

2. Consultation draft Community housing allocations framework for the Victorian Housing Register

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Victorian
housing register

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Key Definitions

Term

Proposed Definition

Adjustment Factor	An equation that adjusts the calculation (metric) of a participating registered agency's performance against the priority allocations target to acknowledge and encourage participating registered agencies to make priority allocations across their entire portfolio. The rationale of the adjustment factor is to include allocations outside of targeted social housing in these participating registered agency's performance, while ensuring the performance uplift is proportionate and fair to other participating registered agencies with the largest proportions of targeted social housing.
Eligibility Criteria	The asset, income and agency specific eligibility criteria that must be met by an applicant to be eligible for a tenancy in social housing.
Nomination Rights	An arrangement between a participating registered agency and a support agency under which the support agency can nominate certain households for tenancies in housing owned or managed by a participating registered agency.
Participating Registered Agency	<p>A registered agency that is a participant in the Victorian Housing Register.</p> <p>Agency-specific eligibility criteria must be mission driven. Examples include Aboriginality, gender, age and ethnicity.</p> <p>See also <i>Business Rules: Agency-specific eligibility and allocation policies and nomination rights</i>.</p>
Performance Standards	Performance standards for registered agencies (2014) determined by the relevant Minister under section 93 of the <i>Housing Act 1983</i> and published in the Victoria Government Gazette. The Performance Standards must be met by all registered agencies.
Priority Access Group	<p>The Priority Access Group comprises the applicants who meet the priority access eligibility criteria of the following priority categories of the Victorian Housing Register and subcategories including family violence, as detailed at Appendix 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Emergency Management Housing• Priority Transfers• Homeless with support• Supported housing• Special Housing Needs• Special Housing Needs aged 55 years and over.
Priority Access Eligibility Criteria	The criteria that must be met by an applicant to be eligible for a particular priority access group category.
Priority Allocations	Allocations made from the priority access group categories and subcategories (or priority reasons).
Priority Allocations Target	The annual target percentage of priority allocations for each participating registered agency.

Register of Interest	The Register of Interest is the part of the Register for applicants who meet the eligibility criteria but do not meet the priority access eligibility criteria. These applicants do not have urgent housing or support needs and may benefit from social housing.
Registered Agency	A rental housing agency registered as a housing association or a housing provider under Part VIII of the <i>Housing Act 1983</i> .
Social Housing	<p>Social housing means—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) public housing; and (b) housing owned, controlled or managed by a participating registered agency;
Support agency	<p>A support agency is an agency, a body or a person providing services under any of the following for the purposes of assisting disadvantaged people to access social housing or supporting people to sustain tenancies in social housing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) a State contract or any other contract or agreement between the agency, body or person and the Department, the Director of Housing or any other Department of the State; (b) a contract or agreement between the agency, body or person and a Department of the Commonwealth.
Targeted Social Housing	<p>Housing owned, controlled or managed by a participating registered agency that has been subsidised by government including but not limited to properties in which the Director of Housing has an interest registered under section 107 of the <i>Housing Act 1983</i>, properties over which the Director of Housing has a mortgage and properties over which the Director of Housing holds a floating charge registered with the Australian Securities Investment Commission.</p> <p>See also <i>Measuring Priority Allocations: Assessable priority allocation</i>.</p>
Victorian Housing Register	<p>The Victorian Housing Register is the way applications for social housing are managed in Victoria under Part VIIIA of the <i>Housing Act 1983</i> having regard to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the relative housing needs of eligible applicants • the health, safety and support needs of eligible applicants; and • the availability of social housing. <p>The Register brings together public and community housing applications so that people only need to apply once.</p>

Key Parameters

1. Coverage

1.1. Registered agencies in scope

The allocations framework applies to participating registered agencies.

Policy rationale

This reflects the opt-in nature of the Register, and clarifies the application of the framework to both registered housing associations and registered housing providers.

1.2. Allocations and properties in scope

Participating registered agencies should make all allocations into all social housing from the Register. This may include allocations from the Priority Access Group and the Register of Interest.

Policy rationale

This supports the primary purpose of the Register as the single point of entry to social housing. The Director of Housing requires that all allocations to Director owned properties managed by participating registered agencies will be made from the Register.

2. Measuring Priority Allocations

2.1. Assessable priority allocations

The metric will measure allocations performance only in relation to targeted social housing agreed through bilateral negotiations with each participating registered agency, with an adjustment factor to acknowledge and encourage participating registered agencies to make priority allocations across their entire portfolio.

When a targeted social housing property is owned by one participating registered agency and controlled or managed by another participating registered agency the allocation is counted for the performance target of the participating registered agency that controls or manages the property, unless other arrangements apply.

See also *Definitions: Targeted Social Housing*.

