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Community Housing Core Operating Procedure

Registering Community Housing Customers and Managing Vacancies

1. Overview

1.1. Intent

This procedure outlines how **community housing providers** register community housing customers and manage vacancies using the **Community Housing Customer Register (CHCR)**. Community housing providers continue to retain responsibility for selecting new tenants.

1.2. Context

The CHCR is the entry point for customers wishing to register their interest in community housing managed by registered community housing providers. The storage and use of personal information is managed in accordance with the national privacy legislation and *PC012- Information Privacy Principles (IPPS) Instruction (SA)*.

This procedure is based on the *Community Housing Core Operating Policy - Tenant Allocation and Tenure* and the **Community Housing Agreement** which defines the responsibility of community housing providers to make offers of community housing to eligible customers from the CHCR.

1.3. Scope

This procedure applies to all registrations of interest for community housing programs identified under a *Community Housing Agreement* between a community housing provider and the South Australian Housing Trust (SAHT).

Use of the CHCR does not apply to internal tenant transfers of a community housing providers which will be managed in accordance with their internal policies and procedures.

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3. Definitions

Category of Need

A Category of Need is assigned to each registrant in accordance with the *Community Housing Core Operating Policy - Eligibility*, *Community Housing Core Operating Procedure - Eligibility* and the Needs Assessment Framework. The Category indicates the urgency of the registrant's housing need.

Community Housing Agreement

The agreement entered into between the South Australian Housing Trust (SAHT) and a community housing provider, pursuant to section 20 of the *Community Housing Providers (National Law) (South Australia) Act 2013* and includes:

- The *Master Community Housing Agreement* including all attachments, annexures and schedules to it; and
- Any agreement, deed or instrument executed under or which is subject to or bound by the *Master Community Housing Agreement* (including but not limited to project agreements, deeds of statutory charge and pre-existing agreements).

Community Housing Customer Register (CHCR)

The register of that name which comprises a list of persons seeking access to community housing (or any replacement register determined by South Australian Housing Trust (SAHT) maintained by SAHT).

Community housing provider

An entity that provides community housing and is registered under the *Community Housing Providers (National Law) (South Australia) Act 2013*.

Housing Needs Assessment

A formal process undertaken by a registrant, or a member of the registrant's household, incorporating three components: an individual needs assessment, accommodation history assessment and housing options assessment. The Housing Needs Assessment is designed to determine the nature and urgency of the registrant's housing requirements, and may be required to confirm a Category of Need.

Limited tenure

Refers to the housing of a customer on a short or medium term basis only.

Portfolio profile

A register of the community housing provider's portfolio as at the date of execution of the Community Housing Agreement annexed as Annexure A to Schedule 2.

Primary Contact Organisation (PCO)

The community housing provider that acts as the contact point for the registrant in relation to the ongoing management of the customer's registration. Most community housing providers act as the Primary Contact Organisation for registrants who have registered through that provider. For registrants for volunteer member tenant managed provider, the Housing SA Contact Centre is the Primary Contact Organisation.

Registrant (Principal Registrant)

A person who has lodged a *Registration of Interest Form* and whose name is listed on the Community Housing Customer Register (CHCR).

Registrant Household

The entire household registering interest in community housing (may consist of more than one household grouping).

Tenancy type (General, Supported, Affordable)

The type of tenant allocated to a specific project property. Tenant types include:

- a) General tenants - persons who meet the SAHT Base Eligibility Criteria and the income, assets and/or needs test as defined in the *Community Housing Eligibility Policy*;
- b) Supported tenants - persons who meet the income, assets and/or needs test AND have an package of support approved by SAHT in accord with formal homelessness/mental health supported/supportive housing programs and
- c) Affordable tenants – persons who meet the SAHT Base Eligibility Criteria and the prescribed income tests as defined in the *Community Housing Eligibility Policy*.

