

Allocation of Long-Term Housing Policy

Policy Description:

This policy establishes the approach of SouthEast Housing Cooperative 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.

The Allocations Schedule forms part of this policy document and provides detail on these long-term rental housing programs.

Applies to:

All long-term rental properties owned or managed by SouthEast Housing Cooperative, and all housing programs run by SouthEast Housing Cooperative.

Definitions:

Applicant	A person who has applied for housing via the VHR or, where permitted by this policy, directly to SouthEast Housing Cooperative.
Community housing affordable housing program	The housing program of SouthEast Housing Cooperative described in further detail in the Allocations Schedule.
DFFH	The Victorian Department of Families, Fairness and Housing.
Director of Housing	The Victorian government statutory authority that owns all public housing land in Victoria and which is the principal funding body for community housing.
Nomination rights	Arrangements between SouthEast Housing Cooperative and third party support providers where the support provider nominates applicants for certain vacant properties.
Priority Access	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"> • Emergency Management Housing • Priority Transfers • Homeless with Support • Supported Housing

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary Absence • Special Housing Needs • Aged (55 years and over)
Public housing	Housing owned and managed by DFFH.
Social housing	The housing program of SouthEast Housing Cooperative described in further detail in the Allocations Schedule.
Transitional housing	The Victorian Government program to provide housing on a short-term basis to people at risk of homelessness seeking long term housing options.
True vacancy	<p>All vacancies excluding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tenant to tenant transfers (but not Priority Transfers via the VHR); and • tenancies started by relocated tenants that are returning.
VHR	The Victorian Housing Register, the Statewide common application for people seeking public and / or community housing.

Relevant policy statements and/or principles:

Approach to allocation – guiding principles

SouthEast Housing Cooperative 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 SouthEast Housing Cooperative’s long-term housing programs.

SouthEast Housing Cooperative is committed to promoting a successful and sustainable tenancy when matching applicants to its properties. This means that SouthEast Housing Cooperative 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.



Procedure:

Victorian Housing Register

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

Allocations Schedule

SouthEast Housing Cooperative has established an Allocations Schedule that establishes the following for each of its housing programs:

Program Description and Funding	Social Housing (General Lease) SouthEast Housing Cooperative managed DFFH properties.
Approach to allocation including any allocation Targets	Refer to the General Lease
Source of applicants	The primary sources are the Victorian Housing Register Priority Access List and Expression of Interest List. Other sources may include Common Equity Housing Ltd, other housing providers and Homelessness Support Agencies.
Eligibility Rules Description	Refer to the DFFH policy and Operational Guidelines
No of properties in the program	190

Program Description and Funding	Social Housing (Owned). These properties were jointly funded by SouthEast Housing Cooperative and the DFFH. Although SouthEast Housing Cooperative owns the properties, the Director of Housing retains an interest in each of the properties and this interest is noted on each certificate of title.
Approach to allocation including	SouthEast Housing Cooperative maintains the same approach and targeting as under the General Lease.

any allocation Targets	
Source of applicants	The primary sources are the Victorian Housing Register Priority Access List and Expression of Interest List. Other sources may include Common Equity Housing Ltd, other housing providers and Homelessness Support Agencies.
Eligibility Rules Description	Refer to the DFFH policy and Operational Guidelines
No of properties in the program	10

Program Description and Funding	Social Housing (Domestic/Family Violence), Rapid Housing Assistance Program. Social Housing (Owned). These properties were jointly funded by SouthEast Housing Cooperative and the DFFH. Although SouthEast Housing Cooperative owns the properties, the Director of Housing retains an interest in each of the properties and this interest is noted on each certificate of title.
Approach to allocation including any allocation Targets	These properties primarily target victims of domestic violence and comply with DFFH and NRAS allocation policies and targets.
Source of applicants	The primary sources are the Victorian Housing Register Priority Access List and Expression of Interest List. Other sources may include Common Equity Housing Ltd, other housing providers and Homelessness Support Agencies.
Eligibility Rules Description	Refer to the DFFH policy and Operational Guidelines and NRAS guidelines.
No of properties in the program	4

The 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 SouthEast Housing Cooperative 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 SouthEast Housing Cooperative 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;
- real estate listings;
- Registered Housing Associations and Providers.

