

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING MANAGEMENT (THM) POLICY

1. Why we need this policy

- 1.1 Launch Housing is a registered Community Housing Provider, regulated by the Victorian Housing Registrar.
- 1.2 This policy details the management of Launch Housing Transitional Housing Management (THM) tenancies.
- 1.3 Transitional housing provides short term, subsidised housing to individuals and families in crisis as a result of homelessness or impending homelessness; during which time all renters must engage with their support provider to secure long term housing options.

2. Who this policy applies to

- 2.1 This policy applies to renters in Transitional Housing Management (THM) properties managed by Launch Housing.
- 2.2 This policy applies to Launch Housing staff managing these properties.

3. Which Launch Housing properties this policy applies to

- 3.1 This policy applies to all Transitional Housing Management (THM) properties managed by Launch Housing on behalf of the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH).
- 3.2 This policy does not apply to the following housing programs run by Launch Housing:
 - i. properties managed by Launch Housing under the Long-Term housing program;
 - ii. properties managed by Launch Housing on behalf of other property owners where the owner retains responsibility for allocation of housing; and
 - iii. Transitional Housing properties that are managed as Crisis Supported Accommodation.

4. What this policy includes

4.1 Guiding principles

- 4.1.1 In applying this policy Launch Housing will ensure:
 - i. Households in immediate need of housing assistance are appropriately prioritised;
 - ii. Consideration is given to the health, safety and support needs of applicants;
 - iii. Vacant properties are matched with individuals housing needs;
 - iv. Consistent, fair, and accountable processes are followed, and renters are provided with information about processes that impact their tenancy;
 - v. Proper consideration is given to the human rights of renters under the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic) (Charter);
 - vi. All contractual, legal, and regulatory duties are met.

4.2 Aim of the Transitional Housing Management (THM) program

- 4.2.1 The THM program is subject to guidelines as established by DFFH Homelessness Services guidelines and Conditions of Funding.
- 4.2.2 The THM program provides short-term, subsidised housing to individuals and families/households during which time renters must engage with their support provider to secure long-term housing options.
- 4.2.3 The broad aim of the THM program from a housing provision perspective is to:
 - i. Provide housing assistance to individuals and families/households in crisis because of homelessness or impending homelessness;
 - ii. Assist individuals and families/households in housing crisis to establish and/or maintain appropriate, secure, and sustainable housing through the provision of transitional housing, initial assessment and planning, and support.

- iii. Provide general transitional housing and Joined-Up Initiative (JUI) housing in accordance with formalised allocation referral pathways, and through collaboration with Local Area Service Networks via the Resource Register process.

4.3 Eligibility for THM

- 4.3.1 Any household wishing to access transitional housing will have first received an assessment from a Homelessness Entry Point service or Family Violence Entry Point service in order to be placed on the prioritisation list for access to transitional housing.
- 4.3.2 The assessment takes into consideration a range of circumstances, including:
 - i. Current accommodation;
 - ii. Other housing options available;
 - iii. Stated and/or observed support needs;
 - iv. Income eligibility;
 - v. Professional support available;
 - vi. Assessment of an individual's situation and level of vulnerability.

4.4 Allocations

- 4.4.1 Transitional Housing Management (THM) housing is not long-term housing and allocations are not made from the Victorian Housing Register (VHR). Allocation of transitional housing is coordinated through the Launch Housing, Housing and Support Allocations team.
- 4.4.2 There is no wait list for THM access, and allocation occurs generally by way of nomination rights, Joined-Up Initiatives or advertised vacancies.
- 4.4.3 Launch Housing has formal partnership agreements in place with nomination agencies who support renters throughout their tenancy. Support includes development of case plans and regular reviews to achieve a long-term housing outcome.

4.5 Nomination rights

- 4.5.1 Support agencies in each region hold nomination rights to specific properties. When a property becomes available, the nominating agency is notified and asked to nominate renter/s into that property.

4.6 Joined Up Initiatives/Housing Pathways

- 4.6.1 The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing has also made properties available to other Departments within government including but not limited to, youth justice, mental health, corrections, alcohol and other drugs etc.; these are called "Joined Up Initiatives" (JUI). These Departments and/or their partnering support agency have nomination access to specific properties with the THM portfolio.