Volunteer member-tenant managed provider

A community housing provider which is incorporated under the *Associations Incorporation Act 1985 (SA)* or the *Co-operatives National Law (South Australia) Act 2013* and which does not engage any paid staff or officers, but operates solely on a volunteer tenant member managed basis.

4. Procedure detail

Step	Description
1	<p>To become an authorised user of the CHCR</p> <p>Access to the CHCR is limited to authorised users. Community housing providers will be required to provide written authorisation of individuals within their organisation to whom access to the CHCR is requested by completing the relevant section of the <i>Online User Application Form</i> and returning it to the system administrator (Renewal SA).</p> <p>To become an authorised user, the community housing provider representative/s must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not have an active community housing registration AND ▪ Be a duly appointed office holder or committee member of the organisation for which user access is being granted AND ▪ In the case of <i>volunteer member tenant managed providers</i> the authorised user must be a current member of the organisation for which user access is being granted. <p>Prior to being granted access to the CHCR, attendance at system training run by Renewal SA must be verified and authorised users will be required to agree to terms and conditions relating to system use.</p> <p>Community housing providers must advise Renewal SA in writing when an authorised user is no longer a member/employee of their organisation, or is no longer authorised, so that access to the CHCR can be withdrawn.</p> <p>Misuse of Authorised Access</p> <p>Authorised users must not misuse or breach their access privileges. Users must protect their login ID and password, and must not provide this information to anyone, including other workers of their organisation, under any circumstances.</p>
2	<p>To register customer interest in community housing</p> <p>The process followed will vary as follows:</p> <p>a. <i>Where customer is registering interest in <u>both</u> community housing and public housing:</i></p> <p>Where a customer wishes to register their interest in <u>both</u> public and community housing (not including housing provided by volunteer member-tenant managed providers), they should be referred to Housing</p>

	<p>SA which will provide a single registration of interest form that can be used.</p> <p>Housing SA staff will then provide a dual entry process into both the public and community housing customer register systems and will become the customer's primary contact organisation. Customers will then also be able to be shortlisted and housed by community housing providers from the CHCR providing they meet their individual eligibility criteria.</p> <p>b. Where customer is registering interest in community housing <u>only</u>:</p> <p>Customers wishing to register their interest in community housing only use the standard <i>community housing registration of interest (ROI) form</i> made available by community housing providers.</p> <p>If a customer expresses interest in more than one community housing provider, the provider accepting the ROI form and entering the customer information onto the CHCR is deemed the primary contact organisation (sometimes referred to as the "PCO"). This is the community housing provider which will act as the contact point for the registrant in relation to the ongoing management of their registration.</p> <p>c. Where customer is registering interest in volunteer member-tenant managed community housing:</p> <p>Customers wishing to register their interest in community housing managed by volunteer member-tenant managed providers must access the applicable ROI form via the Community Housing Council of South Australia (CHCSA) following their attendance at a Public Information Session.</p> <p>A customer may have only one current registration at any time.</p> <p><u>Small Community Housing Providers</u></p> <p>The Housing SA Contact Centre may enter registrations of interest onto the CHCR on behalf of some small community housing providers. In the case of volunteer member tenant managed providers, <u>all</u> registrations of interest will be entered by the Housing SA Contact Centre. Any change of circumstances will therefore need to be recorded via the Housing SA Contact Centre as the primary contact organisation for these registrations.</p>
3	<p>To acknowledge registrations</p> <p>The primary contact organisation will advise the customer (or the customer's nominated support worker/friend/relative as recorded on the ROI form) in writing within 7 days of receipt of their registration, of their eligibility/ineligibility for community housing.</p>

