

Housing Operating Policies, Procedures and Guidelines

Chapter 1:

Access to Housing

Policy statement

1.01 Housing allocations procedures (social housing)

1.02 Affordable housing applications and allocations

1.03 Selection of social housing tenants and offers
(Housing Pathways)

1.04 Facilitation of social housing products

Version: 1.00

Last updated: 30/11/2018



Policy statement

1.1 Social housing applications

Housing Pathways

Momentum Collective participates in the NSW Government's Housing Pathways system and complies with all relevant policies, procedures and instructions for receiving and assessing applications made by clients for social housing assistance.

Momentum Collective may vary the policies, procedures and protocols of Housing Pathways where it is in the best interests of the client, our community or Momentum Collective to do so. Any such variations are approved and documented in accordance with this policy.

Momentum Collective complies with the Community Housing Eligibility Policy.

Access to services and information

Momentum Collective responds in a timely manner to clients in need of housing and clients seeking housing assistance have direct access to our service in a variety of ways

Momentum Collective promotes its services to other local organisations, including local support service providers, to improve access for those who are eligible and in housing need.

Effective assessment and referrals

Momentum Collective have effective systems and processes in place to support the assessment of the housing needs of our clients

Momentum Collective provides effective referrals of clients by:

- involving and consulting with clients to identify their housing needs
- considering solutions to the client's immediate and long term needs
- prioritising work with clients who have higher and more immediate needs, including those with nowhere safe to stay
- having a thorough knowledge of housing and support options within the areas we serve and how these options can best be accessed.

Wherever possible, referral protocols and agreements with other agencies will be in writing.

Conflicts of interest

Momentum Collective staff will declare and effectively manage any conflicts of interest by those involved in the application receipt or needs assessment processes.

1.2 Social housing eligibility

Social housing eligibility

Momentum Collective complies with the Community Housing Eligibility Policy and the Community Housing Access Policy. Wherever required, Momentum Collective assesses tenant eligibility for housing according to specific housing program policies and guidelines.

Housing Pathways

Momentum Collective complies with all relevant policies, procedures and instructions for managing social housing allocations to eligible clients under the Housing Pathways system.

Momentum Collective may vary the policies, procedures and protocols of Housing Pathways where it is in the best interests of the client, our community or Momentum Collective to do so. Any such variations are approved and documented in accordance with this policy.

Supported housing agreements and third-party nominations

Allocation subject to tenant nomination rights for third parties will be managed in accordance with the supported housing policies and procedures of Momentum Collective.

1.3 Affordable housing

Momentum Collective manages its affordable housing programs in accordance with relevant funding guidelines and agreements, including:

- NSW Affordable Housing Guidelines
- NRAS Policy Guidelines

To be eligible for any affordable housing program, the client will:

- prove they meet all tenant eligibility criteria specified in the relevant policy guidelines
- not have assets or property which could reasonably be expected to solve their housing situation

1.4 Housing allocations

Momentum Collective is committed to providing a fair and transparent system of allocation of properties to applicants. Allocation is based on contemporary best practice standards in community housing and does not unlawfully discriminate against our clients.

Allocation systems and processes used will enable Momentum Collective to:

- identify eligible applicants
- prioritise eligible applicants for housing on the basis of need in a fair, equitable and consistent way
- meet identified housing needs
- minimise barriers to access housing and maximise opportunities for individuals
- allocate vacant properties (fixed term, general social housing or other) from the Housing Pathways NSW Social Housing register
- There is demonstrated integrity in all the agreed processes relating to tenant selection and housing allocations, including high standards of documentation and internal auditing.

Momentum Collective encourages a collaborative process between referring support services to ensure accountability and consultation with local community, specific target groups and/or local housing need.

Momentum Collective will consider neighbourhood and community needs, suitability and property type, local demographics, and any other issues pertinent to ensuring allocation is made achieving the best use of a property. A *Local Allocation Strategy (LAS)* may be utilised in this process.

Tenant selection

When matching a client to a property, Momentum Collective aims to ensure the:

- property size is large enough to accommodate all household members
- property is suitable for the applicant's mobility level
- property is in an area requested by the applicant
- property meets any special needs the applicant or family members may have, wherever possible
- property is within reasonable distance and access to any support services being accessed by the applicant
- allocation makes the best use of Momentum Collective's housing stock

- allocation (matching applicant to property) will benefit the applicant and not adversely affect the neighbours or neighbourhood
- property is left vacant for the shortest possible time

Program eligibility, including eligibility for social housing where such applies will be checked *prior* to any allocation of a property.

Affordable housing

When allocating properties provided under NRAS, Momentum Collective will comply with the Federal Government's [NRAS Policy Guidelines](#).

For all other affordable housing properties, allocations will comply with the [NSW Affordable Housing Guidelines](#).

Conflict of interest

Any Momentum Collective employee involved in the application assessment or housing allocations processes must register any personal or other relationship with a tenant or applicant being considered for housing assessment or allocation.

The employee must withdraw from any involvement in the allocation of housing to that tenant or applicant and must not participate or influence in any way, either implicitly or explicitly, the decision-making process when such a conflict has been declared.

The Momentum Collective Executive must approve the allocation of any social or affordable housing property (managed by Momentum Collective) to a current or former employee of Momentum Collective or its associated entities.

ENDORSEMENT	
Version	1.1
Ratified by	Board of Directors
Date	July 2017
Review	July 2019
Person responsible	Director Property & Housing

1.01 Housing allocations procedures (social housing)

Purpose

To provide direction to Housing staff in relation to making social housing allocations (including transitional housing)

Exclusions

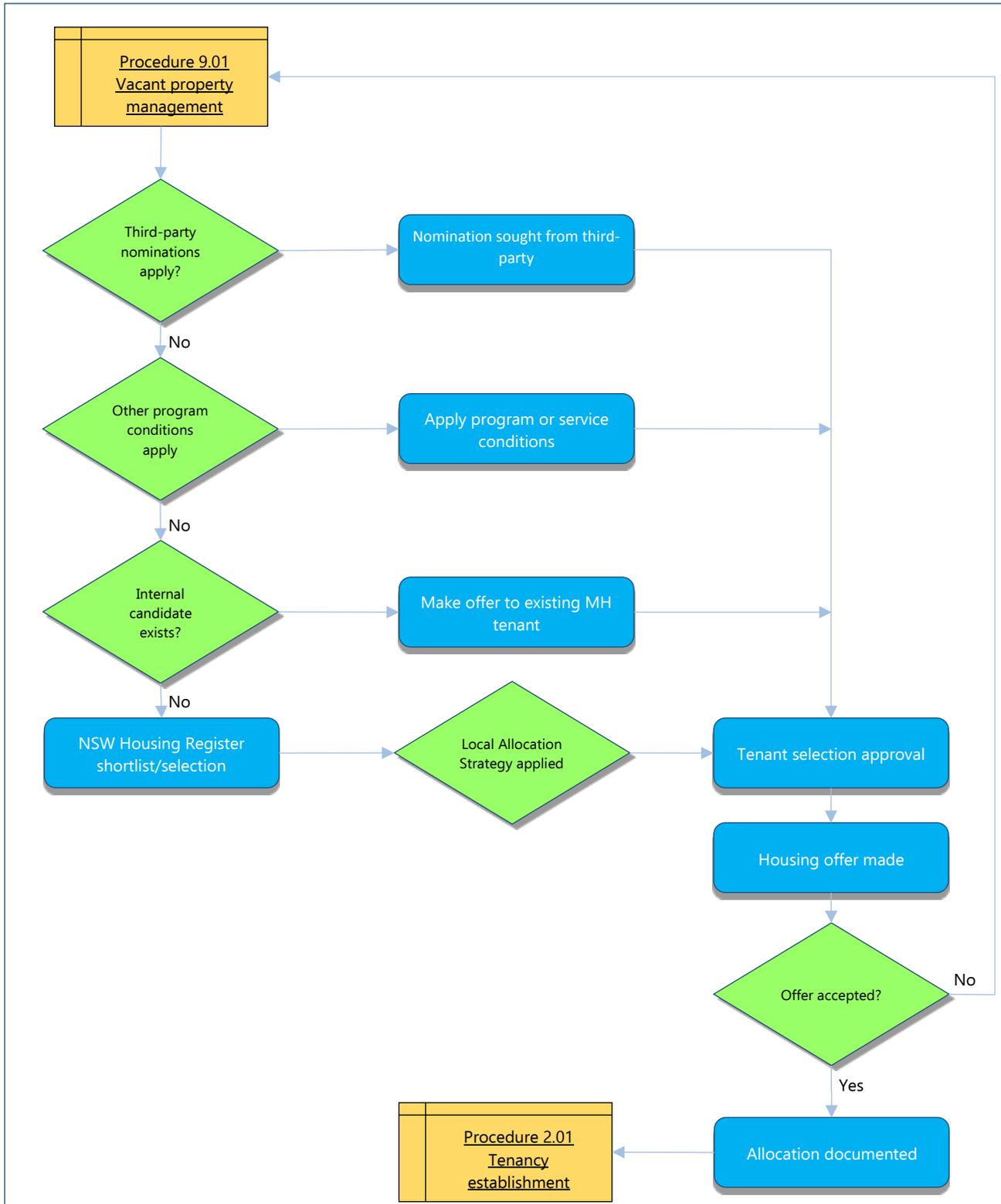
These allocation procedures do not include:

