

VCCH TENANCY & PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

Policy Name:	Renter Transfer and Succession
Approved by:	Policy Authorisation Committee
Date effective:	July 2022
Due to be reviewed:	July 2025

Section 1 – Introduction

PURPOSE

VincentCare Community Housing (VCCH) is committed to ensuring that renter transfers are managed in an equitable and transparent manner, in keeping with the Residential Tenancies Act and observing the principles of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights. The policy also provides for succession, ensuring that VincentCare Community Housing responds to changes in renters' household circumstances.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to all renters managed by VincentCare Community Housing.

For the purpose of this policy, the term 'renter' is inclusive of the term 'resident'.

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy will be reviewed every three years. It will be modified or replaced whenever VCCH becomes aware that this policy no longer complies with the requirements of the organisation or when any legislative or regulatory obligations impacting renter transfers and succession change.

Section 2 – Policy Statement

VCCH shall respond to changes in renters' circumstances in a way that is ethical, lawful and supportive and which minimises the likelihood of a return to homelessness.

Guiding principles/approach

VCCH recognises that circumstances change and is committed to working with renters to enable access to housing appropriate to their needs. This may include:

- supporting renters who are experiencing family violence;
- assisting renters and household members when there is a relationship breakdown;
- managing occupancy in line with property size;
- dealing with the death of a renter

2.1 Family violence

- VCCH is committed to supporting any person experiencing family violence.
- Where family violence has occurred or is occurring in a property, VCCH shall prioritise the housing needs of the person experiencing family violence and their dependant household members.
- VCCH will support people experiencing family violence to remain in the property if appropriate

2.2 Household breakdown

- In cases of household breakdown, the Primary renter and their dependants (where applicable) will be assisted to remain in the property if appropriate.
- VCCH will seek to locate an alternative property for the secondary renter or make an appropriate referral to an alternative service.

2.3 Under occupancy and overcrowding

- VCCH utilises the Housing Size Guidelines contained in the *DHHS Allocations Manual: Matching Clients with Housing*. It is a guide only and VCCH reserves the right to decide based on available properties to meet the renter's needs

2.4 Departure or death of a Primary Renter

- When the Primary Renter of a property departs permanently or dies, staff shall assess the tenancy status and support needs of any remaining household members in the property, in line with the occupancy and eligibility requirements. A determination will then be made as to whether:
 - the other household members can remain in the property,
 - relocation to an alternative VCCH property is required
 - the renter requires support to relocate to a property external to VCCH.

2.5 Renter Initiated transfers

2.5.1 Transitional Housing

- Renters who may wish to transfer to a different property during their tenancy are required to engage the assistance of their support worker.
- The support worker must refer to the Housing & Support Partnership Agreement and advocate on their client's behalf in writing.
- Circumstances in which a voluntary property transfer request may be approved are:
 - Risk of family violence;
 - Violence and serious threats from neighbours, associates or co-renters;
 - Significant change to household size; and/or,
 - Significant mental and physical health concerns which are exacerbated by the property or location.
- The Program Manager will consider transfer requests that meet the criteria above.
- The Program Manager will assess the transfer request against the Housing Plan and any exemptions listed on the Housing Application.

2.5.2 Long Term Housing

- Renters seeking a transfer must apply through the Victorian Housing Register. Renters seeking a transfer will need to meet transfer eligibility requirements of the Victorian government. See Housing Victoria website - VHR Priority Transfer Guidelines.

2.5.3 Transfer Eligibility

Transfer applicants must also meet additional VCCH criteria, including:

- rent payments being up to date,
- the property the renter is transferring from being maintained by the renter in a good condition
- no recent history of anti-social behaviour/VCAT action.

2.5.4 Transfer Conditions

For property transfers made at the request of renters the following applies:

- Renters are required to pay any associated removal costs
- Renters are responsible for ensuring the vacated property is left in a clean and tidy condition
- Keys to the relinquished property must be returned to VCCH within two business days of the sign-up
- The renter must agree to repay any property damage identified in the vacated property

2.6 VCCH initiated renter transfers

- VCCH will undertake transfers of renters between properties when required, acting within the parameters of the Residential Tenancies Act and observing the principles of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights.
- VCCH initiated transfers may be necessary when:
 - A leased THM property is required to be handed back to the Lease Management Team (LMT).
 - A property becomes uninhabitable/requires major refurbishment/is to be demolished or sold.

All transfers will be subject to alternative accommodation availability.

Communication

VCCH will provide clear information to renters on this policy.

Section 3 - Procedures

Any procedures established by VCCH in relation to Renter Transfer and Succession will ensure compliance with this policy.

Section 4 – References

Definitions

Word/Term	Definition
LMT	Lease Management Team
RTA	Residential Tenancies Act
THM	Transitional Housing Management
VHR	Victorian Housing Register
VCCH	VincentCare Community Housing

Related External References

Name	Link
Residential Tenancies Act 1997	http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/rta1997207/
Housing and Support Partnership Agreement	http://www.nwhn.net.au/admin/file/content/2/c7/Housing%20and%20Support%20Partnership%20Agreement%20Nov%2011.pdf
Housing Registrar Performance Standards	http://www.housingregistrar.vic.gov.au/files/assets/public/publications/performance-standards-and-evidence-guidelines/current-performance-standards.pdf

Legislation and standards

THIS POLICY IMPLEMENTS THE OBLIGATIONS OF VINCENTCARE COMMUNITY HOUSING UNDER:

- Residential Tenancies Act 1997
- Housing Act 1983 (Vic)
- Performance Standards for Registered Housing Agencies

Section 5 – Governance

Transparency and accessibility

THIS POLICY WILL BE AVAILABLE ON THE VINCENTCARE COMMUNITY HOUSING WEBSITE

[HTTPS://VINCENTCARE.ORG.AU](https://vincentcare.org.au)

Responsibility

Process Owner	State Manger Housing
Content Holder/s	Housing Program Manager
Recommending body	Quality Committee
Endorsed by	Policy Authorisation Committee

Change history

Version	Effective Date	Author	Change
V1	May 2019	General Manager Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This is a new policy for publication on VincentCare's website• This policy is a compliance requirement for registered agency participation in the Victorian Housing Register (VHR)
V2	June 2022	Manager Tenancy & Property	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Revised and updated to reflect RTA changes made effective March 2021• Removal of detailed procedures• Update of external references