Policy rationale

This reflects the policy intent to assess priority allocations to targeted social housing, acknowledging the sector view that separate treatment is required for participating registered agencies' own properties acquired outside government sponsored processes, such as those gifted by philanthropic organisations.

2.2. Priority Allocations target

The target percentage of priority allocations is 75 per cent for each participating registered agency.

Policy rationale

This reflects the policy intention of the Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing for greater targeting of allocations to priority access applicants.

2.3. Definition of metric

The framework provides for the measurement of the number of allocations from the priority access group in the Register. All priority allocations are included in the metric calculation, regardless of whether the property allocated to the priority access applicant is classified as targeted social housing.

The calculation for each participating registered agency is:

$$\text{Performance} = (A+(C*F))/(B+(C*F))$$

Where:

A = Priority allocations to the agency's targeted social housing

B = Total allocations to the agency's targeted social housing

C = Priority allocations to the agency's other housing

E = Total allocations

F = Proportion of allocations to the agency's targeted social housing (B/E)

Policy rationale

The metric acknowledges any priority allocations outside of the targeted social housing in the participating registered agency's portfolio.

2.4. Granularity of target

Priority allocations are not subject to any sub-targets for individual groups within the Priority Access Group.

See also *Performance Monitoring: Monitoring*.

Policy rationale

This protects the specialisation and diversity of the sector and its nominating partner organisations.

3. Business Rules

3.1. Facilitation of efficient portfolio management by participating registered agencies

Allocations to be used in the metric calculation include an adjustment factor to acknowledge and encourage participating registered agencies to allocate priority access applicants across their entire portfolio.

Policy rationale

This recognises that participating registered agencies may engage in dynamic portfolio management.

3.2. Agency-specific eligibility and allocation policies and nomination rights

In recognition of, and consistent with, their organisational mission, participating registered agencies may continue to apply agency-specific eligibility and allocations policies and any nomination agreements to which the participating registered agency is subject in satisfying the priority allocations target.

See also *Definitions: Eligibility criteria*.

See also *Business Rules: Transparency in agency-specific allocation policies*.

Policy rationale

This is intended to enable preservation of the tenancy selection processes employed by participating registered agencies to deliver on their organisational mission, and contribute to stable tenancies.

Tenancy selection processes include eligibility filters such as age, ethnicity, gender or Aboriginality and selection mechanisms such as interviews and mandatory information sessions.

This is also intended to preserve nomination rights, recognising that the majority of nomination rights are likely to be consistent with the priority access eligibility criteria.

3.3. Transparency in agency-specific allocation policies

Agency-specific allocation policies must be made available to prospective tenants through a standard comparator tool.

See also *Business Rules: Agency-specific eligibility and allocation policies and nomination rights*.

Policy rationale

The intention for this requirement is to increase transparency for prospective tenants, to facilitate informed choice of social housing.

3.4. Procedural fairness in allocations

Participating registered agencies must be fair, transparent and responsive in delivering housing including determining and managing eligibility, allocation, and termination of housing assistance. Participating registered agencies' access and allocations policy must be sensitive to clients with complex needs and low incomes and, to the extent permitted by performance standards, ensures allocation of tenancies to this client group.

To inform these obligations, the Register will provide participating registered agencies with information on applicants' order by priority and effective date.

Policy rationale

This is intended to reflect requirements in existing performance standards, and to facilitate information for participating registered agency to assess applicants against criteria including housing need and length of wait.

4. Performance Monitoring

4.1. Commencement

Performance monitoring against the priority allocations target and reporting to the Housing Registrar commences from the date when a registered agency becomes a participating registered agency.

The format of performance monitoring and reporting will depend on a range of conditions, including the amount of time that has elapsed since the registered agency became a participating registered agency, and the number of allocations made annually by the participating registered agency.

See also *Business Rules: Transparency in agency-specific allocation policies*.

Policy rationale

This is intended to reflect that it will take time for the Register dataset to mature, and therefore for accurate performance measurement to emerge.

4.2. Monitoring

Allocations performance data from the Register will be provided to the Housing Registrar at the end of the reporting year that a registered agency becomes a participating registered agency. However this data will not be provided for public reporting purposes.

Annual allocations performance data accrued from the commencement of the next reporting year will be provided by the Director of Housing to the Housing Registrar at the end of that year for public reporting.

If the participating registered agency's total allocations to targeted social housing dwellings for that year as calculated by the denominator of the adjustment factor ($B+(C \cdot F)$)

- equals or exceeds 12, the data will be reported publicly in the same year or
- is less than 12, the data will be held over until the reporting year when the cumulative number of the agency's allocations over those years is 12 or greater, and reported publicly in the same year.

As is currently the case the form and extent of public reporting will be agreed between registered agencies and the Housing Registrar.