- The allocation of crisis (refuge) accommodation
- The allocation of boarding and lodging house accommodation through the CRS (mental health program)

Responsibilities

- Tenancy Officers (TO) – approval of transitional housing and housing where tenants are nominated by third parties
- Senior Housing Officer (SHO) – approval of long term social housing properties, oversight of MH allocation and documentation processes
- General Manager Housing (GMH) – management oversight, out of guidelines decisions

Procedural overview



1. Allocation rules

Principles

All staff involved in the allocation of MH-managed properties will ensure that the [company's policies and principles of tenant selection](#) are followed.

Conflict of interest

Any MH employee involved in the application assessment or housing allocations processes must register any personal or other relationship with a tenant or applicant being considered for housing assessment or allocation.

The employee must withdraw from any involvement in the allocation of housing to that tenant or applicant and must not participate or influence in any way, either implicitly or explicitly, the decision-making process when such a conflict has been declared.

The Momentum Executive must approve the allocation of any social or affordable housing property (managed by MH) to a current or former employee of MH or its associated entities.

Occupancy standards

All housing allocations, including those made under third-party agreements, will ensure that the selected tenant meets the current rules for social housing bedroom entitlements, which has been adopted as the MH occupancy standard.

See [Annexure 2: Standard bedroom entitlements for public housing](#) for the current public housing policy.

2. Third-party tenant nominations

Third-party tenant nominations are made as part of the terms of formal supported housing agreements between with Momentum support services or with external support service agencies. The following conditions apply to those agreements where the support provider has “tenant nomination tights” as a term of their agreement with MH.

Note: The details of the required allocation protocols may differ between agreements. Housing allocations must only be made with a full understanding of the relevant terms of these agreements. The following rules about allocation arrangements under supported housing agreements is provided for general guidance only.

- The Tenancy Officer has the authority to authorise allocations of properties to nominated clients
- The nominated household must meet the current MH [occupancy standard](#)
- The nominated household must meet the terms of any relevant [Local Allocation Strategy](#) for the property
- The nomination must be completed on the agreed tenant nomination form
- The third-party organisation must ensure that the tenant has a plan for the provision of support services
- The nominated tenant must meet the cohort (or target group) specified under the terms of the relevant supported housing agreement
- The nominated housing must be eligible for social housing at the time the nomination is made (some eligibility exclusions apply under the Specialist Homelessness Service Program)
- MH must be satisfied that the third-party organisation has met the terms of its own internal client selection procedures, as these are outlined in their agreement with MH.

See [Annexure 1: Allocations, offers and agreements \(by allocation type\)](#) for further information about housing offers and documentation requirements for internal transfers.

See SHS Tenancy Allocation Process for information specific to the allocation of properties under the Specialist Homelessness Services.

Required timeframes (third-party nominations)

Event	Timelines	Required by
Request for nomination by service provider	Generally, this referral must be within 24 hours of each vacancy event occurring (See MH Procedure 9.01 Vacant property management)	Vacancy Manager
Provision of nomination form by support provider to MH	Within 5 working days referral from the Vacancy Manager	Vacancy Manager
Escalation 1: Non-receipt of nomination form support provider	Within 1 working day of expiry date for provision of nomination form	Vacancy Manager escalates matter to senior Manager of support service and request response within 2 working days
Escalation 2: No response from senior Manager of support service	Within 1 working day of expiry date for provision of nomination form	Vacancy Manager escalates matter to CHSM
Approval of nominated tenant	Within 2 working days of receipt of nomination form	Vacancy Manager/CHSM
Property viewing by nominated tenant	Within 2 working days of offer being made	Vacancy Manager
Property acceptance/decline by nominated tenant	Within 2 working days of property viewing	Vacancy Manager
Tenancy commencement (upon acceptance of offer by nominated tenant)	Within 5 working days of property acceptance	Vacancy Manager

3. Specific program requirements

The rules and required allocation processes for vacant properties may also vary as a result of distinct property programs, funding arrangements or services that are attached to individual properties.

The following table provides a guide for staff to these specific program requirements:

Program	Information
Boarding houses	Clients must meet the criteria for the Mental Health Pathways funding and referral program.
Affordable housing	These procedures do not apply to those properties that are managed under the NRAS or NSW Affordable Housing Guidelines. Please refer to MH Procedure 1.02 Affordable housing (access and Allocations)
State Environmental and Planning (Seniors Living) Policy	<p>MH recognises that properties built under this Policy need to be maintained for its original use. Tenants need to meet one of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are an indigenous person older than 45 years of age • They are a non-indigenous person older than 55 years of age • They are a person with a disability <p>Additional care must be taken when allocating properties to people who do not meet the age criteria for these developments where the development is predominantly occupied by older people.</p> <p>This requirement applies to both third-party nominations and allocations made from the NSW Housing Register</p>

4. Internal candidates

The SHO has the authority to approve all offers of vacant properties to existing MH tenants where:

- the approval does not breach the terms of any relevant [supported housing agreement](#); and
- there is an approved internal management transfer for that tenant (see MH Procedure 7.01 Transfers); and
- the allocation would not breach any [specific funding or program](#) eligibility that is relevant to the property.

See [Annexure 1: Allocations, offers and agreements \(by allocation type\)](#) for further information about housing offers and documentation requirements for internal transfers

5. NSW Housing register protocols

General

Under Housing Pathways protocols, MH selects the next suitable candidate from the NSW Housing Register, according to the agreed HOMES tenant selection and nomination process.

The required Pathways protocols must be followed for all nominations sought using this method.

MH must ensure that the next suitable candidate remains eligible for social housing.

MH rules

The following MH rules will be followed when selecting tenants from the NSW Housing Register:

- MH has the right to apply its own approved [Local Allocation Strategies](#) in relation to the selection of all Housing Register clients
- MH reserves the right to suspend the social housing application of a former unsatisfactory tenant of MH

- MH reserves the right to deny housing to a former MH tenant who is classified as being ineligible for further social housing assistance.
- MH has the right to apply its own [occupancy standards](#) in relation to selection of all Housing Register clients
- Where it is necessary to conduct an eligibility review of a client with another social housing provider (i.e. in relation to either a former or current tenant of the provider), MH will allow that provider 2 working days to respond. In the event of no response being received, MH will bypass the client for a housing allocation.
- MH recognises that clients with special property requirements, particularly those households with members who have a physical disability, are often bypassed for social housing allocations. MH will ensure that it seeks to make all reasonable efforts to identify suitable MH properties (or modify an existing vacant MH-managed property) in order to improve access to social housing for such households.
- A client will be bypassed by MH where the client has a pet (that contravenes the MH pets policy) and they will not be able to or willing to comply with relevant MH policies. See MH Procedure 6.03 Pets.
- Clients need to be able to sustain a social housing tenancy. Where a client from the NSW Housing Register has complex needs and is considered to require initial or ongoing support to sustain their tenancy, social housing offers can be made conditionally on the provision of necessary support services being accepted by the tenant.

