

Scope

This Allocation Policy provides guidance to ensure people who make application to Pacific Link Housing Limited (PLH) for housing (“applicants”) receive fair and transparent service from PLH when being considered for, and offered, a property. This policy is applied according to National Regulatory System for Community Housing (NRSCH) and NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) requirements that include effective management of vacant property timeframes.

Purpose

This policy outlines the key principles applied in allocating vacant properties to applicants across all PLH housing programs and types. Programs include social housing, affordable housing, supported housing and transitional housing. PLH applies this policy under the guidance of relevant legislation, industry standards, DCJ policies and regulatory compliance requirements.

Affordable Housing Allocations

PLH manages affordable housing properties under the [NSW Government Affordable Housing Guidelines](#). Affordable Housing is designed for people on low to moderate incomes and rents are charged at a discount to market rent.

Applicants for Affordable Housing properties are sourced via Key2 Realty through advertisement of vacancies or eligible referrals via stakeholders. PLH may consider offering affordable housing to tenants who are no longer eligible for social housing. These offers are managed according to the Offer of Housing described below, however may impact security of ongoing tenure.

Social Housing Allocations

Social housing allocations are designed to meet the needs of people with very low-income. PLH aligns with the NSW DCJ Housing Pathways Eligibility for Social Housing Policy and Social Housing Eligibility and Allocation Policy Supplement that can be [found here](#).

This policy outlines requirements specific to PLH-managed housing including:

1. Creating sustainable tenancies
2. Matching applicants to properties
3. Management transfers
4. Offer of Housing

1. Creating Sustainable Tenancies

PLH, under the guidance of relevant legislative requirements, program and contractual requirements uses various strategies to enable sustainable tenancies to be created and maintained to develop community cohesion. PLH applies strategies and programs that enable tenants to break the poverty cycle and offer a platform for greater community involvement. PLH proactively supports tenants to identify barriers to sustaining tenancies and to promote opportunities for informed choice.

1.1 Local Allocation Strategies

In some instances, PLH may apply a local strategy when considering a local community’s needs, such as:

- a high concentration of community and/or public housing stock
- a high concentration of tenants within a certain demographic to ensure cohesion, or with multiple health, social or economic concerns

- known tenancy management concerns, that have potential to exacerbate a current social, community or behavioural concern
- hard to let properties.

1.2 Community Housing Leasehold Program (CHLP)

PLH has the following objectives to support effective management of the CHLP program through which properties are leased from the residential market:

- targeted allocation to minimise risk to the company associated with cost of malicious damage, anti-social behaviour and poor property care,
- achieving a sustainable property management portfolio by selectively allocating properties to applicants with minimal complex needs, and minimal risk of hard wearing behaviours on the property, and
- promotion of positive relationships and minimisation of reputational risk with real estate agents, investors and developers.

1.3 Medium and High-Density Units

PLH will apply sensitive allocation strategies for medium and high density units and areas of high concentration of social housing, such as:

- age, connection to family or other supports, risks to others in the immediate community
- tenant's physical capability including physical health or disabilities
- successfully completed transitional supported tenancies that may be considered as permanently housed.

2 Matching Applicant to Properties

PLH applies property matching processes within the program, contractual and legislative requirements as described in this policy. Property matching is a key element to ensuring sustainable tenancies are created for the longer term and has direct impacts on the applicant and the community they are moving into.

Each applicant has specific needs and each property has particular characteristics. PLH applies property matching to ensure the needs of applicants match the characteristics of the available property within allowances sufficient to effectively manage this process. These include tenancies with support needs, property size, type and modifications, location and proximity to services, supports and family.

2.1 Modified or Program Specific Properties

Modified properties

Properties with specific features are only allocated to applicants that are able to demonstrate a particular need. PLH will work closely with applicants (and their supports) and other services to support the identification of eligible people who have specific needs that can be matched with a vacant property.

Program specific properties

Certain properties are targeted to demographic groups to support meeting a specific housing need, within a contract or program that PLH is required to comply with.

2.2 Applicant Need and Size of Property

The tables below outline the standard bedroom entitlements by DCJ for social housing households. PLH considers the make-up of a tenant's household, including children, in assessing the number of bedrooms required. Housing of children under family custody arrangements will also be considered based on DCJ policy. PLH will consider a room to be available for a carer for current tenants with appropriate evidence to support the application.

Household type	Standard bedroom entitlement
Single people	Studio, one or two bedrooms
Couples	One or two bedrooms
Single people or couples with one other household member	Two or three bedrooms
Single people or couples with two other household members	Two or three bedrooms
Single people or couples with three other household members	Three or four bedrooms
Single people or couples with four other household members	Three or four bedrooms
Single people or couples with five or more other household members	Four bedrooms or, if available, five or more bedrooms. Clients who have a five bedroom household complement will generally be offered a four bedroom property unless a five bedroom property is available. This is because of the limited availability of five bedroom accommodation.

Criteria for Accommodating Children

PLH will consider the age and gender of any children in the household when it determines a household's bedroom entitlement. The principles applied by PLH when it does this are set out according to DCJ policy in the table below:

Situation	DCJ Policy
Child is over 18 years of age	The person is considered to be an adult when calculating the minimum bedroom entitlement
Shared bedrooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same sex children up to 18 years of age are expected to share a bedroom • Male and female children are expected to share a bedroom until one of the children reaches 10 years of age.
Children can't share a bedroom	<p>DCJ will allocate an additional bedroom where the client has demonstrated a need for same sex children, or children under 10 years of age, to have separate bedrooms.</p> <p>Examples of situations where an extra bedroom could be appropriate include where there is a large age gap between the children or behavioural factors.</p>
Shared custody	The child/children are considered to be part of the household if the client has shared custody of children for 3 days per week or more. Normal bedroom entitlements apply.
Access visits from children	The children are not considered to be part of the household if they visit for less than 3 days per week.

	<p>The children are not considered to be part of the household if they are receiving out-of-home care, unless family restoration to the household is being considered or carried out. An extra bedroom will be considered when evidence of proposed restoration of children is provided.</p> <p>The client must demonstrate a need for an extra bedroom to accommodate access visits.</p>
<p>Future needs of children who may need separate bedrooms in 2 or 3 years time</p>	<p>DCJ will take this into account when matching the client to a property if it can. DCJ will make this decision on a case by case basis according to the size and type of housing that is available in the area.</p>

3 Management Transfers

Management initiated transfers are undertaken when PLH is required to relocate a tenant to another property for management purposes. These allocations are undertaken outside the NSW Housing Register. Refer PLH Transfer Policy for more information.

4 Offer of Housing

PLH will make (up to) **two** reasonable offers of housing to an applicant or tenants approved for transfer. An offer of housing is reasonable if it meets the applicant's housing requirements and locational needs based on the information provided by the applicant in accordance with DCJ Policy.

PLH will be guided by the [DCJ Housing Social Housing Offers](#) process to apply to social housing offers.

Offer Withdrawn by PLH

PLH can withdraw an offer after it has been made at its absolute discretion. PLH will ensure fair and transparent communications when working with tenants in this scenario.

Appeals

If an applicant believes PLH has made the wrong decision they should ask for a formal review of the decision. To do this an applicant needs to complete an appeals form stating why they disagree with the decision – refer PLH Appeals and Complaints Policy.

Related Policies

- Transfer Policy
- Rent and Rent Subsidy Policy
- NSW Affordable Housing Guidelines
- DCJ Social Housing Policy
- NSW Community Housing Eligibility Policy
- NSW Community Housing Access Policy

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