Policy rationale

This approach to monitoring is intended to enhance accountability and transparency. Reporting only in the year when a participating registered agency's total number of vacancies for the metric exceeds 12 will ensure monitoring equity for smaller participating registered agencies that have lower annual numbers of allocations.

Allocations performance data for registered agencies that are not participating registered agency will continue to be reported in the current format to the Housing Registrar for the foreseeable future.

However as the primary purpose of the Register is as a single point of entry to social housing, this reporting may be reviewed when participation in the Register reaches a critical mass.

4.3. Compliance and Enforcement

Participating registered agencies must comply with the allocations framework under the Housing Registrar's Performance Standards on allocations performance and contractual arrangements, including for Victorian Housing Register participation, as well as continuing the Director of Housing's practice of including allocations performance requirements as a condition of new initiatives and funding.

Policy rationale

The intention is to embed this allocations framework for participating registered agencies within the existing regulatory regime of performance standards administered by the Housing Registrar (as enabled by the *Housing Act 1983*), which state that:

The performance standards govern the relationship between the registered agency and the Registrar. The registered agency may also be bound by contractual relationships with the Director of Housing. The registered agency will need to ensure it can comply with both.

Enforcement measures against non-compliant participating registered agencies may be managed by the Director of Housing under contracts, including through action to recover funding, and to ensure compliance with the conditions of participation of the Victorian Housing Register.

4.4. Review

In the first years of the Register's operation, operational policies and guidelines will be periodically assessed in relation to their efficacy by the Department of Health and Human Services in consultation with the Housing Registrar, Victorian Housing Register Senior Leadership Group, or other appropriate representatives of the community housing and homelessness services sector.

Policy rationale

This is intended to reflect that the introduction of the Register represents a new way of working for the sector, and that care will need to be taken to address any unintended consequences.

Appendix 1 – Priority access group for the priority allocations target for community housing organisations participating in the Victorian Housing Register

Priority access category	Income and asset limits for calculation of the priority access target	Notes	New or transfer	Priority Sub category
Emergency Management Housing	Register of interest income and asset limits		New and transfer	For people whose housing is no longer safe or habitable, due to an emergency, for example a bushfire, flood or storm.
Priority Transfers	Transfer: register of interest income and asset limits, or disability modification asset limit where relevant	Application must be submitted by Tenancy Manager or approved support provider	Transfer	Safety Issues Family Violence Anti-social behaviour by neighbours causing a tenant to be unsafe on an ongoing basis Threats to safety in a rooming houses Risk of a tenant re-offending after returning to their property after being in prison
			Transfer	Manifestly unsuitable housing Employment transfers
			Transfer	Uninhabitable Housing (Tenancy Managers only)
			Transfer	Family reunification
	Transfer: priority access income and asset limits, or disability modification asset limit where relevant	Application must be submitted by Tenancy Manager or approved support provider	Transfer	Stock Utilisation
			Transfer	Major public housing sites – Move out
			Transfer	Major public housing sites – Move back
			Transfer	Move out of property (Tenancy Manager only) Head lease is expiring on the leased property The property is to be demolished The property is to undergo major upgrade/redevelopment A tenant wants to return to a redeveloped area Transfer from Movable Unit
Homeless with support	New: priority access income and asset limit	Application must be submitted by Tenancy Manager or approved support provider	New	Family Violence
			New	Homeless
			New	Rapid Housing Assistance Fund
			New	Housing First
Supported housing	New and transfer: priority access income and asset limit, or disability modification asset limit where relevant	Application must be submitted by Tenancy Manager or approved support provider	New and transfer	Major Modifications Full Disability Modifications Full Disability Modifications (NDIS)
			New and transfer	Significant Personal Support Acquired brain injury Aged care Children, youth and families Disability (non NDIS) Mental health National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)
Special Housing Needs	New: priority access income limits. Transfer: register of interest limits.	Application can be submitted by the applicant	New	Insecure Housing Living in temporary, emergency or crisis housing Living with relatives or friends who are unable to provide long term housing
			New	Inappropriate Housing Severe Overcrowding (Transfer) Unsuitable Housing Family Reunification
			New	Unsafe Housing Family violence Serious threat of physical violence
			New and transfer	Urgent Medical Needs
Special Housing Needs aged 55 years and over	New: priority access income and asset limits	Application can be submitted by the applicant	New	55 and over

How can I get more information?

For more information:

- visit our [social housing website](http://www.housing.vic.gov.au/victorianhousingregister) at <www.housing.vic.gov.au/victorianhousingregister>
- send us an email at allocations@dhhs.vic.gov.au>
- refer to our informatino sheet and Q&As on the framework.

To get this publication in an accessible format, call your local office, using the National Relay Service 13 36 77 if required, or get it from our website at <www.housing.vic.gov.au>.

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