MH internal procedures (including Offer Response Forms and Offer Checklist)

Full completion of the Housing Pathways Offer Response form and Offer Checklist is a requirement of Housing Pathways.

MH has allocated responsibilities for their completion as detailed in the following table (“Allocations Officer” refers to the staff member with responsibility for selecting the nominee through HOMES)

Events	Responsibility/required actions
Generation of HOMES shortlist	By Allocation Officer via HOMES, as per Housing Pathways protocols
Eligibility check of shortlisted nominees	By Allocation Officer, as per Housing Pathways protocols
Selection of tenant	Once the nominee is selected, the Allocations Officer emails the Offer Checklist to the Vacancy Manager
Nominee refuses offer	Vacancy Manager notes refusal in Offer Checklist and refers Offer Checklist and Offer Response Form to Allocations Officer. Allocations Officer records offer as a refusal and manages Offer Outcome process. The responsibility includes deciding as to the validity of the client’s reasons for refusal of the property.
Nominee accepts offer	Vacancy Manager notes acceptance in Offer Checklist and arranges sign-up with nominee. Vacancy Manager refers Offer Response Form and Offer Checklist to Allocations Officer, who records offer as accepted and closes nominee’s Housing Register application.
Acceptance of transitional housing by third-party nominee	The Allocations Officer is responsible for updating the HOMES records of clients who have accepted transitional housing with MH. These tenants can remain listed on the Housing Register for an offer of permanent social housing, however their HOMES record must be updated (including their new address and contact details) The Vacancy Officer sends the Nominee Details form to the Support Service, in order to collect relevant household data.

Required timeframes (Pathways)

Refer to 9.01 Vacant property management procedures for timeframes.

6. Using local allocation strategies

A Local Allocation Strategy (LAS) is developed by MH as part of its aim of establishing sustainable tenancies. Typically, an LAS is used to explain how allocations to a property or group of properties (such as a unit complex or an estate/ suburb) would have a higher likelihood of leading to sustained long-term tenancies if targeted to clients with particular characteristics.

Importantly, an LAS must also demonstrate that such a strategy would not have a significant detrimental impact on the overall access to social housing clients in the local area.

Each LAS:

- Must be in the form prescribed by MH; and
- Must include clear instructions for the allocation of properties assigned to the LAS; and
- Must be approved by the Family and Communities Manager

For further information, see MH Local Allocation Strategy (Template).

7. Housing offers

All housing offers are primarily made verbally, to minimise the reletting period

A letter (the **Access01**) can be used, where the tenant cannot be contacted by telephone or other means

8. Allocation documentation requirements

All housing applications made by MH must be documented, including the keeping of evidence that demonstrates that the required procedures have been met.

The evidentiary required are listed [in Annexure 1: Allocations, offers and agreement \(by allocation type\)](#)

9. Standard letters

Letter name	Text
Access01 – Social housing offer	<p>SOCIAL HOUSING OFFER</p> <p>We are pleased to make you an offer of a social housing property.</p> <p>You NSW Housing Register records indicate to us that the size, type and location of this property will meet the needs of your household, according to the social housing eligibility criteria under Housing Pathways.</p> <p>You will need to contact me by <date> to proceed with this offer. If we do not hear from you by this time, then the offer will be withdrawn. If you fail to contact us, the offer of this property will still qualify as valid offer of social housing.</p> <p>Please contact me on <phone> and I will be pleased to organise a viewing of the property for you.</p>
Access02 – Confirmation of social housing provider	<p>ACCEPTANCE OF SOCIAL HOUSING PREMISES</p> <p>I am writing to confirm that Momentum (MH) is a “social housing provider” as defined by Section 136 of the Residential Tenancies Act (NSW) 2010, by being:</p> <p>registered as a community housing provider within the meaning of the Housing Act 2001.</p> <p>The social housing premises recently offered to and accepted by <nominee name> are subject to a social housing tenancy agreement. Therefore, our clients are entitled to give notice to terminate their current fixed term agreement in accordance with section 100(1)(a) of the Act, without being liable to pay any compensation or other additional amount for early termination of the agreement.</p>

	Please contact me at the office if you require any further information.
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1.02 Affordable housing applications and allocations

Purpose

- To provide direction to Housing staff in relation to receiving and assessing applications for housing and to make housing allocations provided under Momentum Collective Affordable Housing Programs
- To ensure that Momentum Collective meets its obligations under the NSW Affordable Housing Program.

Definitions

Affordable Housing - Housing managed by Momentum Collective according to the NSW Affordable Housing Guidelines:

- <Addresses removed>

Responsibilities

- Receiving and assessing all affordable housing applications – All Momentum Collective Housing Staff
- Allocation of affordable housing properties – Senior Housing Officer

General eligibility criteria

To be eligible for the Momentum Collective Affordable Housing Program, the client must:

- Be a citizen or have permanent residency in Australia
- Be a resident of NSW
- Establish their identity
- Be able to sustain a successful tenancy
- Where applicable, make repayments of any former debts to a community housing provider in NSW
- Be a least 18 years of age
- Be in housing need and unable to resolve this need in the medium to long term without assistance
- Not have assets or property which could reasonably be expected to solve their housing situation
- Be eligible according to the income eligibility criteria according to the NSW Affordable Housing Guidelines (“the Guidelines”).

Applications

An application for housing provided under the Momentum Collective affordable housing programs must be made by the client directly to Momentum Collective using the prescribed application form.

Applicants must provide the required verification of the income of all household members.

Applicants who do not provide sufficient documentation are ineligible for housing assistance.

Affordable housing clients are not required to apply through Housing Pathways prior to making an application to Momentum Collective.

Clients must prove eligibility for the program upon application.

Ongoing eligibility

Affordable housing tenants must continue to meet the eligibility criteria for affordable housing according to the current Guidelines, which is reviewed on an annual basis.

See Momentum Collective Procedure: 10.02 Affordable housing eligibility reviews.

Application management

The following are the documentation requirements for applications made for the Momentum Collective affordable housing program

- Application for Tenancy (Affordable Housing); and
- Proof of identity for all residents older than 18; and
- Verification of all sources of income for the head tenant for past 3 month period; and
- Verification of all sources of income for all other residents aged 18 or older for the past 3 month period; and
- A bank statement for each income earning resident, covering a 3 month period.

Unlike social housing application requirements, the eligibility for affordable housing is determined by considering all household income received for the past 3 month period.

Eligibility assessments

To assess eligibility:

- Ensure all required supporting documentation has been provided
- Enter all income received by all residents of each household in the [Affordable Housing Eligibility Calculator](#)
- The assessor then prints off the [Calculator](#), signs it and sends with all supporting documents to the Momentum Collective Senior Housing Officer (SHO). The household's eligibility needs to be substantiated by the SHO.

Housing allocations

These policies and procedures for the allocation of dwellings to clients are consistent with the overall program and service aims of the Momentum Collective affordable housing programs and the related funding and program requirements.

For each affordable housing vacancy, Momentum Collective will select a shortlist of suitable applicants from those applications received as part of the vacancy advertising process; and

The preferred applicant will be selected, giving consideration to a range of factors:

- The income band of the client will ensure there is a continued income and social mix within the affordable housing project and across the affordable housing program;
- There is a matching of available housing to the needs of the client, including the client's household size meeting the generally agreed social housing occupancy guidelines;
- The client demonstrates they have a need for affordable housing, they would be unlikely to be allocated priority housing in the short-term and the vacant dwelling satisfies that need;
- The household has income growth potential and/or home ownership prospects in the medium term;
- The household has a connection to the local area or has demonstrated a need to live in the area for employment, training or schooling.

