

Establishing New Tenancies Policy

Purpose

This document outlines Alliance Housing's policy for establishing a new tenancy.

Scope

This policy applies to the establishment of new tenancies across all Alliance Housing's housing programs.

Intent

The intent of this policy is to ensure that Alliance Housing establishes new tenancies with a solid foundation for success and longevity consistent with the requirements of the Residential Tenancies Act and in a way that builds a positive relationship with the tenant.

Policy

1. Commencement of Tenancy

On in-principle acceptance of an offer of housing, Alliance Housing will conduct an interview with the prospective tenant and will provide:

- a copy of their application;
- a residential tenancy agreement;
- two copies of the Property Condition Report; and
- an up-to-date Tenant Handbook.

During the interview Alliance Housing will discuss:

- any changes in the prospective tenant's circumstances since the time of their application, particularly changes which may affect eligibility;
- the terms of the residential tenancy agreement, the length of the initial tenancy period and the potential for future tenancy extensions;
- the tenant's rights and responsibilities as a tenant;
- Alliance Housing's legal and policy requirements;
- the rent calculation process, their likely rent charge, the rent review process and the rent payment arrangements;
- the security bond requirements;
- the contents of the Handbook;
- any questions the prospective tenant may have;
- any existing support arrangements the tenant may have in place;
- the prospective tenant's right to take legal advice before entering into the residential tenancy agreement;
- Complaints and Appeal process and where to find further information eg. Handbook, Website.

Subject to confirmation of eligibility, Alliance Housing may offer an initial 3 months fixed-term tenancy with the potential for extension.

Extension of the tenancy may be offered as further fixed-term or periodic agreements, depending on tenant performance, property use and housing program considerations.

2. Communicating tenant rights and responsibilities

When establishing a tenancy, Alliance Housing will ensure the completed residential tenancy agreement and the major clauses including Part C are specifically explained to the prospective tenant(s) before signing the document.

When tenants are under 18 years of age or have difficulty in understanding, Alliance Housing will ensure that it has gained their informed consent to involve guardians or advocates for signing the tenancy agreement.

Alliance will provide ongoing support and information in relation to tenant rights and responsibilities by a range of formal and informal means. These may include:

- in-person assistance during business-hours at Alliance Housing's office;
- in-person assistance during property inspections and home-visits;
- provision of online resources including the Tenant Handbook;
- provision of printed resources including the Tenant Handbook at commencement of a tenancy and on request;
- provision of contact information regarding advocacy and support services.

3. Security Bond

All tenants will be required to pay a security bond which is no more than four (4) times the weekly rent. The security bond will be lodged with the Bond Administrator consistent with the Residential Tenancies Act 1987 (WA).

To enable lodgement, the Tenant and Alliance Housing will complete a Security Bond Lodgement Form.

Once lodged with the Bond Administrator, the Tenant will be provided with a Record of Payment of Security Bond from the Bond Administrator.

The security bond will remain at the equivalent of four (4) weeks' rent. Accordingly where rent is increased, Alliance Housing may request a bond top up, but no more than once in any 12 month period, in accordance with the Act. Any shortfall will be payable by the tenant, with the gap payment to align with the 60 days' notice after the rent increase.

4. Rent Calculation

At the commencement of a tenancy, an assessment of the tenant's household income and financial circumstances will be undertaken to determine: -

- (a) The tenant's eligibility for a discounted rent;
- (b) The level of rent to be paid by the tenant.

Alliance Housing will then determine the tenant's rent consistent with its [Rent Assessment Policy](#). The tenant will be formally notified of the assessed rent.

5. Rental Payments

Tenants must ensure that rent for their premises is paid every fortnight and kept a fortnight in advance. Tenants are required to pay their rent through an automated payment arrangement.

At the commencement of the tenancy, tenants will be provided with appropriate documentation and forms to authorise the nominated payment arrangement.

Tenants who receive income support payments from Centrelink are required to pay their fortnightly rent in advance by the Centrepay system.

Other tenants should be assisted to arrange fortnightly rental payments via a direct debit from their bank account to Alliance Housing's bank account.

6. Tenancy Support

Where the tenant has been referred by a relevant support agency or is currently engaging with support services, Alliance Housing will discuss the ongoing support arrangements with the Tenant. The Tenancy Officer should seek to establish whether the tenant would benefit from continued support to successfully maintain the tenancy.

Where appropriate the Tenancy Officer should seek to obtain the tenant's consent to engage with the support agency to establish contact for ongoing support arrangements, or future referral potential.

Refusal of consent will be respected and will not impact tenancy rights or eligibility.

7. Property condition reports

On commencement of a new tenancy agreement, Alliance Housing will produce a Property Condition Report (PCR) consistent with the regulations of the Residential Tenancy Act (or equivalent) prior to occupancy.

PCRs will clearly, identify the condition of the property and fixtures at the time of occupation and will be thorough and accurate. Where possible records will include comprehensive notes and photographs.

The tenant will be provided the opportunity to comment on the assessed condition. Any issues identified concerning health, safety or building standards which require attention will be addressed promptly. Minor repairs or normal wear and tear will be addressed in accordance with maintenance processes.

PCR reports and photos will be provided to all tenants prior to tenancy/occupancy.

Legislation and Compliance

This policy seeks to operate consistent with:

- *The Residential Tenancies Act 1987 (WA)*
- *The Residential Tenancies Regulations 1989 (WA)*

Implementation, Review and Amendments

This policy is applicable from the date of Board Approval.

Alliance Housing will review this policy on a regular basis to ensure it remains up to date.

Document/ Version Number	Amended By:	Amendment Narrative	Board Approval Date	Status
AH-ENTP/1	Elysian Consultants	New Policy	13/05/2021	Superseded
AH-ENTP/1	Senior Admin	Reviewed -No changes needed	17/08/2022	Superseded
AH-ENTP/1	Senior Admin	Reviewed – minor changes needed	17/09/2025	Approved