



## Allocation of Long Term Housing Policy for VHR

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### Purpose

This policy establishes the approach of Eastern Suburbs Rental Housing Co-operative (ESRHC) to:

- the prioritisation and allocation of vacant properties in its long-term rental housing portfolio; and
- successful and sustainable tenancies and communities through the matching of applicants to properties.

## Scope

This policy applies to all long-term rental properties owned by the Director of Housing and managed by ESRHC. The Allocations Schedule attached to this policy provides more detail on its long-term rental housing program.

ESRHC currently does not own/manage stock without a Director of Housing interest but should ESRHC acquire this type of stock, the Allocations Policy will be reviewed and eligibility criteria will be developed consistent with the mission of ESRHC.

## Policy statement

### Approach to allocation – guiding principles

ESRHC will allocate long-term housing in a manner which:

- is fair, transparent and equitable;
- relieves households from housing stress;
- is in accordance with its contractual, legal and regulatory obligations; and
- supports the financial viability of ESRHC's long term housing program.

ESRHC is committed to promoting a successful and sustainable tenancy when matching applicants to its properties. This means that ESRHC will allocate housing in a way that:

- gives appropriate priority to households in need of housing assistance;
- considers the health, safety and support needs of applicants;
- matches individual housing needs with available properties; and
- supports sustainable and harmonious communities.

### Victorian Housing Register

ESRHC participates in the Victorian Housing Register (VHR). The VHR is a common register for all applicants seeking public and community housing in Victoria. Under the VHR's allocations framework, ESRHC is required to target 75% of allocations of true vacancies of social housing to Priority Access applicants.

### Allocations Schedule

ESRHC has established an Allocations Schedule that establishes the following for its housing program:

<b>Program</b>	Long term social housing, managed under a General Lease with DHHS
<b>Approach to allocation for Program</b>	ESRHC will use the VHR to allocate housing; 75% from the Priority Access list and 25% from the Register of Interest according to the VHR - Community Housing Allocations Framework. ESRHC will also apply its own selection requirements regarding active membership and participation.
<b>Source of applicants</b>	The VHR Priority Access List and Register of Interest List.
<b>Eligibility</b>	VHR Eligibility Criteria Operational Guidelines and training requirements for Co-operative membership.
<b>No of properties in the program</b>	39

The Allocations Schedule for ESRHC is attached to this policy. This Allocations Schedule should be read in conjunction with the following:

#### Sourcing applications from the VHR

Where the source of applicants in a program is specified in the Allocations Schedule as “VHR only”, then ESRHC will seek all applicants from the VHR unless no suitable applicants are available. For such programs, if an allocation is made from an applicant not on the VHR, then ESRHC will ensure that all applicants complete a VHR application before or shortly after being offered housing for the purposes of reporting against the VHR allocations target.

Sources of applications outside the VHR include:

- referrals from support providers;
- registered Housing Associations and Providers;
- real estate listings.

#### Dynamic portfolio management

ESRHC will apply dynamic portfolio management so that properties are not tied to a particular allocation category. Rather, ESRHC will take a whole-of-portfolio approach to allocation which seeks to maximise its utilisation; for example, via downsizing.

#### Eligibility

ESRHC will ensure in making any allocation that it complies with legal requirements concerning eligibility for housing. The eligibility rules that apply to programs are specified in the Allocations Schedule.

VHR Eligibility is determined by DHHS. See the Eligibility Policy for further details.

#### Promoting successful and sustainable tenancies

ESRHC is committed to treating all applicants fairly and will not unlawfully discriminate against any potential applicant/s.

ESRHC will assess all applicants before making an offer of housing to determine suitability for a particular vacancy. If ESRHC declines to offer an applicant housing, it will inform the applicant accordingly.

#### Matching households to the right house

In allocating housing, ESRHC will also have regard to the VHR operational guidelines; *Matching Clients with Housing and Special Accommodation Requirements*.