In order to ensure financial viability of the Momentum Collective affordable housing programs, revenue from operations must be sufficient to build a surplus – to offset contingent risks and to support investment in additional affordable housing supply. This means that at least in the short term, allocations of affordable

housing supply to higher income households may exceed those for lower income households. Over time, as resources permit the relative allocation of housing in a project or portfolio may need to be adjusted to achieve a balance across the three target income bands.

- Complete the Property Allocation Record (Affordable housing)
- Ensure that the Property Allocation Record is endorsed within the Momentum Collective delegated authorities
- The offer is *extended* to the endorsed applicant

Standard residential tenancies agreement

Tenants will sign a Residential Tenancies Agreement (Affordable Housing) with Momentum Collective and the lease agreement, accompanying documentation and tenancy commencement procedures will be provided in accordance with current Momentum Collective standards for establishing tenancies.

Each tenant will be provided with a fixed-term lease of 12 months.

Additional information at sign-up

Additional information, including additional agreement terms where necessary, will be provided that reflect the aims and objective of the Momentum Collective Affordable Housing program. In particular:

- The rent-setting model used for the tenancy will be outlined; and
- Each agreement will include additional terms that reflect that each tenancy is subject to an annual household eligibility review;

Rental bonds

Affordable housing tenants must pay the full rental bond (equivalent to 4 weeks of the assessed rent, rounded down to the closest \$25).

In cases of financial hardship, affordable housing tenants can be allowed to repay the bond over a maximum of 4 payments. The first instalment must be paid before or at the time of tenancy sign-up.

Advertising of vacancies

All affordable housing programs will be broadly advertised:

- Online (e.g. Gumtree, Domain, realestate.com.au)
- Local newspapers
- By direct mailing to community mailing lists

Rent setting

The rent-setting policies of Momentum Collective for each affordable housing project will ensure affordable outcomes for eligible households.

Refer to the Momentum Collective Rent Setting Policies, for further information.

1.03 Selection of social housing tenants (Housing Pathways)

Purpose

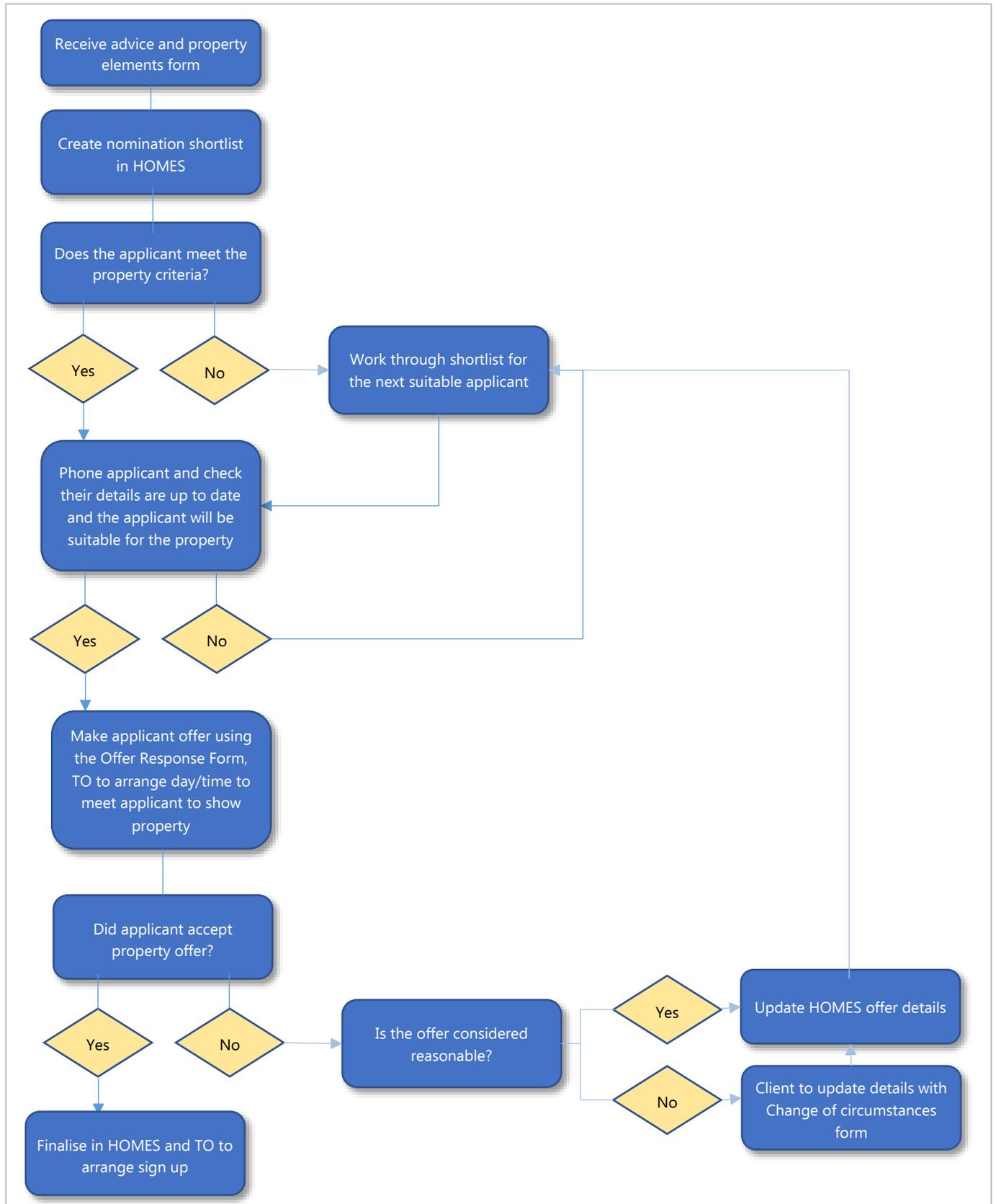
To provide guidance to staff in making social housing offers and in assessing priority housing applications

Responsibilities

Senior Housing Officer – approvals and decision making

Tenancy Officer – recommendations, tenancy management

Procedure



Create nomination shortlist in HOMES

- Log in to HOMES
- Click on the following:
- Allocations
- Nominations
- Create drop down box
- Create nomination
- Enter details of the property
- Enter agency reference number
- Save and write down the Nomination Ref number, you may want to develop something to keep track of nomination reference numbers as you will need to enter it later when the offer is accepted
- Click on **Actions** drop down box
- Select suitable applicants
- Select restrictions
- Always mark "YES" to accept Community Housing
- Untick "Exclude bypassed applicants & nomination requested"
- Click Search
- Print out 4-6 pages, more can be printed in required

Assess the client/s

- Click on Client View
- Search for and open the client's file
- Scroll down to **Actions**
- Click on Maintain Application Details
- Read notes on the applicant
- Open TRIM and check for supporting documentation to assist in determining if the applicant is suitable for the property
 - Medical assessment
 - Support letter
 - If the applicant is NOT suitable select **Bypass** from the drop down box
 - Type in a reason for bypassing the applicant
 - Repeat steps until you find a suitable applicant

Offer

When a suitable applicant is selected, the SHO will phone the applicant and fill in the "Offer Checklist- Applicants" to assess if they are still eligible for social housing.

If the applicant is deemed suitable the SHO will make an offer of housing and advise the applicant that the Tenancy Officer for the region will contact them to arrange a day and time to inspect the property and ensure they are aware of the 2 offer policy.

SHO to complete an Offer Response form and send to the TO to take to the inspection. The TO is responsible for making sure the applicant inspects the property, signs the Offer Response form and returns it to the SHO.

Offer for transfer applicants

If the chosen applicant is listed as a transfer, the SHO will need to contact the current housing provider and forward on the "Offer Transfer & Relocations" form for them to complete and contact their tenant.