4.7 Advertised vacancies

- 4.7.1 In each THM portfolio there are properties that are not allocated to a JUI or Support Agency. When these properties become tenable, they are advertised on the government website or Resource Register (for agency use only). This allows agencies from the region to nominate into the property.
- 4.7.2 There are several considerations when allocating an advertised property to a resident that include but are not limited to:
 - i. Allocation policies for the region;
 - ii. Initial Assessment for individuals and families/households;
 - iii. Target groups assigned to properties;
 - iv. Age/Gender room ratios.
- 4.7.3 Each THM comes with a target group as set by the Department of Families Fairness and Housing. Targets include but are not limited to family violence, youth, Aboriginal housing, culturally and linguistically

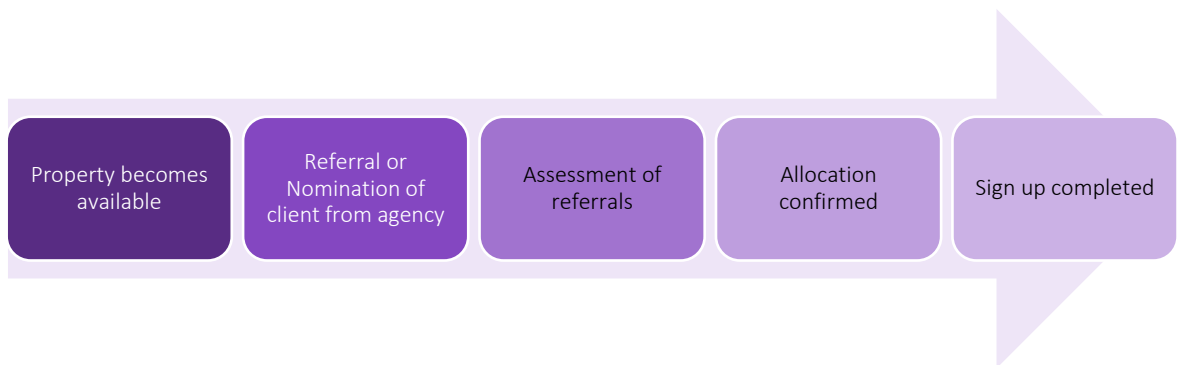
diverse (CALD) , mental health, Youth Justice, alcohol and other drugs, Corrections Victoria etc. There are also general targets with no specific group.

4.8 Allocation of non-nominated THM properties

- 4.8.1 Where a property does not have nomination access, the Launch Housing’s Housing and Support Allocations team will receive referrals in the form of initial assessments for consideration received from specialist Homelessness Services.
- 4.8.2 Applications are assessed based on the best match between the applicant/s circumstances, property target, room ratio and the considerations outlined above. All applicants are notified of the outcome via their referring agency. A time is arranged to sign up the successful applicant to the property and the supported tenancy commences.

4.9 Process map for THM allocation process

4.9.1 The following chart outlines the process and considerations in THM allocations. These keys steps are consistent across different types of allocations, however, as outlined above, there may be some additional steps or variation.



4.10 Rent calculation

4.10.1 Rent is calculated as per the following table:

Renter Age	Rent Calculation
Renters aged 18 years and over	25% of total household income plus 15% of Family Tax Benefit (FTB) Payments and/or child support payments.
Renters 15-17 years Independent rate of Centrelink	\$15 per week
Renters 15-17 years Dependent rate of Centrelink	\$7 per week

- 4.10.2 Renters aged 15-17 years who receive part benefits due to wages from part-time work, or those with dependents, are assessed as per the criteria for non-youth households.
- 4.10.3 Working renters are charged based on the calculation of the 12 most recent consecutive pay slips (gross wages).
- 4.10.4 Renters in transitional housing are NOT eligible for Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA).

4.11 Period of tenure

4.11.1 Transitional Housing is not permanent housing. THM is classified as shorter-term housing, generally with a fixed term rental agreement of 12 to 18 months. Some transitional housing properties are reserved for

shorter tenures of between six (6) weeks and three (3) months, which will be communicated during the allocation process.