ESRHC will match applicants to properties so that an allocation:

- is the right size for the applicant’s household;
- is in an area consistent with the applicant’s needs;
- assists the applicant to access employment or any support services that they need;
- makes the best use of housing stock owned or managed by ESRHC;
- encourages a sustainable tenancy; and
- meets any particular expressed needs of the applicant so far as they are known, such as modifications for people with a physical disability or mobility impairment, availability of car parking or room for carers.

ESRHC aims to make sure that properties with specific features that are in high demand and short supply are only allocated to those applicants who need them, including:

- properties that are suitable for older people
- properties that have been built or modified to meet the needs of people with a disability;
- properties on the ground floor,
- properties with level access; or
- properties with a yard/garden.

ESRHC will ask applicants to provide reasonable evidence to substantiate any particular requirements, if this is not contained in a VHR application.

### Supporting sustainable and harmonious communities

ESRHC may, to the extent necessary, adopt different strategies to allocations in response to:

- a high concentration of public and community housing stock in a particular area;
- a high concentration of tenants with multiple health, social or economic issues in a particular area or building;
- existing tenancy management issues (or a potential for them to develop);
- existing neighborhood tensions or disputes which may be exacerbated if allocations are not sensitively handled; and
- a mismatch of supply and demand making the property hard to let.

## Definitions

In this policy:

<b>Applicant</b>	A person who has applied for housing via the VHR or, where permitted by this policy, directly to ESRHC
<b>Community housing affordable housing program</b>	The housing program of ESRHC described in further detail in the Allocations Schedule.
<b>DHHS</b>	The Victorian Department of Health and Human Services
<b>Director of Housing</b>	The Victorian Government statutory authority that owns all public housing land in Victoria and which is the principal funding body for community housing
<b>Priority Access</b>	Applicants on the VHR who have been assessed as having a priority housing need. The Priority Access Categories are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Emergency Management Housing</li><li>• Priority Transfers</li><li>• Homeless with Support</li><li>• Supported Housing</li><li>• Temporary Absence</li><li>• Special Housing Needs</li><li>• Aged (55 years and over)</li></ul>
<b>Public housing</b>	Housing owned and managed by DHHS
<b>Social housing</b>	The housing program of ESRHC described in further detail in the Allocations Schedule.

<b>True vacancy</b>	All vacancies excluding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• tenant to tenant transfers (but not Priority Transfers via the VHR); and</li><li>• tenancies started by relocated tenants that are returning.</li></ul>
<b>VHR</b>	The Victorian Housing Register; the state-wide common application for people seeking public housing and community housing

## Related policies

Allocation of Housing - Tenant Selection Policy  
Rent Management Policy  
Eligibility Policy for VHR  
Rent Setting Policy for VHR

## Legislation and standards

This policy implements ESRHC's obligations under:

- Housing Act 1983 (Vic)
- Performance Standards for Registered Housing Agencies
- DHHS Victorian Housing Register Operational Guidelines

## Transparency and accessibility

This policy will be available on the ESRHC website [www.esrhc.org.au](http://www.esrhc.org.au)

## Allocations Schedule

Program	Approach to allocation for Program	Source of applicants <sup>1</sup>	Eligibility <sup>2</sup>	No. units
<p><b>Social Housing (General Lease)</b>  <i>Long-term housing owned by the Director of Housing and leased to ESRHC.</i>  <i>Social housing is appropriate to the needs of people who are unable to access suitable accommodation in the private rental market.</i></p>	<p>ESRHC targets 75% of allocations of true vacancies of Social Housing to applicants from the Priority Access category under the VHR and 25% from the Register of Interest list.</p> <p>ESRHC will also apply its own selection requirements regarding active membership, participation and training.</p>	VHR only	VHR	39

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<sup>1</sup> Under the Allocations Policy, where a property is specified as “VHR only”, ESRHC may seek all applicants from other sources if no suitable VHR applicants are available. In these circumstances ESRHC will ensure that all applicants complete a VHR application before or shortly after being offered housing for the purposes of compliance and reporting.

<sup>2</sup> See Eligibility Policy for further details.