<p>4</p>	<p>To assign a ‘Category of Need’</p> <p>The CHCR automatically assigns a registration as either a Category 2 or Category 3. A plus sign (i.e. Category 2+ or Category 3+) indicates the customer may have special housing needs. In order to verify this, the community housing provider will offer the customer the opportunity to undertake a <i>Housing Needs Assessment (Needs Test)</i>. This will determine the nature and urgency of their housing requirements and confirm their Category of Need. The CHCR <u>will not</u> automatically assign a Category 1.</p> <p>Based on this assessment, the community housing provider will assign a Category of Need to the registration in the system. The registrant will be required to substantiate identified needs with reports from medical or support services.</p> <p>(Refer to: <i>Community Housing Core Operating Policy- Eligibility</i> and <i>Community Housing Core Operating Procedure – Eligibility</i> regarding the Housing Needs Assessment processes).</p> <p>Category 1+ is the category assigned to those customers approved to receive offers of <i>supported</i> accommodation made available through the Supportive or Supported Housing Programs (refer <i>Supportive Housing Program Guidelines – Homelessness</i> and <i>Supported Housing Program - Mental Health</i>).</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>To indicate a health, safety and/or service (HSS) matter exists</p> <p>A community housing provider may indicate by completion of a tick box on the CHCR that there is information relating to a customer’s registration not appropriate to record on the system but important to know in order to provide an appropriate housing service.</p> <p>When the registration is processed the CHCR will indicate that a HSS matter applies. The indicator may be applied for cultural, safety or other reasons, or legal requirements about where the registrant can live.</p> <p>Where a community housing provider (other than the primary contact organisation) wishes to consider or contact a registrant for whom a HSS indicator has been applied, they should contact the primary contact organisation before making contact with the registrant to query the nature of the HSS issue.</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>Registration status</p> <p>When the customer’s information has been entered onto the CHCR, a registration status is assigned by the system as:</p> <p><i>Draft</i></p>

	<p>An incomplete registration.</p> <p><i>Ineligible – Current</i> The registrant may request reconsideration of their ineligibility within 30 days of this status being recorded on the CHCR, providing reasons and any additional information required to substantiate their request. The primary contact organisation is able to override this status provided the reasons satisfy the requirements of the <i>Community Housing Core Operating Policy- Eligibility</i> and the <i>Community Housing Core Operating Procedure – Eligibility</i>. The status of the registrant’s registration can then be upgraded to ‘Lodged’ deeming the registrant eligible.</p> <p><i>Ineligible – Expired</i> Once this status has been assigned, a new ROI form must be completed if the customer wishes to re-register interest in community housing.</p> <p><i>Lodged</i> When all required information has been entered onto the CHCR for an eligible customer.</p> <p>When registration status is ‘Lodged’, the registration may be viewed by all community housing providers for which the registrant has expressed interest and is eligible for.</p> <p>The system generates an acknowledgement letter that must be printed by the primary contact organisation and sent to the registrant.</p>
7	<p>To assign ‘sensitive’ status to a registration</p> <p>On request, or on the basis of individual circumstances, the primary contact organisation can assign <i>sensitive</i> status to a registration where it is deemed that access to the registrant’s personal identifying information should be restricted (e.g. an Intervention Order, or a Child Protection Order applies). To assign sensitive status the primary contact organisation completes the check box in the ‘Office Use Only’ section of the ROI form and records the status on the system.</p> <p>Only the primary contact organisation can view the personal identifying information of customer whose registration has been assigned sensitive status.</p> <p>Where another community housing provider wishes to interview the customer or make a housing offer, they should contact the primary contact organisation who will make contact with the registrant on their behalf.</p> <p>In certain circumstances, for example, where a registrant is under witness protection, registrations should not be entered onto the CHCR at all. In this case the hard copy of a ROI form should be retained and securely stored by</p>