Place applicant under offer

- Log in to HOMES
- Click on Allocations > Nominations > Please select > Create shortlist nominee offer > Offer date > Exp tenancy start date > Save
- Check that the applicant has been placed under offer
- Click on Allocations > Nominations > Search on > Agency Ref No > type 378644
- Click Perform Search
- Look for the property in the list, the status should show as **COMP**

Finalise offer

- Enter the **Nomination Ref** in the corresponding field, **Search**
- In the Actions drop down box select **Accept Nominee Offer**
- Tick the Complete Nomination Box
- Enter the status date, this is the date the lease is signed
- Click **Next** and **Save**
- Confirm that the allocation has been finalised

Withdrawal of offer

If for any reason you need to withdraw the offer or the applicant has declined the offer and it is deemed a reasonable offer:

- Log in to HOMES
- Click on Nominations
- Enter the **Nomination Ref** in the corresponding field, **Search**
- In the Actions drop down box select **Refuse Nominee**
- Select "Yes" in Reasonable Refusal
- For withdrawals that are not to be considered a reasonable offer
- Log in to HOMES
- Click on Nominations
- Enter the **Nomination Ref** in the corresponding field, **Search**
- In the Actions drop down box select **Reject Nominee**
- Explain why you are withdrawing the offer

Next:

- From the **Rejection Reason** drop down select the reason for the withdrawal
- Type a brief comment
- Save
- Start the allocation process again from the list

Manual Allocations

- Log in to HOMES
- Click on the following:
 - Allocations
 - Nominations
 - Create drop down box
 - Create nomination
- Enter details of the property
- Enter nominee details
- Click on Create Manual Nominee Offer
- Search for Nominee
- Click on Accept Nominee Offer
- Click on Complete Nomination
- Copy address to all
- Save

Application should now show as housed in HOMES and nomination should show as COMP.

Suspend an application

The SHO may suspend a client's application based on the following:

- Client request to do so giving reasonable grounds
- Client needs to provide more documentation
- Debt owing on previous tenancy

To suspend an application:

- Log in to HOMES
- Click on Application
- Click on Actions drop down box select Update Application List Entry Status
- Change list status to SUSP – suspend for a period
- Enter start and review dates
- Enter reason for suspension
- Save
- Enter the suspension end date to outlook calendar to follow up as the application will become active/live again at the end of the suspension period.

1.04 Facilitation of social housing products

Purpose

To provide guidance for staff in handling client requests for transfers, priority assessments and information on housing products.

Definitions

SHO – Senior Housing Officer

CSO - Client Services Officer

TA - Temporary accommodation

Responsibilities

Senior Housing Officer – approvals and decision-making

Client Services Officer – Initial assessment, data entry

Access Procedures

- Change of Circumstance
- Priority Assessment
- Temporary Accommodation
- Transfer Assessment
- Rentstart Bond Loan

Housing Products

The below housing products are available via the FaCS website www.facs.nsw.gov.au or by phone 1800 422 322.

- Rent Choice Start Safely
- Rent Choice Youth and Private Rental Subsidy
- Tenancy Assistance (rental arrears)
- Tenancy Guarantee

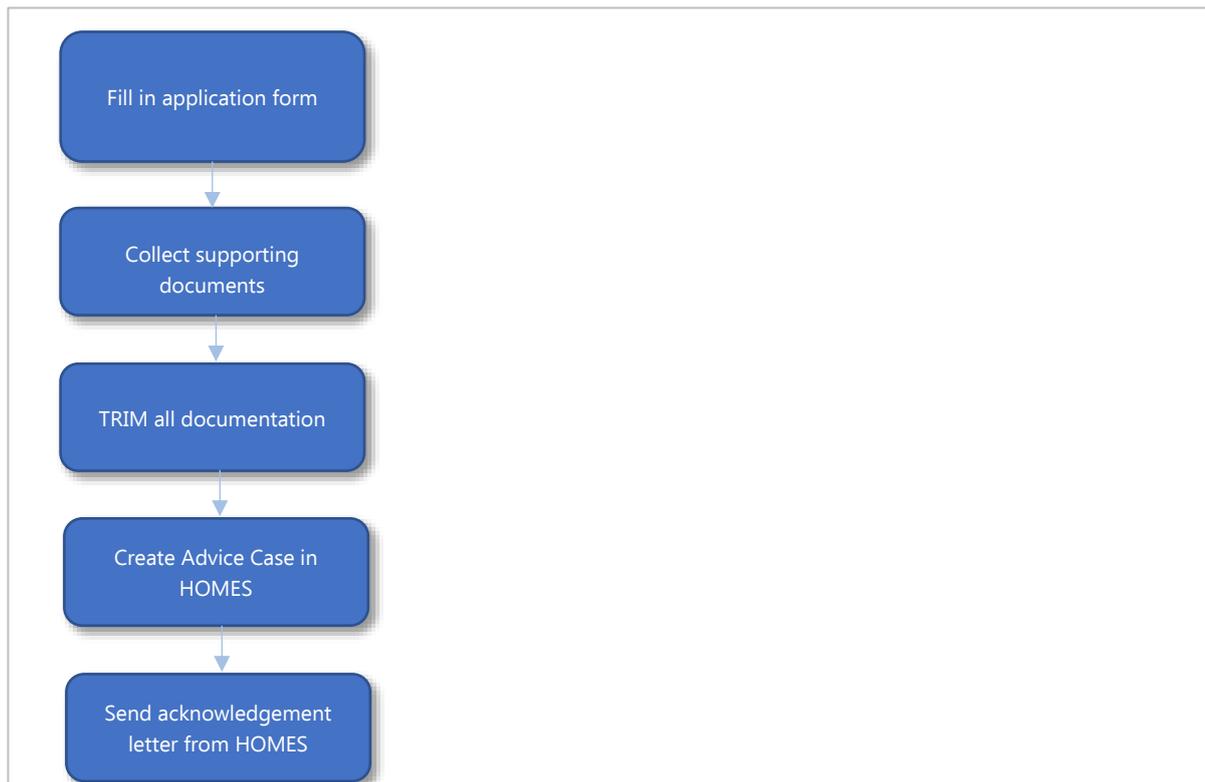
Change of Circumstances procedure



When a client's needs change they will need to fill in a Change of Circumstances form as it may improve their position on the Housing register as well as the type of house they may be allocated.

- Have the client fill in the Change of Circumstances form
- Collect documentation, e.g. medical assessment
- TRIM all documentation
- Create Note in clients file on HOMES
- Send acknowledgement letter

Priority Assessment Procedure



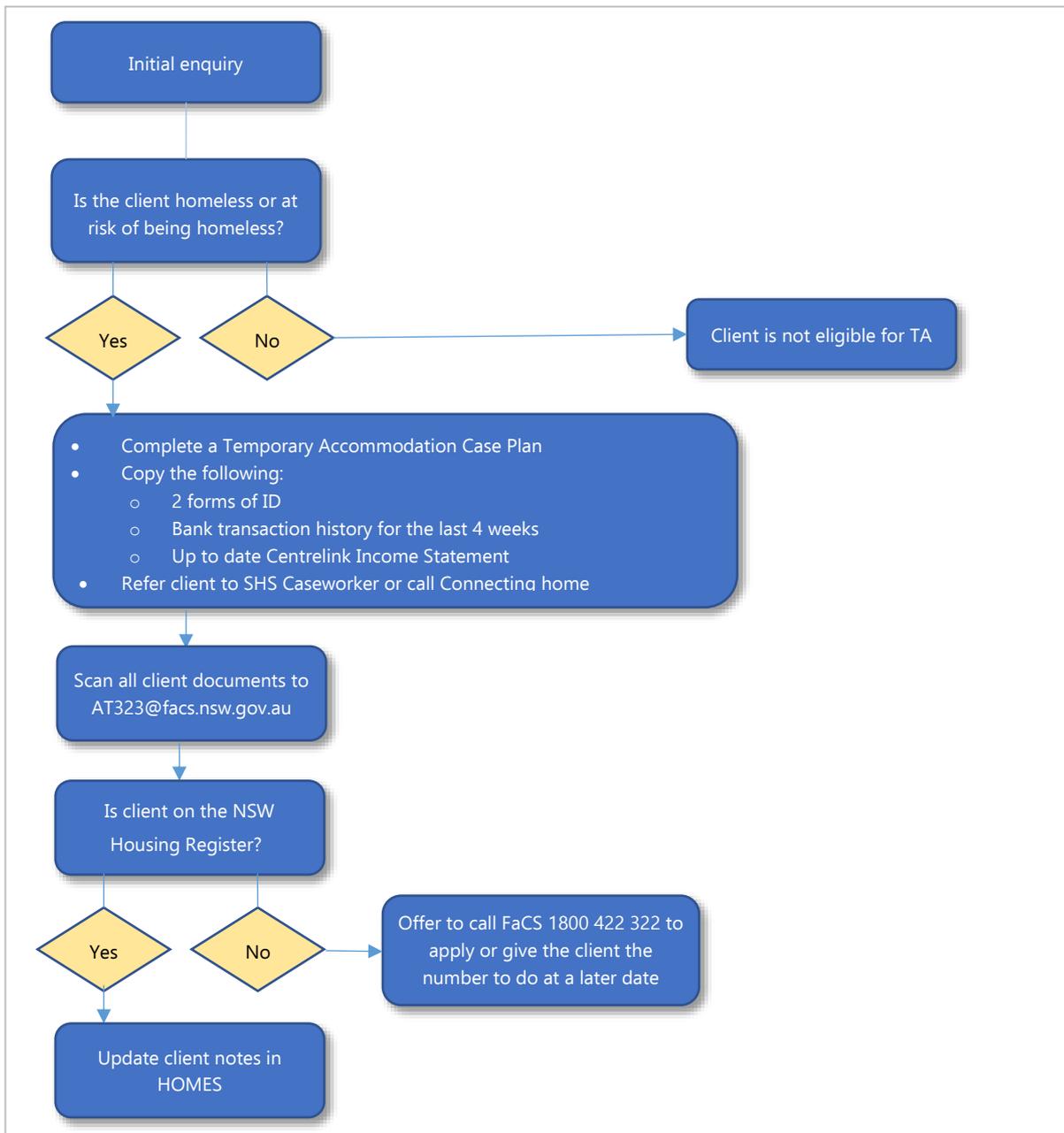
Depending on a client's/tenants situation, they may be eligible for a Priority assessment, however this is determined by FaCS based on the information provided by us.