- 4.11.2 All renters must sign a Residential Rental Agreement and are expected to be working with a Housing Support Worker on their long-term housing goals throughout their tenancy.

4.12 Housing exit plans

- 4.12.1 The housing exit plan describes the renter's long-term housing goals and the various steps that will be taken to achieve them. Exit plans are an integral part of a renter's successful transition to long term housing.
- 4.12.2 The renters support worker is expected to provide Launch Housing with a Exit Plan within the first month of commencement of tenancy. This Exit Plan also forms the basis of ongoing housing reviews.

4.13 Housing reviews

- 4.13.1 Housing reviews (including routine property inspections) and Exit Plans are undertaken regularly to discuss the current tenancy and plans toward securing long-term housing.
- 4.13.2 Housing Reviews provide renters with an opportunity to raise any concerns they have in relation to their tenancy and to discuss their progress towards achieving their anticipated long-term housing outcome.
- 4.13.3 Housing Reviews also provide Tenancy Managers and the renter with an opportunity to discuss the tenancy to date, reinforce conditions of the tenancy and highlight any tenancy issues.
- 4.13.4 Generally, a Housing Review will cover:
- i. Any changes in household circumstances;
 - ii. Engagement with support;
 - iii. Exit options – i.e., private rental etc;
 - iv. Routine inspections and maintenance;
 - v. Refusal of housing offers;
 - vi. Rent payments, rent review and/or rent arrears;
 - vii. Complaints and feedback (if applicable);
 - viii. Issue of a notice to vacate for end of fixed term tenancy.
- 4.13.5 Housing reviews will also take into account relevant factors, such as:
- i. Whether there is a critical ongoing need for transitional housing;
 - ii. Whether exit from transitional housing is impacted due to no suitable alternative options available; and/or
 - iii. Status of any VHR application for priority access to public housing.

4.14 End of a THM tenancy

- 4.14.1 Launch Housing has an obligation to ensure that transitional housing is being appropriately utilised to enable the most effective response to homelessness. The documented Housing Review and Exit Plan discussions will be considered at each decision-making point the along with:
- i. THM program guidelines; and
 - ii. Any exceptional circumstances.
- 4.14.2 Any decision to issue a notice to vacate for the end of fixed term rental agreement will be discussed with the renter and their supports. Eviction will only be considered after all other avenues to resolve tenancy issues have been exhausted, and only after consultation with Support Workers.

4.15 Refusal of a long-term housing offer

4.15.1 THM renters who refuse offers of long-term public or community housing that meets their needs and where there are no extenuating circumstances for the renter in relation to the offer, will be expected to enter into an alternative agreed Exit Plan; this may also result in a renter’s tenancy becoming at risk or the current rental agreement coming to an end at the end of the initial fixed term.

4.16 Moving out of the transitional property

4.16.1 Where a renter receives an offer of long-term housing or is planning on moving out of the THM, they are required to advise Launch Housing of the planned moving date. Renters should leave the property in a clean condition, free of personal belongings. It is expected all furniture supplied will remain in the property.

4.17 THM furniture and appliances

4.17.1 Launch Housing transitional properties are provided with basic furniture and appliances. These should remain in the property at the end of the tenancy. In addition, Launch Housing supplies a welcome pack of kitchen goods to all renters.

4.18 Repairs and maintenance

4.18.1 Launch Housing will respond to urgent and non-urgent repairs in line with the Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic) (RTA).
 4.18.2 In most cases, repairs and maintenance are the responsibility of Homes Victoria as they are generally the owner of the property. Therefore, Launch Housing has limited control over maintenance works and timeframes, however, will continue to follow up with Homes Victoria where maintenance is not attended to.

4.19 Notifying Launch Housing of repairs and maintenance

4.19.1 Renters must notify Launch Housing of any repairs and/or maintenance required at the property. During business hours, renters are to contact their Tenancy Worker for both urgent and non-urgent repairs.

4.20 After Hours Urgent Repairs

4.20.1 For urgent and/or emergency maintenance required after hours, renters are to contact the Housing Call Centre on 13 11 72. Typically, urgent/emergency works include electrical wiring faults, burst hot water services, blocked sewerage, or severe roof leaks.