	<p>the primary contact organisation receiving it. The registration is then limited to housing made available by that provider only, and there is no provision on the CHCR to record any housing offer made.</p>
<p>8</p>	<p>To defer, withdraw or cancel a registration</p> <p><i>Deferral</i></p> <p>On request by the registrant a registration may be deferred. To defer the registration the registrant must complete a <i>Change of Circumstances form</i> and send it to their primary contact organisation. The primary contact organisation may grant deferral status when the registrant is temporarily unable to accept an offer of housing for good reason as judged by the primary contact organisation. Deferring a registration prevents the registration from returning on shortlists created for available vacancies.</p> <p>The primary contact organisation or the Contact Centre, Housing SA can initiate a deferral where the registrant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ cannot be contacted at the time a housing offer is made; or ▪ fails to respond to a request to attend an interview to review their registration or to assess their needs; or ▪ has not responded to requests for contact within 30 days. <p>A registration can be deferred for a maximum of 12 consecutive months. The deferral period must be noted on the register.</p> <p><i>Withdrawal</i></p> <p>A registration may be withdrawn on request by a registrant by completing a <i>Change of circumstances form</i> or through an audit of the register, advising they no longer require community housing.</p> <p>A registration may be withdrawn by a community housing provider / primary contact organisation where there is a duplicate registration already on the system or the registrant is ineligible for community housing at the point of allocation to a property.</p> <p>A registration may be withdrawn by the Housing SA Contact Centre as part of an audit of the CHCR where a registrant's status is deferred and there has been no recorded contact with the Contact Centre or a provider for a period of 12 consecutive months.</p> <p><i>Cancellation</i></p> <p>A draft registration should be cancelled after 6 months. This may be required where the registration has been identified as a duplicate, where there has been a data entry error, or where the registrant failed to return additional information required to complete a registration on the CHCR.</p>