Collect the following supporting documentation:

- Evidence around the reason for priority, such as:
 - Support letters
 - Medical assessments
 - Police event numbers
 - AVO's
- 2 forms of ID
- Bank statement
- Centrelink income statement
- Application for Housing Assistance form
- Additional persons form, if applicable
- Change of Circumstances form

- Consent to Exchange Information form
- Independent Living Skills Assessment form, if applicable
- TRIM all supporting evidence to the tenants TRIM file under a new sub-folder called "Priority Housing Application" (see *TRIM Procedure*)
- Create an advice case for the tenant through their HOMES file (see *HOMES Procedure*)

Temporary Accommodation Procedure

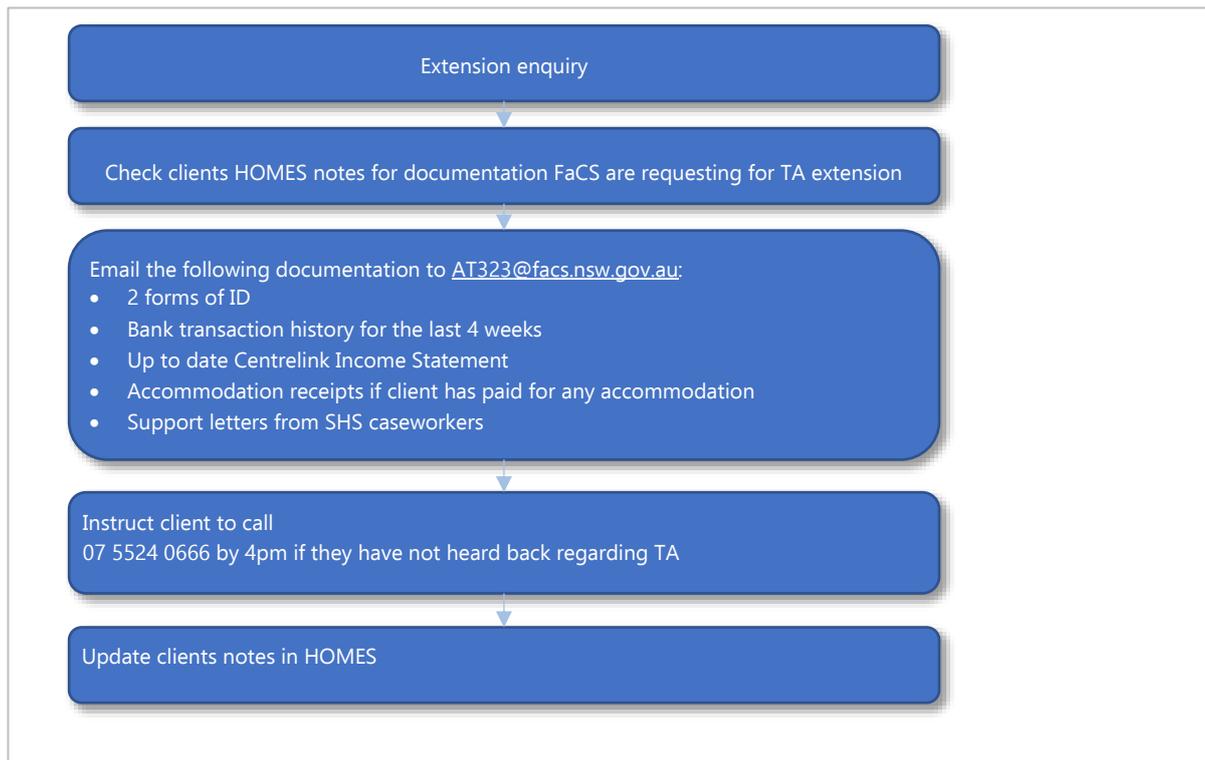


Temporary accommodation can be offered to clients who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. When a client first presents themselves requesting TA request the following documents:

- 2 forms of ID
- Up to date bank transaction history for the last 4 weeks
- Up to date Centrelink Income Statement

1. Fill in the Temporary Accommodation Case Plan in detail, including reason for homelessness.
2. Email all documents to FaCS AT323@facs.nsw.gov.au, requesting temporary accommodation for the client. Include in the email any additional information that may be of assistance i.e. presentation of client.
3. Advise the client it could take up to 4pm that day for TA to be processed by FaCS. If they have not heard back by this time, advise them to call Link 2 Home on 1800 152 152.
4. If the client is on the NSW Housing Register update the client's details in HOMES. If the client is not on the NSW Housing Register encourage them to apply either by phoning 1800 422 322 or on the FaCS website.

Temporary Accommodation Extension Procedure



Extension of TA can be offered to clients after first receiving TA.

