



Being offered housing assistance

If you are on the housing register, the Department of Communities (Housing and Homelessness Services) will contact you when a property becomes available. You will be asked if you can move into the property, and if you can, you will be invited to inspect the property. This is called an offer of housing. You are expected to accept the offer.

Prior to being made an offer of housing, we will contact you to see if you are still eligible for housing assistance. You will need to provide the department with evidence of your household's income and assets, and you will also need to advise the department:

- if you own or part-own any form of property, or a mobile, or a transportable home or a live-aboard boat
- if your Australian residency status has changed
- if you or a household member has any specific housing needs which you have not previously told the department about
- if your housing need has changed, and
- if there is any reason why you cannot accept an offer of housing, for example, you may be on a private fixed-term tenancy agreement.

What if I cannot accept the offer for some reason?

If you cannot accept the property which is offered to you, you must provide us with an acceptable reason why you cannot accept it before we give you the address of the property. You may need to provide evidence to show why you cannot accept the offer.

Depending on your circumstances, your application may be deferred until you are able to accept an offer of housing. If you need to have your application deferred, talk to your nearest Housing Services office about it.

What if I do not respond to an offer?

If you do not respond to an offer of housing, we will cancel the offer and your application for housing assistance. We will send you a letter telling you this has happened. It is important that you tell us about any changes to your application. The fact sheet *Waiting for housing assistance* provides further information.

When will I be offered a property?

Your application is placed on the housing register behind applicants who have a higher housing need than you and applicants with the same housing need as you, but who have applied before you.

If I am offered a property, where will it be?

If you are offered a property, it will be from any one of the areas you have listed on your application for housing assistance.

If you are listed on the housing register as having a moderate or lower housing need, we may be unable to offer you social housing and you might wish to consider other housing options. Talk to your nearest Housing Services office about other available housing assistance products.

What type of property will I be offered?

You will be offered housing of any type (e.g. a detached home or an apartment) with the number of bedrooms you are entitled to. Some exemptions apply, so ask your Housing Services office for details. The fact sheet *Housing Entitlements* describes the types of housing available.

Can I inspect the property?

Yes. We will provide you with the keys to the property which must be returned by 4pm on the same day you picked them up. Keys cannot be kept overnight.

What do I do if I want to move into the property?

When you return the keys to us, tell staff you wish to move into the property. We will make an appointment with you so you can sign a State Tenancy Agreement.

Can I refuse the property that is being offered?

Yes, but only if you have an acceptable reason, for example:

- distance from essential services, including medical and support services, or
- specific employment and education needs.

You may be asked to provide evidence to support your reasons for refusal.

What happens if I refuse a property for an unacceptable reason?

If you do not have an acceptable reason for refusing the offer, your application date will be changed to the date you refused the offer and your application will move to the bottom of the housing register. As a result, a further offer of housing may not be made for a long time. Examples of unacceptable reasons include:

- you wanted a brick house instead of timber, or
- you do not like the street where the property is located.

Can I refuse an offer of housing more than once?

Yes, but if you refuse two offers of housing without an acceptable reason, your application is removed from the housing register and you cannot apply for housing assistance for 12 months.

Further information

Please contact your nearest Housing Services office. Also refer to the fact sheets:

- *Eligibility for housing assistance*
- *Applying for housing assistance*
- *Housing entitlements.*