

Policy Name: Maintenance and Repairs (public facing policy)

Authorised by: Policy Authorisation Policy

Date effective: March 2022

Due to be reviewed: March 2025

Section 1 – Introduction

PURPOSE

This policy and procedure ensures that Vincent Care Community Housing (VCCH) complies with its maintenance and repairs obligations under the Housing Registrar Performance Standards, Residential Tenancies Act 1997 and other associated standards, guidelines and agreements.

VCCH operates a diverse range of accommodation and support services for people experiencing disadvantage, and is committed to applying an appropriate duty of care to all people in contact with VincentCare services. This includes protecting people's personal and cultural safety regardless of ability, cultural background, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation or religion. This policy supports these aspirations.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all long-term rental properties owned or managed by VincentCare Community Housing.

This policy does not apply to the following VincentCare Community Housing programs:

- Transitional housing properties managed by VincentCare Community Housing; and
- temporary or crisis accommodation.

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 the policy no longer complies with the requirements of the organisation, or where impacting legislative, compliance and regulatory changes occur.



Section 2 – Policy statement

VCCH is committed to:

- ensuring that all its properties are maintained to an acceptable standard and that required property repairs are attended to speedily and efficiently;
- ensuring that it fulfils its duties as a residential rental provider under the Residential Tenancies Act and has clearly defined planned and responsive maintenance arrangements;
- ensuring that VCCH complies with performance and legislative standards regarding property maintenance and repairs.

Guiding principles

Property maintenance programs, repair processes and systems involve planned and responsive maintenance programs.

VCCH is also required to participate in the long term and cyclical maintenance plans determined by the Department of Families, Fairness & Housing (DFFH) for DFFH owned properties managed by VCCH.

2.1 Planned Maintenance

VCCH's involvement in planned maintenance programs includes the following considerations:

- typically occurs every five to ten years and covers property maintenance, such as internal and external painting.
- Long-term maintenance covers the life cycle of the building and includes replacement of key components such as kitchens and bathrooms.
- Planned maintenance works will be undertaken to ensure compliance and optimise asset performance

2.2 Responsive Maintenance and Repairs

VCCH is responsible for ensuring completion of responsive maintenance at properties in accordance with the Residential Tenancies Act and/or any other relevant legislation and standards. VCCH will manage responsive maintenance and repair requests as follows.

- If minor responsive repairs are not necessary to maintain the property at an acceptable standard, staff may use their discretion to place repairs on hold until the property is vacant, to prevent disruption to the renter.
- Staff shall ask the renter to sign written consent to provide their first name and telephone number to contractors in the event that repairs are required.
- VCCH shall provide renters with easy-to-read and easy-to-follow instructions for ordering maintenance both during office hours and after hours.
- For continuous improvement purposes staff shall invite verbal feedback from the renter on their satisfaction with contractor behaviour and the work completed.

Section 3 - Procedures

Any procedures established by VCCH in relation to Maintenance & Repairs will ensure compliance with this policy.

Section 4 – References

Definitions

DFFH	means the Victorian Department of Families, Fairness & Housing
Minor Response Repairs	means repairs not normally covered by residential rental provider responsibilities
RTA	Residential Tenancies Act
THM	Transitional Housing Management

External Links

Name	Description
Homelessness Assistance Program Guidelines	https://dhhs.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/201705/Homelessness-Services-Guidelines-and-Conditions-of-Funding-May-2014.pdf
Housing and Support Partnership Agreement	http://www.nwhn.net.au/admin/file/content2/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
Residential Tenancies Act 1997	http://www8.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/viewdb/au/legis/vic/consol_act/rta1997207/

Legislation and Standards

This policy implements the obligations of VincentCare Community Housing under:

- Housing Act 1983 (Vic)
- Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic)
- Guidelines for Registered Housing Agencies published by DFFH
- Performance Standards for Registered Housing Agencies

Section 4 – Governance

Responsibility

Process Owner	EGM Client Services
Content Holder/s	State Housing Managers
Recommending body	Quality Committee
Endorsed by	Policy Authorisation Committee

Change history

Version	Effective Date	Author	Change
1	May 2019	General Manager Housing	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)
2	March 2022	Manager Tenancy and Property	Revised and updated to reflect RTA changes made effective March 2021. Removal of detailed Procedures. Update of external references.