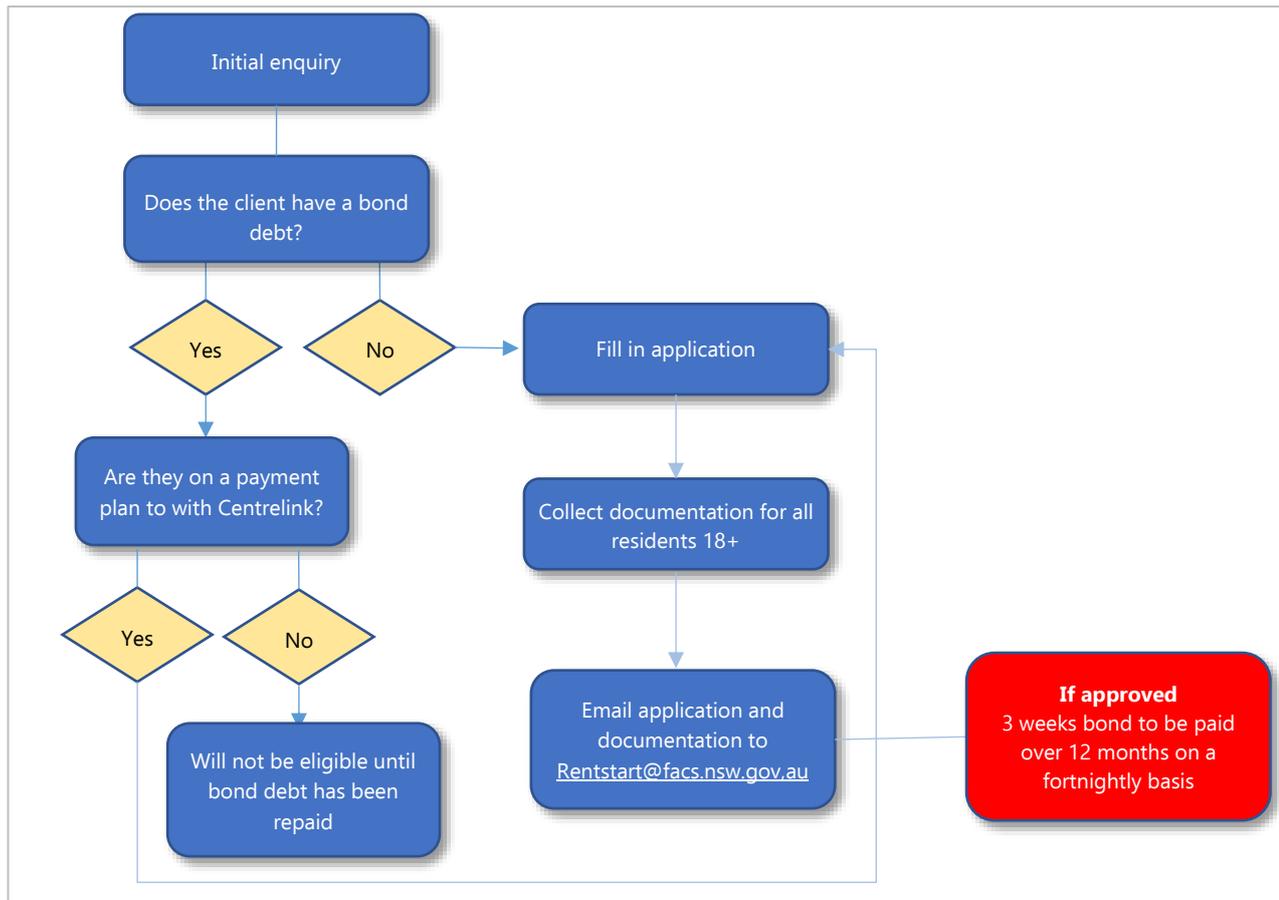
How to apply for TA extension

Check HOMES to see what information/documentation FaCS require for a TA extension.

Email the following documents to AT323@facs.nsw.gov.au:

- 2 forms of ID
 - Up to date bank transaction history for the last 4 weeks
 - Up to date Centrelink Income Statement
 - Any receipts where the client has paid for accommodation
 - Rental diary, if FaCS request
 - Support letters from SHS Caseworker
1. If the client has not heard from anyone regarding their TA extension by 4pm, instruct the client to call 07 5524 0666.

Rentstart Bond Loan Procedure



Rent Start is an initiative to help private renters set up a tenancy in the private rental market. Applicants must not have a previous unpaid bond debt.

How to apply for Rent Start

Collect the following documentation for all residents/applicants 18 years and over:

- Bank statement
- Centrelink income statement, if applicable
- 2 current ID's
- If working, 4 x most recent payslips or letter from employer

Fill in Rentstart Bond Loan Application form

Advise client that if approved the bond loan is for 3 weeks only and is repayable over 12 months on a fortnightly basis

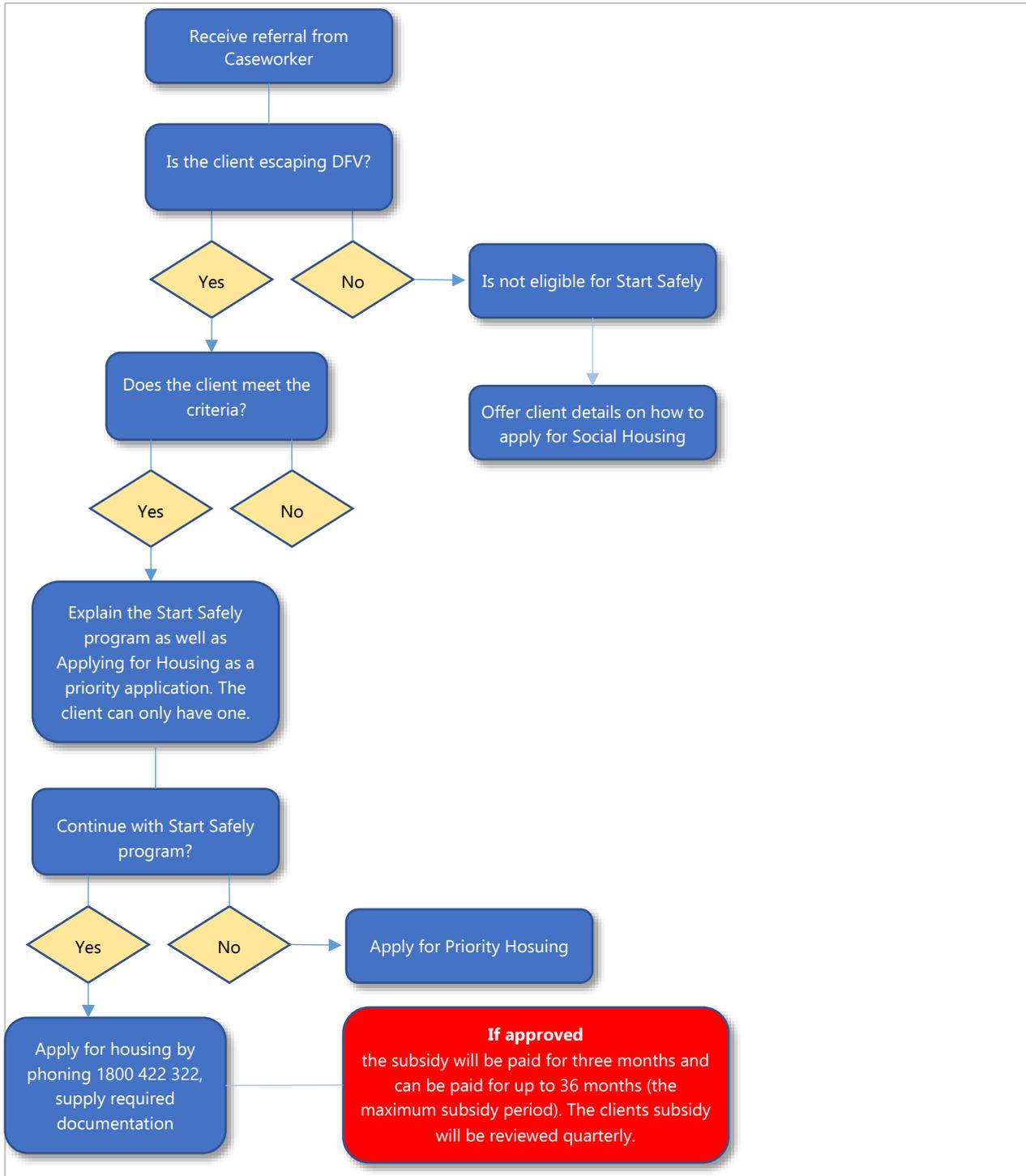
Clients can be assessed for additional assistance such as 2 weeks in advance, *Question 20*, but maybe required to supplied additional evidence, such as:

- Notice of Termination
- Support Letter
- Doctor's certificate proving long term homelessness

NOTE: Rent in advance does not get paid back and tenants can apply once a year. Medical, youth, DV may be eligible for 6 weeks upfront rent.

NOTE: If renting through a private landlord, ask if the landlord resides at the same address. If so, they will need to provide the landlords rates notice showing 2 separate dwellings.

Start Safely Procedure



Start Safely provides short to medium term financial support for people escaping Domestic or Family Violence and be:

- homeless or at risk of being homeless
- eligible for social housing
- demonstrate they can afford private market rental after the subsidy period ends
- engage in support services.

