

Policy Number: 61

Policy Name: Eligibility for long-term housing

Version No. 02

Established: 2018

Present Version Passed: 08/06/2021

Next Scheduled Review: 2023

PURPOSE

This policy establishes the approach of the Northern Geelong Rental Housing Co-operative Ltd (NGRHC) to eligibility for its long-term rental housing program.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all long-term rental properties owned or managed by NGRHC and the following topics:

- Victorian Housing Register
- Eligibility Requirements

RELEVANT CO-OPERATIVE OBJECTIVES

Housing Registrar Performance Standards for Registered Housing Providers

POLICY STATEMENT

Approach to eligibility – guiding principles

NGRHC establishes eligibility criteria for long-term housing to fulfill its social mission and to ensure that its housing is made available to relieve households from housing stress. (see Definition).

Accordingly, NGRHC will:

- only allocate long-term housing to eligible applicants according to the criteria of the Victorian Housing Register (VHR);
- communicate clearly to applicants and the community as to who is eligible for long-term housing with NGRHC; and
- comply with its contractual, legal and regulatory obligations relating to eligibility for long-term housing.

VICTORIAN HOUSING REGISTER

NGRHC participates in the Victorian Housing Register (VHR). The VHR is a common register for all applicants wanting to apply for public housing or community housing in Victoria.

DFFH has established common eligibility criteria for the VHR that are set out in the eligibility policy framework and operational guidelines. The VHR eligibility criteria apply to all properties owned or managed by NGRHC in Victoria, other than those properties which NGRHC and DFFH have agreed are outside the scope of the VHR. Further details may be found on the DFFH website.

<https://fac.dhhs.vic.gov.au/eligibility-policy-framework-and-operational-guidelines>

All applicants with a current VHR application are taken by NGRHC to have established that they meet the VHR eligibility criteria.

Applicants without a current VHR application who can provide evidence to NGRHC that establishes they meet the VHR eligibility criteria. NGRHC will assist such applicants to make a VHR application either through referral to a suitable service or by assisting the applicant to lodge a VHR application.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ELIGIBILITY FOR LONG-TERM HOUSING

To be eligible for long-term housing with NGRHC, an applicant must:

- meet the VHR eligibility criteria;
- have no previous debt with NGRHC, the Director of Housing or another registered housing agency that remains unpaid;
- indicate your preference for community housing by checking the appropriate box at the VHR application process;
- possess an ability and willingness to participate in all aspects of the life of the NGRHC; and
- show potential and aptitude to participate in the Governance of the NGRHC.

PROCEDURES

Procedures established by NGRHC will include processes to ensure compliance with this policy, including to:

- assist people to apply for housing with NGRHC; and
- identify the VHR and NGRHC requirements that apply to a particular vacancy.

DEFINITIONS

In this policy:

Applicant	means a person who has applied for housing via the VHR or, where permitted by policy, directly to NGRHC
Community housing	Housing owned or managed by a community housing organisation
DFFH	The Victorian Department of Families, Fairness and Housing
General eligibility criteria	The eligibility criteria established by NGRHC under the section of this policy entitled “General requirements for eligibility for long-term housing”
Housing Stress	Describes a situation where the cost of housing (either as rental, or as a mortgage) is high relative to household income. It may also be used to describe inadequate housing for a proportion of the population. As a rule of thumb, a household spending 30 per cent or more of its income can be considered under housing stress. (Source Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Housing_stress)
Public housing	Housing owned and managed by DFFH
VHR	The Victorian Housing Register, the state-wide common application for people seeking public housing and community housing, which can be accessed via NGRHC, DFFH, the mygov portal or designated support providers
VHR eligibility criteria	The VHR establishes who is eligible for social housing. The VHR Eligibility Criteria relates to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• income eligibility;• asset eligibility;• Australian Citizenship or permanent residency; and• Victorian residency.

RELATED POLICIES

Allocation of Long Term Housing

LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

This policy implements NGRHC obligations under:

- Housing Act 1983 (Vic)
- Performance Standards for Registered Housing Agencies
- DHHS Victorian Housing Register Operational Guidelines

TRANSPARENCY AND ACCESSIBILITY

This policy will be available on the NGRHC website www.ngrhc.org.au/policy