

Transfers Procedures

SPPRO3: Transfer procedures for funded social housing providers

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1. Purpose

Providers funded by the Department of Housing and Public Works ('the department') to deliver social housing services must use these procedures as a requirement of the *Allocations Policy for Funded Social Housing Providers*, available on the department's website at www.hpw.qld.gov.au.

2. Scope

These procedures cover transfers of tenants within a funded social housing provider's own portfolio, to another funded provider, and to the department.

3. What is a Transfer?

A transfer takes place when a tenant moves from one social housing property to another while the assistance is continuing.¹

Whether a transfer is considered **provider-initiated** or **client-initiated** depends on the *reasons* for the transfer, *not* on whether a client asks for the transfer.

A **client-initiated transfer** takes place when the tenant needs to move because:

- they are homeless or at risk of homelessness (e.g. fleeing domestic violence)
- they are at risk of violence from members of the local community or neighbourhood
- they need to move to access essential services, employment, to meet cultural obligations, gain access to children or for family/informal support
- the design or size of the current housing does not meet the household's need
- the rent has become unaffordable (this only applies to requests to transfer from affordable housing)²

A **provider-initiated transfer** takes place when the tenant needs to move because:

- the property requires significant maintenance or upgrades
- the property is to be demolished or redeveloped
- the property is being resumed by the owner and is no longer available to the provider
- under-occupancy – that is, the property has two or more bedrooms than the tenants need (as defined by the department's bedroom entitlements policy).
- there are persistent and/or significant disruptive behavior such as neighbourhood disputes or harassment and tenant transfer is considered the appropriate solution
- there is a health and safety issue or fire or natural disaster including mitigating the potential effects from lead in the Mt. Isa region
- the transfer moves the household from a high-demand to low-demand area
- the tenant or a household member no longer requires the specific accessibility features of the property
- the initial allocation of transitional housing is deemed inappropriate, or
- there are other exceptional circumstances, as approved by the delegated officer of the provider.

¹ When a tenant moves from transitional housing to long-term housing, this is an **exit**, not a transfer. Providers managing tenant exits should refer to the SPPRO2: Exits from Transitional Housing available at www.hpw.qld.gov.au

² Affordable housing includes housing funded under the Affordable Housing Program and affordable housing funded under any other funding program.

4. Transfer Process

The provider must:

1. for **client-initiated** transfers, assess the tenant's eligibility under the criteria described below
2. assess the tenant's priority for transfer
3. attempt to transfer the tenant within their own portfolio
4. if a transfer cannot take place within the provider's own portfolio, attempt to transfer the tenant to another funded social housing provider in a suburb/s matching the tenant's needs
5. if a transfer cannot take place within the community housing sector, lodge the Application for Transfer Form (with the tenant's consent) and Transfers Checklist with the local Housing Service Centre or organisation managing the Housing Register.

The provider may choose to ask a tenant to fill in the Application for Transfer Form for transfers within their own portfolio or to another provider. An Application for Transfer Form **must** be filled in for transfers lodged with the local Housing Service Centre.

5. Eligibility for a transfer

For **client-initiated** transfers only, the provider must use the eligibility criteria as published in the [Social Housing Eligibility Criteria](#), and some of these include:

Access Eligibility Criteria:

1. Australian citizenship or permanent residency
2. Queensland residency
3. independent income
4. household income limits
5. appropriateness of current housing:
 - fleeing domestic violence
 - irreversible family breakdown
 - access to essential facilities, support services, employment, to meet parole conditions, enable care of children, to meet cultural obligations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people) formation of a new household, where a tenant with a disability needs to move to establish a new household under advice provided by the Department of Community Services
 - the management of disruptive behaviour
 - the rent in affordable housing exceeds 30% of the gross household income in relation

Ongoing Eligibility Criterion

6. ongoing eligibility assets test

6. Verifying the tenant's circumstances

Where appropriate, the provider must seek to verify the tenant's circumstances by sighting evidence, such as a current Domestic Violence Protection Order or letter from a doctor.

If it is not possible to obtain evidence of the tenant's circumstances, the provider has discretion in processing the tenant's application.

7. Prioritising tenants for transfer

Provider-initiated transfers may take place as soon as an appropriate vacancy arises.

The provider must consider the relative priority of **client-initiated transfer** applications on the following basis:

1. Very High Need:
 - a. homeless or at risk of homelessness due to domestic violence or violence/abuse from another family member or community member or neighbour, and/or
 - b. four reasons from the transfer appropriateness criteria above.
2. High Need:
 - a. homeless or at risk of homelessness due to irreversible family breakdown or being split between family and friends; or
 - b. three reasons from the transfer appropriateness criteria above
 - c. need to access essential facilities, support services, to meet parole conditions, enable care of children, cultural grounds relating to a death in the tenant's dwelling or an issue with the design of the housing.
3. Moderate Need:
 - a. need to access employment, cultural reasons excluding a death in the tenant's dwelling, family and informal support, physical amenity (housing size/overcrowding) or formation of a new household.

The delegated officer of the provider may use discretion in applying the transfer process.

8. Transfer management

1. Tenants will be listed for all suitable social housing types and the provider must: inform the tenant that transfer applications accepted by the department are placed on the Housing Register in order of need and it is likely that it is likely the tenant will have to wait longer for a transfer offer for public housing than if they move within the community housing sector
2. assist the tenant to lodge the Application for Transfer Form with a Housing Service Centre or approved organisation managing the Housing Register
3. provide any relevant information on the tenant's current housing to the Housing Service Centre or approved organisation managing the Housing Register.

9. Rejection of an offer

If a tenant rejects an offer of alternative housing, the provider must assess whether the reason is considered valid or invalid using the department's guidelines available at www.hpw.qld.gov.au. Tenants who reject offers for invalid reasons may have their transfer priority reassessed, or application cancelled.

10. Offering other assistance to tenants

For provider-initiated transfers, the provider may offer financial assistance to help tenants move in accordance with the *Allowable Expenditure and Surplus Policy*.

11. Record-keeping

The provider must keep appropriate records relating to tenant transfers.

12. More Information

For assistance with a transfer application lodged with the department, please contact the relevant Housing Service Centre.

For other enquiries, contact your local Contract Manager