How to apply for Start Safely

If the client meets the above criteria, apply for housing assistance by phoning FaCS on 1800 422 322

Supply the following along with the application for housing:

- support letters
- evidence from hospital, AVO, police, medical assessment

What is the subsidy?

- 25% of weekly income
- 100% of rent assistance

How long is the subsidy paid for?

Initially, the subsidy will be paid for three months and can be paid for up to 36 months (the maximum subsidy period). The client's subsidy will be reviewed quarterly.

NOTE: Where rents are more expensive FaCS will pay more subsidy if the clients are working.

NOTE: depending on the extent of DV the client may be eligible for Victims Compensation.

Rent Choice Youth

Youth Subsidy

A young person between the age of 16 and 24 years old, may be eligible for Youth Subsidy if they meet the following criteria:

- eligible for social housing
- be homeless or at risk of being homeless
- are an Australian Citizen or permanent resident
- are motivated to work or complete study or training to help obtain a job, and
- are willing to engage with a support provider, who will help you engage in training, education and employment
- are on a low income or studying.

If the clients meets the criteria the Youth Subsidy program will help to:

- find the client a place to live
- get approved for a lease
- pay the rent for up to 3 years
- stay in a current rental if its affordable
- link to a support worker

How to apply

Complete Application for Housing by phone or online

Provide required documentation:

- ID
- Bank statement
- income details
- support letters
- medical assessment

What is the subsidy?

- 25% of weekly income
- 100% of rent assistance

Once the client has paid their part of the rent, FaCS will pay the rest directly to the landlord or real estate agent.

Private Rental Subsidy

A Private Rental Subsidy assists people to access affordable accommodation in the private rental market, if they meet the following criteria:

- meet social housing eligibility criteria
- be approved for priority status on the NSW Housing Register
- have a disability
- be at risk in your current accommodation.

How to apply

Complete Application for Housing by phone or online

Provide required documentation:

- ID
- Bank statement
- income details
- support letters
- medical assessment

Once approved, FaCS will send an approval letter to the client detailing what kind of property to look for. The support service will help to the client find a private rental.

What is the subsidy?

- 25% of weekly income
- 100% of rent assistance

Once the client has paid their part of the rent, FaCS will pay the rest directly to the landlord or real estate agent. The subsidy will be paid until they accept an offer of social housing.

NOTE: the client will stay active on the NSW Housing register until they receive an offer of social housing. If the client rejects a reasonable offer of social housing while they are receiving a Private Rental Subsidy, the subsidy will be stopped. Tenancy Assistance procedure

FaCs can assist tenants, private or social with up to 4 weeks of their rental arrears per year.

How to apply for tenancy assistance

Collect the following documentation:

- letter from real estate stating the tenant can reside in the property for a minimum of 12 months if arrears are paid
- evidence of why they have gone in to arrears
- bank statement and/or
- Centrelink statement
- ID

1. Fill in Application for Housing

2. Send application and supporting documents to AT323@facs.nsw.gov.au

Tenancy Guarantee procedure

What is the Tenancy Guarantee?

The Tenancy Guarantee is an incentive and added security for landlords and agents to offer accommodation in private rentals where they would otherwise be refused.

The Tenancy Guarantee is:

- up to \$1,500 (including GST) is available to landlords/agents to cover rental arrears and/or property damage over and above the rental bond
- valid for the fixed-term period of the tenancy agreement for up to 12 months, or until the tenancy is terminated, whichever is sooner.

The client must meet the following eligibility:

- meet social housing income eligibility criteria
 - demonstrate they have looked and applied for private rental accommodation without success
 - have been assessed as able to afford private rental
 - have been assessed as able to sustain private rental
 - do not have a current Tenancy Guarantee
 - have agreed to the conditions for receiving a Tenancy Guarantee

How to apply

- Fill in a Tenancy Guarantee application form
- Provide supporting documentation
- Once approved, FaCS will supply a support letter for the client to take to the real estate when making an application for a private rental.
- NOTE: the Tenancy Guarantee is available for the first lease only.

Annexure 1: Allocations, offers and agreements (by allocation type)

Program/service	Allocation method & protocols	Allocation documentation	Offers	Agreement to be used
General social housing	Housing Pathways	Offer checklists and offer response forms (TRIM)	Tenancy Officer	Residential tenancies agreement (social housing)
Specialist Homelessness Services (program)	As per agreement with SHS service provider	SHS tenant nomination form Nominee details form	Offer is extended to applicant by support service.	Residential tenancies agreement (social housing)
Mental health program (bot boarding and lodging)	As per agreement with MH service provider	Nominee details form	Offer is extended to applicant by support service.	Residential tenancies agreement (social housing)
Specialist Disability Accommodation	As per agreement with SDA service provider	Nominee details form	Offer is extended to applicant by support service.	Occupancy agreement
Boarding and lodging (mental health)	As per agreement with CRS service provider	Resident Intake/Exit form	Offer is extended to applicant by support service.	Boarding and lodging agreement
Crisis accommodation (refuges)	As per agreement with SHS service provider	Resident Intake/Exit form	Offer is extended to applicant by support service.	Crisis accommodation agreement

Note:

All internal transfers must be documented by way of a completed and approved Transfer Assessment form

Annexure 2: Standard bedroom entitlements for public housing

Table 1: Standard bedroom entitlements for public housing

Household type	Standard bedroom entitlement
Single people	Studio, one or two bedrooms
Couples	One or two bedrooms
Single people or couples with one other household member	Two or three bedrooms
Single people or couples with two other household members	Two or three bedrooms
Single people or couples with three other household members	Three or four bedrooms
Single people or couples with four other household members	Three or four bedrooms
Single people or couples with five or more other household members	Four bedroom or, if available, five or more bedrooms. Clients who have a five-bedroom household complement will generally be offered a four-bedroom property unless a five-bedroom property is vacant when the client's turn is reached. This is because of the limited availability of five-bedroom accommodation.

Table 2: Criteria for accommodating children

Situation	Response
Child is over 18 years of age	The person is considered to be an adult when calculating the minimum bedroom entitlement
Shared bedrooms	Same sex children up to 18 years of age are expected to share a bedroom Male and female children are expected to share a bedroom until one of the children reaches 10 years of age.
Children can't share a bedroom	FACS will allocate an additional bedroom where the client has demonstrated a need for same sex children, or children under 10 years of age, to have separate bedrooms. Examples of situations where an extra bedroom could be appropriate include where there is a large age gap between the children or behavioural factors.
Shared custody	The child/children are considered to be part of the household if the client has shared custody of children for 3 days per week or more. Normal bedroom entitlements apply.
Access visits from children	The children are not considered to be part of the household if they visit for less than 3 days per week. The client must demonstrate a need for an extra bedroom to accommodate access visits.
Future needs of children who may need separate bedrooms in 2 or 3 years time	FACS will take this into account when matching the client to a property if it can. FACS will make this decision on a case by case basis according to the size and type of housing that is available in the area.

Approved by:	General Manager Housing
Person responsible	General Manager Housing
Legislation or other requirements	<p>Community Housing Access Policy National community housing standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard 1.1 Allocation of housing • Standard 3.6: Complaints and appeals • Standard 6.3 Management information systems <p>Residential Tenancies Act 2010 (NSW) CHLP Funding Agreement Community Housing Eligibility Policy National Regulatory Scheme for Community Housing Unit-Level reporting (NSW State government) Residential Tenancies Act 2010 (NSW) Residential Tenancies Regulation 2010 (NSW)</p>
Related Documents	<p>Procedure 9.01 Vacant property management Procedure 2.01 Tenancy establishment procedures Procedure 2.03 Tenant nominations) Procedure 10.02 Affordable housing eligibility reviews Section 5: Tenants Rights and Participation (Complaints and appeals) SHS nomination form Client Intake/Exit form Nominee details form Supported housing agreements Decision on Housing Register urgent form Local Allocation Strategy (template) Transfer assessment form Section 3: Rent setting and management Residential tenancies agreement (affordable housing) Affordable housing application form (Parts A &B) Affordable Housing eligibility calculator Recognition as Tenant Application form</p>

<END>