5. Who is responsible for this policy

Who is responsible	Key activities
Launch Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managing the THM properties and tenancies in line with the program guidelines and Launch Housing policies and procedures.
Renters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comply with the THM program guidelines.

APPENDIX: ADMINISTRATION

6. Definitions

Term	Definition
DFFH	Department of Families Fairness and Housing
Household income	Assessable income received by all household members used to calculate the rent amount payable and repayment agreements for the household.
Joined-up-Initiative Housing	A joined-up approach that supports a collaboration between Launch Housing and key organisations.
Local Area Service Networks	Housing and support agencies funded to deliver homelessness services in local areas.
Long-Term housing	Rental housing that is intended to be provided for an indefinite period or multiple years.
Nomination rights	Refers to arrangements between Launch Housing and third-party support providers where the support provider nominates applicants for certain vacant properties.
Residential Rental Agreement	A lease under the Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic) (RTA), which sets out the rights and duties of the renter and rental provider.
THM	Transitional Housing Management.
Transitional housing program	A supported short-term accommodation program designed to help people move to more permanent housing, such as public housing, community housing, or the private rental market.
VHR	Victorian Housing Register

7. Related Launch Housing Policies

Name	Description
Client / Renter Complaints, Feedback and Appeals Policy	Details Launch Housing’s policy and process for managing feedback, complaints and appeals made by clients, renters and stakeholders.
End of Tenancy Policy	Details Launch Housing’s arrangements, processes and considerations for ending tenancies.
Hardship and Temporary Absence Policy	Details how Launch Housing aids renters experiencing significant financial hardship.
Maintenance and Repairs Policy	Details how Launch Housing ensures all properties under its ownership and management are maintained to a community standard which is habitable, safe and secure for our renters; and the asset retains its value as best as possible.
Neighbours and Community Policy	Details how Launch Housing will foster and support positive relationships with neighbours and local communities involved in and/or affected by services provided by Launch Housing.
Privacy Policy	Details how Launch Housing complies with Australian and Victorian Privacy Law, including the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) and Health Privacy Principles (HPPs).
Property Inspection Policy	Details how property inspections are conducted by Launch Housing.
Rental Arrears Policy	Details Launch Housing’s approach to managing a tenancy when a renter falls behind in their regular rent payments.
Renter Recharge Policy	Details the responsibility for payment of maintenance undertaken on Launch Housing’s properties.

8. Legislation

This policy meets the following legislative requirements:

Name	Description
Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)	Legislation that protects 20 civil, political, and cultural rights and imposes obligations on Parliament, courts, and public authorities.
Housing Act 1983 (Vic)	Legislation for housing law, which seeks to improve housing administration in Victoria.
Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic)	Legislation that regulates the rights and obligations of landlords and tenants in Victoria.

9. Regulatory / accreditation standards

This policy meets the following regulatory and/or accreditation requirements:

Standard	Standard reference
Housing Registrar Performance Standards	Standard 1: Tenant and housing services (Determining and managing eligibility, allocation, and termination of housing assistance) Standard 2: Housing Assets (Setting and meeting relevant property condition standards)

10. Amendments to this Policy

This policy may be amended, terminated or replaced at Launch Housing's discretion. This policy will be reviewed, and updated as required, on a periodic basis.

In the event any related State or Commonwealth legislation changes, the legislation/directions will prevail to the extent of any inconsistency with this policy.

Amendments			
Date last approved:	11/10/2024	Date of effect:	11/10/2024
Date last amended:	02/10/2024	Date of next review:	11/10/2026
Owner:	Group Manager, Housing Services	Approver:	Executive Director, Housing Solutions
Audience:	Renters in all Transitional Housing Management (THM) properties managed by Launch Housing, and staff managing these properties.		

11. Version Control

Version	Effective Date	Amended by	Approved By	Amendment
V1.0	30/04/2019	General Manager, Keeping Housing	General Manager, Keeping Housing	First Version
V2.0	29/03/2021	General Manager, Keeping Housing	General Manager, Keeping Housing	Updated terminology as per RTA changes.
V3.0	11/10/2024	Group Manager, Housing Services	Executive Director, Housing Solutions	Process updates.