



**SouthEast**  
Housing Co-operative

*Housing Futures*

# ALLOCATION OF LONG-TERM HOUSING POLICY

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## Purpose

This policy establishes the approach of SouthEast 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 or managed by SouthEast. The Allocations Schedule forms part of this policy document and provides detail on these long-term rental housing programs.

This policy applies all housing programs run by SouthEast.

## Policy statement

### **Approach to allocation – guiding principles.**

SouthEast 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's long-term housing programs.

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

SouthEast 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, SouthEast is required to target 75% of allocations of true vacancies of social housing to Priority Access applicants.

## Allocations Schedule

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

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Program Description and Funding</b>                         | Social Housing (General Lease) SouthEast managed DHHS properties.  |
| <b>Approach to allocation including any allocation Targets</b> | Refer to the General Lease   |
| <b>Source of applicants</b>                                    | 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. |
| <b>Eligibility Rules Description</b>                           | <a href="#">Refer to the DHHS policy and Operational Guidelines</a>  |
| <b>No of properties in the program</b>                         | 150  |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Program Description and Funding</b> | Social Housing (Owned). These properties were funded 25% by SouthEast the other 75% was funded by the DHHS and though |
|--|---|

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | SouthEast owns the property titles the Director of Housing retains an interest in each of the properties.  |
| <b>Approach to allocation including any allocation Targets</b> | SouthEast maintains the same approach and targeting as under the General Lease.  |
| <b>Source of applicants</b>                                    | 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. |
| <b>Eligibility Rules Description</b>                           | <a href="#">Refer to the DHHS policy and Operational Guidelines</a>  |
| <b>No of properties in the program</b>                         | 10   |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Program Description and Funding</b>                         | Social Housing (Domestic/Family Violence), Rapid Housing Assistance Program. These properties were funded 50% by SouthEast the other 50% was funded by the DHHS and though SouthEast owns the property titles the Director of Housing retains and interest in each of the properties. NRAS funding is attached to each property. |
| <b>Approach to allocation including any allocation Targets</b> | These properties primarily target victims of domestic violence and comply with DHHS and NRAS allocation policies and targets.  |
| <b>Source of applicants</b>                                    | 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.   |
| <b>Eligibility Rules Description</b>                           | <a href="#">Refer to the DHHS policy and Operational Guidelines</a> and <a href="#">NRAS guidelines.</a>   |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>No of properties in the program</b> | 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 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 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 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 will apply dynamic portfolio management so that properties are not tied to one allocation category. Rather, SouthEast will take a whole-of-portfolio approach to allocation which seeks to maximise its utilisation e.g. via downsizing

## Eligibility

SouthEast 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

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

SouthEast 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 declines to offer an applicant housing, it will inform the applicant accordingly.

## Matching households to the right house

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

SouthEast 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;
- 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 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 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 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.

## Definitions

In this policy:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Applicant</b>                                    | means a person who has applied for housing via the VHR or, where permitted by this policy, directly to SouthEast  |
| <b>Community housing affordable housing program</b> | The housing program of SouthEast described in further detail in the Allocations Schedule.   |
| <b>DHHS</b>   | means the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services   |
| <b>Director of Housing</b>                          | means the Victorian government statutory authority that owns all public housing land in Victoria and which is the principal funding body for community housing  |
| <b>Nomination rights</b>                            | means arrangements between SouthEast and third party support providers where the support provider nominates applicants for certain vacant properties  |
| <b>Priority Access</b>                              | <p>Applicants on the VHR who have been assessed as having a priority housing need. The Priority Access Categories are:</p> <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 SouthEast described in further detail in the Allocations Schedule.   |
| <b>Transitional Housing</b> | means the Victorian Government program to provide housing on a short-term basis to people at risk of homelessness seeking long term housing options   |
| <b>True vacancy</b>         | means 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 Statewide common application for people seeking public housing and community housing  |

## Related policies

- VHR and DHHS eligibility documents
- VHR [eligibility guidelines](#)
- Transfers ex Governance Manual
- CHFV Definitions

## Legislation and standards

This policy implements SouthEast’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 SouthEast website: [www.sehc.org.au](http://www.sehc.org.au)

## Allocations Schedule

| Program   | Approach to allocation for Program   | Source of applicants | Eligibility              | No. units |
|---|--|----------------------|--------------------------|-----------|
| <p><b>Social Housing (Owned)</b></p> <p><i>Long term housing owned by SouthEast 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 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> | <p>VHR only</p>      | <p>VHR and SouthEast</p> | <p>10</p> |

| Program  | Approach to allocation for Program  | Source of applicants         | Eligibility     | No. units  |
|--|---|------------------------------|-----------------|------------|
| <p><b>Social Housing (General Lease)</b></p> <p><i>Long-term housing owned by the Director of Housing and leased to SouthEast.</i></p>   | <p>SouthEast targets 75% of allocations of true vacancies of Social Housing to applicants from the Priority Access category under the VHR.</p>  | <p>VHR only</p>              | <p>VHR/DHHS</p> | <p>150</p> |
| <p><b>Community Housing Affordable Housing (CHAH) Program</b></p> <p><i>Long term housing owned by SouthEast</i></p> <p>This housing is appropriate for the needs of a range of low to moderate income households. These</p> | <p>NA</p> <p>Note</p> <p>Current DHHS policy does not cover this type of program in which case the Social Housing (Owned) program properties do not qualify. If the Director of Housing maintains an interest in a property then owned or leased the property is governed by existing VHR/DHHS policy. Currently only properties purchased 100% with SouthEast funds would qualify.</p> | <p>VHR and other sources</p> | <p>VHR</p>      | <p>0</p>   |

| Program  | Approach to allocation for Program  | Source of applicants  | Eligibility   | No. units |
|--|---|-----------------------|---|-----------|
| households might not be able to access social housing but nonetheless would live in housing stress if in the private rental market                   |   |                       |   |           |
| <p><b>Specialist program: Rapid Housing Assistance Fund – Domestic/Family Violence</b></p> <p><b>National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS)</b></p> | <p>As per the CHAH program - all vacancies to be allocated to applicants from the VHR unless no suitable applicants are available. In this case, SouthEast may seek referrals from non-VHR sources. These properties are most likely to be suited to applicants from the Register of Interest category of the VHR.</p> <p>SouthEast will allocate these properties in line with a target tenancy profile and rental budget for the program, ensuring that allocations are to applicants for whom the set rent is affordable.</p> <p>NRAS - SouthEast has agreed to ensure that NRAS properties are allocated to households eligible for housing under the NRAS rules.</p> | VHR and other sources | Applicants must be formally classified as domestic/family violence victims and supported by an approved agency. | 04        |

| Program   | Approach to allocation for Program | Source of applicants | Eligibility | No. units    |
|---|------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|--------------|
| <i>Funded in part by Commonwealth NRAS funding for affordable housing (no DHHS funding)</i> |                                    |                      |             |              |
|   |                                    |                      |             | Total<br>164 |

Notes:

1. Under the SouthEast Allocations Policy, where a property is specified as “VHR only”, SouthEast may seek all applicants from other sources if no suitable VHR applicants are available. In these circumstances, SouthEast 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.