

FACT SHEET 1 - IDENTIFYING YOUR HOUSING NEEDS

Where do you want to live?

Decide if you need to live near:

- Transport – check transport routes on www.translink.qld.gov.au.
- Services – for example shops, doctors, hospitals, schools and childcare.
- Friends and family - can they visit you easily? Can you visit them easily?

It is important to find out which suburbs have suitable properties for rent at a price you can afford. You may need to consider a few different locations. Find out rental prices in the suburb you are interested in by searching www.realestate.com.au.

If you need to move to a completely new area, the local council or neighbourhood centre can tell you about services in that area. You may want to contact a local council office by phone or on their website to ask questions or request information. To find the contact details for a local council, visit www.whitepages.com.au.

To find the location of a property and how to get there, visit www.whereis.com.au for step by step directions.

What sort of home do you need?

- How many bedrooms do you need?
- Do you prefer a house, a unit/apartment or a townhouse?
- Do you need to live in a home with minimal steps and easy access to the main living areas?
- Do you need a property where pets are allowed?
- What other things are you looking for – for example, a fenced garden, off street parking, or a garage?

How much rent can you afford?

Rent is affordable when you still have enough money left to pay your other household expenses after you have paid your rent. Other expenses include food, bills, toiletries, clothes, credit cards, transport.

To work out how much rent you can afford, you need to prepare a budget.

To prepare a budget:

1. add up your income, which is how much money you receive each week.
2. list your expected expenses, which is how much you think you will spend on rent and other bills such as electricity, telephone, childcare, food, transport and insurance.
3. check that your income is greater than your expected expenses.

If your expected expenses are more than your income, you need to find ways to reduce your expenses and/or look for a property in a more affordable area.

Tools and help to work out a budget are available on these websites:

- Australian Security and Investments Commission
<http://www.fido.gov.au/fido/fido.nsf/byheadline/Budget+Planner?openDocument>
- Understanding money, Australian Government
<http://www.understandingmoney.gov.au/>
- The Salvation Army – Financial Counsellors
<http://www.salvos.org.au/need-help/financial-troubles/>
- Wesley Mission Credit Line Money Plan
<http://www.wesleymission.org.au/centres/creditline/Services/Tools/plan.asp>

For further information

This fact sheet is part of a series of fact sheets, including:

- Fact Sheet 2 – [*Documents you need to rent a property*](#)
- Fact Sheet 3 – [*Finding a property to rent*](#)
- Fact Sheet 4 – [*Making a good impression*](#)
- Fact Sheet 5 - [*Inspecting a property to rent*](#)
- Fact Sheet 6 – [*Applying for a tenancy*](#)
- Fact Sheet 7 – [*Starting a tenancy*](#)
- Fact Sheet 8 – [*Where to get help when renting*](#)
- Fact Sheet 9 – [*Tenancy databases*](#)

Contact us

For more information, visit <http://www.housing.qld.gov.au/contact/offices/index.htm> for your local Department of Housing office's contact details.