

ALLOCATION OF LONG-TERM HOUSING POLICY

Name of Policy:	VCCH - Allocation of Long-Term Housing
Approval Authority:	CEO
Date effective:	12 March 2025
Due to be reviewed:	12 March 2028
Accountable Officer:	EGM Housing and Property Strategy
Responsible Officer:	Housing Manager, VCCH
Policy applies to:	VincentCare Community Housing

Purpose

1. The purpose of this Policy is to establish VincentCare Community Housing's (VCCH) approach to allocating vacant properties in its long-term rental housing portfolio.

Scope

2. This Policy applies to VincentCare Community Housing.
3. This Policy applies to all long-term rental properties owned and managed by VCCH.
4. This policy does not apply to Transitional housing properties managed by VCCH and temporary or crisis accommodation.
5. Within this Policy:
 - a. "Renter" is inclusive of the term 'resident';

Definitions

WORD/ TERM	DEFINITION
Applicant	A person who has applied for housing via the Victorian Housing Register or, where permitted by this policy, directly to VCCH.
Homes Victoria	The Victorian government statutory authority that owns all public housing land in Victoria and which is the principal funding body for community housing.
Nomination access	Arrangements between VCCH and third party support providers where the support provider nominates applicants for certain vacant properties

WORD/ TERM	DEFINITION
Priority access	Applicants on the VHR who have been assessed as having a priority housing need.
Public housing	Housing owned and managed by Department of Health and Human Services.
Targeted Social Housing	The properties that are considered Targeted Social Housing under agreements between VCCH and Homes Victoria.
Transitional Housing	The Victorian Government program to provide housing on a short- term basis to people at risk of homelessness
Victorian Housing Register	The state-wide common application for people seeking public housing and community housing.

Policy

SECTION 1 – PRINCIPLES

6. VCCH's approach to allocation is informed by the following principles:

Integrity

7. VCCH will:

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

Fairness and Transparency

8. VCCH will allocate long-term housing to eligible applicants in a manner which:

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

Sustainability

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

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

Equity

10. Allocations Target - Victorian Housing Register (VHR)

11. Under the VHR's allocations framework, VCCH is required to meet an annual Priority Allocations Target. This requires VCCH to allocate a percentage of vacancies in Targeted Social Housing to Priority Access applicants in each financial year.

12. Nomination access

a. Where nomination access is in place, VCCH will:

- i. establish appropriate arrangements in protocol agreements with referral agencies who have responsibility for nominating applicants for vacancies, to ensure timely and appropriate referrals; and
- ii. require that referral agencies nominate applicants who have a current VHR Priority Access application.

Suitability

13. When sourcing applicants VCCH will in the first instance seek suitable applicants from the VHR.

14. 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 VincentCare Community Housing will ensure that such applicants complete a VHR application at the time of making an offer of housing.

Compliance

15. VCCH will ensure in making any allocation that it complies with any other legal requirements concerning eligibility for housing or allocation of housing.

SECTION 2 – SUCCESS AND SUSTAINABILITY

PROMOTING SUCCESSFUL AND SUSTAINABLE TENANCIES

16. VCCH is committed to treating all applicants fairly and will not discriminate against any potential applicant or applicant on the basis of any attribute protected by legislation.

17. VCCH will assess all applicants before making an offer of housing to determine eligibility and suitability for a particular vacancy. If VCCH declines to offer an applicant housing, it will inform the applicant accordingly.

MATCHING HOUSEHOLDS TO THE RIGHT HOME

18. In allocating housing, VCCH will also have regard to the VHR operational guideline, 'Clients with Special Accommodation Requirements.'

19. VCCH will match applicants to properties so that an allocation:

- a. is the right size for the applicant's household;
- b. is in an area consistent with the applicant's needs;
- c. assists the applicant to access employment or any support services that they need;
- d. makes the best use of housing stock owned or managed by VCCH;
- e. encourages a sustainable tenancy; and

- f. 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.
20. VCCH will ensure that properties with specific features that are in high demand and short supply are only allocated to those applicants who need them, including:
- a. properties that are suitable for older people;
 - b. properties that have been built or modified to meet the needs of people with a disability;
 - c. properties on the ground floor,
 - d. properties with level access; or
 - e. properties with a yard/garden.
21. VCCH will ask applicants without a VHR application to provide evidence to substantiate any particular requirements.

SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE AND HARMONIOUS COMMUNITIES

22. VCCH may, to the extent necessary, adopt different strategies in allocation in response to:
- a. a high concentration of public and community housing stock in a particular area;
 - b. a newly built and vacant multistorey community housing development;
 - c. a high concentration of renters with multiple health, social or economic issues in a particular area or building;
 - d. existing tenancy management issues (or a potential for them to develop);
 - e. existing neighbourhood tensions or disputes which may be exacerbated if allocations are not sensitively handled; and
 - f. a mismatch of supply and demand making the property hard to let.
23. When allocating properties of a newly built and vacant multistorey community housing development, VCCH will use interview screening forms to assess an applicant's suitability for allocation of a property. Allocation of properties will be made under the VHR allocations framework or other frameworks depending on the program funding guidelines.
24. To ensure the protection of the applicant's personal and cultural safety, cultural background, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation or religion and age, these factors may be taken into consideration when allocating properties in a multistorey community housing building. The suitability of an applicant will also be assessed against [VincentCare's Recovery Model](#) principles. This is to ensure the likelihood of a sustainable and harmonious community.

Supporting Documentation

- a. [VCCH - Eligibility For Long Term Housing Policy](#)
- b. [VCCH – Neighbours Policy](#)

- c. VCCH – Renter Transfer and Succession Policy

Legislative and Regulatory Obligations and Quality Alignment

- a. Housing Act 1983 (Vic)
- b. Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (Vic)
- c. Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic)