housing Size Guidelines

Housing Size Guidelines are used to determine bedroom allocations within public and community housing properties. The following principles apply:

- Allocations are made against the Guidelines Table (below) at the lower end of the scale, unless individual circumstances justify allocation at the top of the scale;
- No more than two children are generally expected to share a bedroom; and
- Children of differing sex are generally not expected to share a bedroom past the age of seven.

Some flexibility may be exercised where there are special circumstances, including:

- A household member requires a separate bedroom on strong medical grounds (must be supported by medical documentation);
- A tenant requires a live-in carer on strong health/disability grounds (must be supported by medical documentation);
- Adults who are not in a relationship are sharing a bedroom;
- Parents are sharing a bedroom with children;
- An additional bedroom is required for documented child contact/parental responsibility arrangements (must be supported by documentation);
- There is a large age gap (7 years or more) between children of the same sex;
- There are three or more teenage children of differing sex in the family; or
- A person is providing regular or ongoing foster care to children and young people at risk

## Guidelines Table

Household	Bedsitter	1 BR	2 BR	3 BR	4 BR	5 BR
Single Tenant	X	X				
Single Tenant 1 Child			X			
Couple		X	X			
Couple 1 Child			X	X		
Single/Couple 2 Children (depending on gender of children)			X	X		
Single/Couple 3 Children				X		
Single/Couple 4 Children (depending on gender of children)				X	X	
Single/Couple 5 Children					X	
Single/Couple 6 Children (depending on gender of children)					X	X



## Equal shared parental responsibility arrangements

A bedroom will be allocated for a child, in line with these guidelines, where applicants have parental responsibility for a minimum of 50% of the time. This is conditional on the appropriate documentation being provided.

## Provision for child contact/parental responsibility arrangements

Housing ACT may approve an extra bedroom for parents with regular child contact arrangements for a minimum of 27% of the year (which equates to 2 overnight stays every second weekend plus half of the school and public holidays). This is conditional on the appropriate documentation being provided. Generally, one extra bedroom will be provided to cater for contact for up to 3 children. Child contact arrangements involving more than 3 children will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

## Documents required for child contact arrangements

Applicants seeking an extra bedroom for child contact arrangements are required to produce documentation of the arrangement by providing a copy of one of the following documents:

- Parenting Order under section 64B of the Family Law Act 1975;
- Parenting Plan under section 63C of the Family Law Act 1975;
- Confirmation of child contact arrangements from a Family Relationship Centre;
- Letter from the solicitor who is dealing with the child contact arrangements;
- Documentation from Centrelink which substantiates the percentage of care;
- Documentation from a support service/government agency which is directly involved in the child contact arrangements; or
- Care and Protection Order with a plan for restoration of the child/ren contained in the case plan.

Where regular child contact is less than 27% of the year, a copy of the Parenting Order is required to confirm that child contact arrangements are dependent on having appropriately sized housing.

## Changes to child contact arrangements

Applicants must advise Housing ACT immediately of any changes to any child contact arrangements that may affect their bedroom allocation.

## Review of child contact arrangements

Child contact arrangements will be reviewed periodically to determine if the accommodation is being used for the purpose for which it was allocated.



## Foster carers

Foster carers who provide regular or ongoing care to children and young people at risk may be allocated an additional bedroom/s. Documentation is required from the Office of Children, Youth and Family Support and/ or foster care services such as Marymead or Barnardos. Generally, any additional bedrooms would need to be utilised for a minimum of 27% of the year.

## Location Preferences

Housing ACT has divided the suburbs of the ACT into four (4) regions. You can nominate which regions you are interested in. You may need to provide medical or other documentation if you need to live in a specific area.

## Further Information

For more information, contact your Housing Manager or telephone the Community Services Directorate on 133 427.

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

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