



Changing Needs of Tenants Policy

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that the changing needs of members and tenants of Eastern Suburbs Rental Housing Co-operative (ESRHC) are responded to fairly and flexibly within the capacity of the Co-operative and to ensure the maximum use of existing properties.

This policy deals with:

- (a) Succession of tenancies where a member dies or leaves;
- (b) Exchange where a member might wish to change houses or the house is too big/small;
- (c) Exchange where members might seek a mutual exchange of houses; and
- (d) Vacant properties where a member might wish to upsize or downsize to.

2. Basis for Policy

Housing Act 1983 - Performance Standards for Registered Housing Agencies

3. Policy & Procedures

3.1 Succession of tenancies

ESRHC will endeavour to provide for the succession of a tenancy to other householders, who had previously resided in the tenanted property, should the member tenant die or leave the Co-operative.

Death of the member tenant

If a member tenant dies and the tenancy was shared with other family members or partner the Co-operative will assess the suitability of the other family members or partner for tenancy based on the Department of Health and Human Services' (DHHS) criteria for housing allocation. (*see Policy 1.1 Allocation of Housing*).

If a family member or partner meets the criteria for housing AND the Co-operative's active membership criteria as set out in Policy 1.1, the property shall be offered to the family member or partner without the need for a selection process.

If a member tenant leaves

Provided the member tenant who has left has not otherwise breached any terms of the tenancy and was an active member with a satisfactory history, the property **shall** be offered to the family member or partner as provided for above. (i.e.; they must first meet the DHHS criteria and then the Co-operative's active membership criteria).

Arrears of rent

In either scenario above, if there are rental arrears, the succeeding member must pay any portion of the rent that he/she would have been liable had the previous member not died or left, up to the time a new tenancy agreement is entered into.

Responsibilities

The Tenant Selection Committee will be responsible for assessing all and any applications. The Manager will assess the "new" member's suitability against the DHHS criteria (as for new member selection).

3.2 Exchanges due to size

If a member's needs change, i.e. too few bedrooms or too many, the Co-operative will work with the member tenant to help upsize or downsize them into more suitable housing within the stock available.

In the absence of a vacancy arising, this will require a "Mutual Exchange" of properties.

Responsibilities

The Board will monitor the suitability of housing and encourage exchange to maximise housing usage.

Members wishing to exchange properties need to notify the Manager or a Board member.

3.3 Mutual Exchange

Members seeking a mutual exchange may do so provided DHHS housing allocation criteria is met. (See 6. Housing Size Guidelines. An exception to the guidelines would be made for downsizing members only).

Responsibilities

The Manager shall determine if the DHHS housing allocation criteria is met.

3.4 Vacant Properties

If a property becomes vacant, current members who meet the criteria to upsize or downsize will be given the opportunity to submit an expression of interest to transfer before seeking external applicants.

Responsibilities

Members wishing to transfer to a vacant property need to notify the Manager or a Board member. In the event there is more than one expression of interest, the Board will make the final decision based on the most suitable tenant.

4. Members to accept existing conditions

In any exchange between current members or transfer of a tenancy to a family member or partner or if a current member downsizes to a vacant property, the “new” tenant must accept the existing condition of the property.

A condition report will be made as with all new tenancies and any normal maintenance shall be attended to.

Responsibilities

The Maintenance and Administration Co-ordinator shall conduct the condition report.

5. New Rental Agreement

In any exchange or transfer of tenancy, a new tenancy agreement shall be entered into.

6. Housing Size Guidelines

Household Groupings		Minimum no. of rooms per group
Single person or couple		1 bedroom
Resident 18 years and over		1 bedroom
1 child younger than 18 years of age		1 bedroom
2 children under 18 years of age	2 children of same gender	1 bedroom
	1 child of each gender	2 bedrooms
3 children under 18 years of age	3 children of same gender	2 bedrooms
	2 children of one gender and one of the other gender	2 bedrooms
4 children under 18 years of age	same gender	2 bedrooms
	2 children of each gender	2 bedrooms
	3 children of same gender and one of the other gender	3 bedrooms
5 children under 18 years of age	any combination	3 bedrooms
6 children or more under 18 years of age	6 children of the same gender	3 bedrooms
	4 children of same gender and two of the other gender	3 bedrooms
	any other combination	4 bedrooms

To calculate the total number of bedrooms for each household, the number of bedrooms per grouping is added together.