<p>9</p>	<p>To process a change of circumstances request</p> <p>A change of circumstances is any change or event which may impact on the customer's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Eligibility for community housing and/or ▪ Eligibility for a provider for which the customer has expressed interest, and/or ▪ Category of housing need and/or ▪ Receipt of an appropriate housing offer. <p>Primary contact organisations can accept registrants' verbal reports about changes to telephone/mobile numbers and address details, and enter these directly onto their registration in the CHCR. All other changes must be advised in writing via completion of a <i>Change of Circumstances Form</i>.</p> <p>For security purposes, the registrant's/ caller's identity must be established as the person about whom the changes are to be recorded before accepting verbal advice of the changes. In order to establish identity, the organisation should ask the customer to provide the following details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Customer Number ▪ Full name, date of birth, address, telephone number, including mobile number(s) ▪ Centrelink Reference Number (CRN - where applicable) <p>Where a change of circumstance potentially changes the Category of Need, the CHCR will prompt the primary contact organisation to review the registrant's Category of Need. The system will, where relevant, reassess the Category of Need. Appropriate verification is required to confirm continued eligibility and/or Category of Need (e.g. proof of income or new special needs).</p> <p>Only the primary contact organisation is authorised to change customer information on the CHCR. If another housing provider receives a <i>Change of Circumstances Form</i>, they should arrange for it to be forwarded it to the primary contact organisation.</p>
<p>10</p>	<p>To make a housing offer</p> <p>Community housing providers must create a short list on the CHCR for the purpose of filling a vacancy. The short list targets the most appropriate registrant/household for the property according to criteria set by the provider.</p> <p>In order to ensure targeted allocation outcomes identified in the portfolio profile of each community housing provider are met, they must identify in the system the tenancy type they are assigning to the housing offer made.</p> <p>Prior to making a housing offer, the community housing provider must also confirm:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the registrant’s continued eligibility for community housing ▪ the current assigned Category of Need is accurate (If a category is not yet confirmed by the primary contact organisation through Housing Needs Assessment at point of registration, the community housing provider making the offer must undertake a Housing Needs Assessment and assign a Category of Need). <p>If the registrant is no longer eligible for community housing, the CHCR automatically assigns the status of ‘Ineligible – Current’, and will not allow a housing offer to be made.</p> <p>The community housing provider must record the offer on the CHCR by selecting the ‘Make Offer’ function and set the offer period.</p> <p>Community housing providers must advise registrants that in accepting the housing offer, they will be deemed housed by the CHCR and no further offers of housing can be made (unless the housing offer is limited tenure, in which case the person’s registration status will remain ‘lodged’ and open to offers of longer term accommodation – refer step 12).</p> <p>The shortlist can be cancelled where a current offer is not in place.</p>
11	<p>To manage a housing offer</p> <p>A registrant can either accept or reject a housing offer. A community housing provider may withdraw a housing offer, but must record the reason for the withdrawal on the CHCR where the housing offer is rejected.</p> <p>When an offer is accepted, the community housing provider must update the registration status to ‘Offer Accepted’. At the tenancy start date the community housing provider must complete the housing offer by clicking on the ‘housed’ button, and then confirming by clicking the ‘registrant housed’ button.</p> <p>This step is necessary to ensure data integrity of the system. It finalises the offer process by changing the registrant’s status to ‘housed’, no longer returning them on future offer shortlists.</p>
12	<p>To record an offer of housing as ‘limited tenure’</p> <p>Where a registrant is made an offer of community housing on a short or medium term only, the system will enable the user to record that the offer is for a limited tenure only, and the registrant will retain the status of ‘lodged’. This allows the registrant to continue to be shortlisted for other longer term housing opportunities.</p> <p>When a registrant is on a limited tenure and is then offered a long term tenancy at the same address, the community housing provider must, in the CHCR:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create a new short list for the same address, including the registrant, and select the registrant AND ▪ Make the offer to the registrant AND ▪ Accept the offer and then change the status to 'housed.'
<p>13</p>	<p>To manage tasks and reports</p> <p>Task Tab</p> <p>To ensure the data integrity of the system community housing providers must follow up outstanding tasks and activities shown in the 'Task' tab.</p> <p>Export of information from the CHCR</p> <p>Community housing providers are able to export an XML file of relevant tenant information from the CHCR into their own tenancy management systems once a registrant is 'housed'.</p> <p>Auditing and Data Reports</p> <p>Auditors may request information for annual auditing requirements of providers. Auditors may obtain data directly from the providers or from the system administrator (Renewal SA).</p> <p>Renewal SA will produce reports for internal audit and other purposes as required, monitoring use of the CHCR as it relates to contract requirements and the application of relevant policies and guidelines. Where applicable, data required for Commonwealth and State reports will also be drawn from the CHCR.</p>
<p>14</p>	<p>To ensure legal, secure record keeping</p> <p>Community housing providers are expected to develop their own internal procedures for the correct storage and disposal of their records. With respect to the CHCR, ROI forms and related documents such as Housing Needs Assessments (Needs Test), support letters and correspondence are considered to be official records, and must be appropriately and securely stored.</p> <p>Any hard copy files associated with the registration of a customer must be forwarded to the community housing provider that houses the registrant (with the exception of registrations entered by the Housing SA Contact Centre on behalf of volunteer member-tenant managed community housing providers. In this case they will be securely stored by the Contact Centre.)</p>

5. Resources

5.1. Directive documents

- *Community Housing Agreement*
- *Community Housing Core Operating Policy – Tenant Allocations and Tenure*
- *Community Housing Core Operating Policy– Eligibility*
- *Supportive Housing Program Guidelines – Homelessness*
- *Supported Housing Program Guidelines – Mental Health*

5.2. Forms and templates

- *Community Housing Registration of Interest Form*
- *Community Housing Needs Report Form*
- *Community Housing Customer Register Online User Application Form*
- *Community Housing Customer Register Change of Circumstances Form*
- *Transfer of Primary Contact Form*

5.3. Supporting documents and resources

- *Community Housing Customer Register Manual*
- *PC012- Information Privacy Principles (IPPS) Instruction (SA).*

6. Procedure approval

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7. Version record

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1.0	June 2015	Final draft of <i>Community Housing Core Operating Procedure – Registering Community Housing Customers and Managing Vacancies</i>	Lynley Street