



## ALLOCATIONS POLICY

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### 1. PURPOSE

This policy establishes the approach of South Port Community Housing Group Inc. (SPCHG) to:

- eligibility for its long-term rental housing programs;
- the prioritisation and allocation of vacant properties in its long-term rental housing portfolio; and
- successful and sustainable tenancies and communities through the matching applicants to properties.

### 2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all long-term rental properties owned or managed by SPCHG.

### 3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

#### 3.1. ELIGIBILITY FOR HOUSING

SPCHG establishes eligibility criteria for long-term housing to fulfil its social mission and to ensure that its housing is made available to people who have experienced or at risk of homelessness.

Accordingly, SPCHG will:

- only allocate long-term housing to eligible applicants;
- communicate clearly to applicants and the community as to who is eligible for long-term housing with SPCHG; and
- comply with its contractual, legal and regulatory obligations relating to eligibility for long-term housing.

#### 3.2. APPROACH TO ALLOCATION

SPCHG will allocate long-term housing to eligible applicants and in a manner which:

- is fair, transparent and equitable;
- relieves households from housing stress;
- is in accordance with its contractual, legal and regulatory obligations; and
- supports the financial viability of SPCHG's long term housing programs.

SPCHG is committed to promoting a successful and sustainable tenancy when matching applicants to its properties. This means that SPCHG will allocate housing in a way that:

- gives appropriate priority to households in need of housing assistance;
- considers the health, safety and support needs of applicants;
- matches individual housing needs with available properties; and
- supports sustainable and harmonious communities.



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### 4. OBJECTIVES

- To allow SPCHG to continue to allocate housing to those single people with the highest levels of need and least access to other housing options.
- A simple and transparent process
- Process not a barrier to people with complex needs who have experience homelessness.
- To provide SPCHG with enough information about new tenants to be able to support them in maintaining their housing
- Have long-term tenancies that are sustainable without issue
- House single people who have experienced homelessness who have a link to the Port Melbourne and South Melbourne Area
- All staff feel confident in allocating housing, conducting intake interviews and maintaining long term tenancies

### 5. POLICY

#### 5.1. ELIGIBILITY OF HOUSING.

SPCHG participates in the Victorian Housing Register (VHR). The VHR is a common register for all applicants seeking public and community housing in Victoria.

DHHS has established common eligibility criteria for the VHR that are set out in the Eligibility Criteria Operational Guidelines. The VHR's eligibility criteria apply to all long-term housing owned, managed or controlled by SPCHG in Victoria.

All applicants with a current VHR application are taken by SPCHG to meet the VHR eligibility criteria.

Applicants without a current VHR application can provide evidence to SPCHG that establishes they meet the VHR eligibility criteria. SPCHG will then 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.

##### 5.1.1. Additional requirements for eligibility for long-term housing

In addition to meeting the VHR eligibility criteria, to be eligible for long-term housing with SPCHG, an applicant must:

- Be experiencing homelessness or at-risk of homelessness
- Be on government benefits
- Have a connection to the local

#### 5.2. APPROACH TO ALLOCATION

##### 5.2.1. Allocations Target - Victorian Housing Register

Under the VHR's allocations framework, SPCHG is required to meet an annual Priority Allocations Target. This requires SPCHG to allocate 75% of vacancies in Targeted Social Housing to Priority Access applicants in each financial year. As not all of SPCHG's properties are Targeted Social Housing, this Target is adjusted so that SPCHG can make allocations across its portfolio in order to meet the Target.

SPCHG will implement procedures to monitor its performance against the Priority Allocations Target regularly to ensure that SPCHG complies with its obligations.



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### 5.2.2. Sourcing applicants

SPCHG will utilise two key ways to source applicants:

- SPCHG will seek suitable applicants from the VHR. Where a suitable applicant being considered for a vacancy does not have a current VHR application but is eligible for social housing under the VHR and suitable for that vacancy, then SPCHG will ensure that such applicants complete a VHR application at the time of making an offer of housing.
- SPCHG will also work alongside organizations who are supporting people experiencing homelessness in the local area to house people in SPCHG housing.

### 5.3. PROMOTING SUCCESSFUL AND SUSTAINABLE TENANCIES

SPCHG is committed to treating all applicants fairly and will not unlawfully discriminate against any potential applicant or applicant.

SPCHG will assess all applicants before making an offer of housing to determine suitability for a particular vacancy (and eligibility if the applicant does not currently have a VHR application). If SPCHG declines to offer an applicant housing, it will inform the applicant accordingly.

#### 5.3.1. Matching households to the right house

SPCHG will, as best we can, match applicants to properties so that an allocation:

- is the right size for the applicant's household;
- is in an area consistent with the applicant's needs;
- assists the applicant to access employment or any support services that they need;
- makes the best use of housing stock owned or managed by SPCHG;
- encourages a sustainable tenancy; and
- meets any particular expressed needs of the applicant so far as they are known, such as modifications for people with a physical disability or mobility impairment, availability of car parking or room for carers.

SPCHG aims to make sure that properties with specific features that are in high demand and short supply are only allocated to those applicants who need them, including:

- properties that are suitable for older people
- properties that have been built or modified to meet the needs of people with a disability;
- properties on the ground floor,
- properties with level access; or
- properties with a yard/garden.

SPCHG will ask applicants to provide reasonable evidence to substantiate any particular requirements, if this is not contained in a VHR application.

#### 5.3.2. Supporting sustainable and harmonious communities

SPCHG may, to the extent necessary, adopt different strategies in allocation in response to:

- a high concentration of public and community housing stock in a particular area;
- a high concentration of tenants with multiple health, social or economic issues in a particular area or building;
- existing tenancy management issues (or a potential for them to develop);
- existing neighborhood tensions or disputes which may be exacerbated if allocations are not sensitively handled; and
- a mismatch of supply and demand making the property hard to let.

## 6. DEFINITIONS

In this policy:

Applicant	means a person who has applied for housing via the VHR or, where permitted by this policy, directly to [CHO]
DHHS	means the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services
Director of Housing	means the Victorian government statutory authority that owns all public housing land in Victoria and which is the principal funding body for community housing
Priority Access	Applicants on the VHR who have been assessed as having a priority housing need. The Priority Access Categories are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency Management Housing</li> <li>• Priority Transfers</li> <li>• Homeless with Support</li> <li>• Supported Housing</li> <li>• Temporary Absence</li> <li>• Special Housing Needs</li> <li>• Special Housing Needs (Aged 55 years and over)</li> </ul>
Public housing	Housing owned and managed by DHHS
Targeted Social Housing	The properties that are considered Targeted Social Housing under agreements between [CHO] and the Director of Housing.
Transitional Housing	means the Victorian Government program to provide housing on a short-term basis to people at risk of homelessness seeking long term housing options
VHR	The Victorian Housing Register, the statewide common application for people seeking public housing and community housing

## 7. RELATED POLICIES

- Allocations Framework
- Rent Setting Policy
- Allocations Procedures
- Internal Transfer

## 8. LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

This policy implements [CHO's] obligations under:

- Housing Act 1983 (Vic)
- Performance Standards for Registered Housing Agencies



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- Legal agreements between [CHO] and the Director of Housing relating to the VHR
- DHHS Victorian Housing Register Operational Guidelines

### **9. TRANSPARENCY AND ACCESSIBILITY**

This policy will be available on the SPCHG **website**,