

Allocations Policy

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Introduction:

Prahran Malvern Community Housing is committed to maintain and encourage sustainable tenancies and residencies.

Purpose:

This policy establishes the approach of Prahran Malvern Community Housing to:

- the prioritisation and allocation of vacant properties in its long-term rental housing portfolio; and
- successful and sustainable tenancies/ residencies and communities through the matching of applicants to properties.

Scope:

This policy applies to all long-term rental properties managed by Prahran Malvern Community Housing. The Allocations Schedule attached to this policy provides more detail on these long-term rental housing programs.

Definitions:

In this policy:

Applicant means a person who has applied for housing via the Victorian Housing Register or, where permitted by this policy, directly to Prahran Malvern Community Housing

DHHS means the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services

Director of Housing means the Victorian government statutory authority that owns all public housing land in Victoria, and which is the principal funding body for community housing

Nomination Rights means arrangements between Prahran Malvern Community Housing and third-party support providers where the support provider nominates applicants for certain vacant properties

Priority Access means applicants on the Victorian Housing Register who have been assessed as having priority housing need.

Public Housing means housing owned by Director of Housing and managed by DHHS

True Vacancy means all vacancies excluding; tenant/resident transfers (but not priority transfers via the Victorian Housing Register and tenancies/residencies commenced by relocated tenants/residents that are returning

VHR means the Victorian Housing Register, the statewide common application for people seeking public housing and community housing

Policy Statement:

Approach to allocation – guiding principles

Prahran Malvern Community Housing will allocate long-term housing in a manner which:

- is fair, transparent and equitable;
- relieves households from housing stress;
- is in accordance with its contractual, legal and regulatory obligations; and
- supports the financial viability of Prahran Malvern community Housing's long-term housing programs.

Prahran Malvern Community Housing is committed to promoting a successful and sustainable tenancy/residency when matching applicants to its properties. This means that Prahran Malvern community Housing will allocate housing in a way that:

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

Victorian Housing Register

Prahran Malvern Community Housing participates in the Victorian Housing Register (VHR). The VHR is a common register for all applicants seeking public and community housing in Victoria. Under the VHR's allocations framework, Prahran Malvern Community Housing is required to target 75% of allocations of true vacancies of social housing to Priority Access applicants.

Allocations Schedule

Prahran Malvern Community Housing has established an Allocations Schedule that establishes the following for each of its housing programs:

PROGRAM	APPROACH TO ALLOCATION	SOURCE OF APPLICANTS	ELIGIBILITY	No. UNITS
Rooming House Program	<p>Targeted towards people who are without permanent housing or exiting a crisis housing program. People who are 55 years and over.</p> <p>Prahran Malvern Community Housing targets 75% of allocations of true vacancies to applicants from the priority Access category under the VHR</p> <p>Specific targets;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be able to live independently or willing to access and engage with services to enable independent living; • be a single adult, over 25 years of age unable to access youth specific services/accommodation; • priority is given to applicants with existing linkages to the local area. • have no previous debt with Prahran Malvern Community Housing or have a repayment plan in place and are actively repaying a previous debt; 	VHR and other sources	VHR	68
General Long Term Program	<p>Targeted towards people who have a disability within the meaning of that term under the Disability Act 2006.</p> <p>Prahran Malvern Community Housing targets 75% of allocations of true vacancies to applicants from the priority Access category under the VHR</p> <p>Specific targets;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be able to live independently or willing to access and engage with services to enable independent living; 	VHR, Nominatio n Rights and other sources	VHR	12

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • priority is given to applicants with existing linkages to the local area. 			
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The Allocations Schedule for Prahran Malvern Community Housing is attached to this policy. This Allocations Schedule should be read in conjunction with the following:

Sourcing applications from the VHR

Where the source of applicants in a program is specified in the Allocations Schedule as “VHR only”, then Prahran Malvern Community Housing will seek all applicants from the VHR unless no suitable applicants are available. For such programs, if an allocation is made from an applicant not on the VHR, then Prahran Malvern community Housing will ensure that all applicants complete a VHR application before or shortly after being offered housing for the purposes of reporting against the VHR allocations target.

Nomination rights

Where nomination rights apply, Prahran Malvern Community Housing will:

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

Dynamic portfolio management

Prahran Malvern Community Housing will apply dynamic portfolio management so that properties are not tied to a particular allocation category or percentage of VHR Priority Access allocations. Rather, Prahran Malvern Community Housing will take a whole-of-portfolio approach to allocation which seeks to maximise its utilisation.

Eligibility

Prahran Malvern Community Housing will ensure in making any allocation that it complies with legal requirements concerning eligibility for housing. The eligibility rules that apply to programs are specified in the Allocations Schedule.

VHR Eligibility is determined by DHHS. See the Eligibility Policy for further details.

Promoting successful and sustainable tenancies/residencies

Prahran Malvern Community Housing is committed to treating all applicants fairly and will not unlawfully discriminate against any potential applicant or applicant.

Prahran Malvern Community Housing will assess all applicants before making an offer of housing to determine suitability for a particular vacancy (and eligibility if the applicant is not from the VHR). If Prahran Malvern Community Housing declines to offer an applicant housing, it will inform the applicant accordingly.

Matching households to the right house

In allocating housing, Prahran Malvern Community Housing will also have regard to the VHR operational guideline, *Matching Clients with Housing and Special Accommodation Requirements*.

Prahran Malvern Community Housing will match applicants to properties so that an allocation:

- is the right size for the applicant's household;
- is in an area consistent with the applicant's needs;
- assists the applicant to access employment or any support services that they need;
- makes the best use of housing stock managed by Prahran Malvern Community Housing;
- encourages a sustainable tenancy/residency; and
- 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.

Prahran Malvern Community Housing aims to make sure that properties with specific features that are in high demand and short supply are only allocated to those applicants who need them, including:

- properties that are suitable for older people
- properties that have been built or modified to meet the needs of people with a disability;
- properties on the ground floor,
- properties with level access; or
- properties with a yard/garden.

Prahran Malvern Community Housing will ask applicants to provide reasonable evidence to substantiate any particular requirements, if this is not contained in a VHR application.

Supporting sustainable and harmonious communities

Prahran Malvern Community Housing may, to the extent necessary, adopt different strategies in allocation in response to:

- a high concentration of public and community housing stock in a particular area;
- a high concentration of tenants/residents with multiple health, social or economic issues in a particular area or building;
- existing tenancy management issues (or a potential for them to develop);
- existing neighbourhood tensions or disputes which may be exacerbated if allocations are not sensitively handled; and
- a mismatch of supply and demand making the property hard to let.

Procedures:

Legislation and Standards:

This policy implements Prahran Malvern Community Housing's obligations under:

- Housing Act 1983 (Vic)
- Performance Standards for Registered Housing Agencies
- DHHS Victorian Housing Register Operational Guidelines

Related documents:

Eligibility Policy