Nomination Rights

Where nomination rights apply, SouthEast Housing Cooperative will:

- establish appropriate arrangements in protocol agreements with referral agencies who have responsibility for nominating applicants for vacancies, to ensure timely and appropriate referrals; and
- require that referral agencies nominate applicants who have a current VHR Priority Access application.

Dynamic Portfolio Management

SouthEast Housing Cooperative will apply dynamic portfolio management so that properties are not tied to one allocation category. Rather, SouthEast Housing Cooperative will take a whole-of-portfolio approach to allocation which seeks to maximise its utilisation e.g. via downsizing.

Eligibility

SouthEast Housing Cooperative 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 DFFH. See the Eligibility Policy for further details.

Promoting successful and sustainable tenancies

SouthEast Housing Cooperative is committed to treating all applicants fairly and will not unlawfully discriminate against any potential applicant or applicant.

SouthEast Housing Cooperative will assess all applicants before making an offer of housing to determine suitability for a vacancy (and eligibility if the applicant is not from the VHR). If SouthEast Housing Cooperative declines to offer an applicant housing, it will inform the applicant accordingly.

Matching households to the right house

In allocating housing, SouthEast Housing Cooperative will also have regard to the VHR operational guideline, [Matching Clients with Housing and Special Accommodation Requirements](#).

SouthEast Housing Cooperative 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 SouthEast Housing Cooperative;
- encourages a sustainable tenancy; and
- meets any expressed needs of the applicant as 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.

SouthEast Housing Cooperative 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.

SouthEast Housing Cooperative will ask applicants to provide reasonable evidence to substantiate requirements, if this is not contained in a VHR application.

Supporting sustainable and harmonious communities

SouthEast Housing Cooperative may, to the extent necessary, adopt different strategies in allocation in response to:

- a high concentration of public and community housing stock in an area;
- a high concentration of tenants with multiple health, social or economic issues in an 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.

Related Legislation, SEHC Documents and Other Documents:

Legislation / Standards:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Act 1983 (Vic) • Performance Standards for Registered Housing Agencies • DFFH Victorian Housing Register Operational Guidelines
Organisational Documents:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transfers ex Governance Manual

VHR Documents / Guidelines:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VHR and DFFH eligibility documents • VHR eligibility guidelines • CHFV Definitions
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Policy Management:

Policy owner (role title):	Board
Role responsible for implementing:	Board and CEO
Review arrangements:	Every 24 months via internal review
Next Review Date:	June 2024

Document History:

Date:	Controlled Version Number:	Author:	Approved by:	Comment:
24 June 2022	1.0	S. Morrissey (CEO)	Board	Board approved version migrated for display on SEHC website.



Allocations Schedule

Program	Approach to allocation for Program	Source of applicants	Eligibility	No. units
<p>Social Housing (Owned)</p> <p><i>Long term housing owned by SouthEast Housing Cooperative with assistance from the Director of Housing under capital grant, stock transfer programs and which is designated as “social housing”.</i></p> <p><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>SouthEast Housing Cooperative targets 75% of allocations of true vacancies of Social Housing to applicants from the Priority Access category under the VHR.</p> <p>(See also the CHAH Program note below)</p>	VHR only	VHR and SouthEast Housing Cooperative	10
<p>Social Housing (General Lease)</p> <p><i>Long-term housing owned by the Director of Housing and leased to SouthEast Housing Cooperative.</i></p>	<p>SouthEast Housing Cooperative targets 75% of allocations of true vacancies of Social Housing to applicants from the Priority Access category under the VHR.</p>	VHR only	VHR/DFFH	190



Program	Approach to allocation for Program	Source of applicants	Eligibility	No. units
<i>Funded in part by Commonwealth NRAS funding for affordable housing (no DFFH funding)</i>	allocations are to applicants for whom the set rent is affordable. NRAS - SouthEast Housing Cooperative has agreed to ensure that NRAS properties are allocated to households eligible for housing under the NRAS rules.			
				Total 204

Notes:

1. Under the SouthEast Housing Cooperative Allocations Policy, where a property is specified as “VHR only”, SouthEast Housing Cooperative may seek all applicants from other sources if no suitable VHR applicants are available. In these circumstances, SouthEast Housing Cooperative will ensure that all applicants complete a VHR application before or shortly after being offered housing for the purposes of compliance and reporting.
2. See Eligibility Policy for further details.