

ELIGIBILITY Policy and Procedure

QA REFERENCE	M't P&P No 38
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REVIEW RESPONSIBILITY	Chief Financial Officer
APPROVED BY	Chief Executive Officer
REFERENCES –	
Relevant Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Act 1983 (Vic) • Performance Standards for Registered Housing Agencies • DHHS Victorian Housing Register Operational Guidelines • Guidelines for Registered Housing Agencies published by DHHS • Residential Tenancies Act 1997
Other relevant MASP Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility Modifications • Allocations MASP Properties • Being a Good Neighbour • Bond Management • Code of Conduct and Conflicts of Interest • Complaints and Appeals • Inspections • Maintenance and Repairs • Property Damage by tenant • Privacy and Information Security • Rent Arrears Management and Evictions • Rent Setting and Collection
FORMS & TEMPLATES	

Purpose

This policy establishes the approach of MASP to eligibility for its rental housing programs.

Scope

This policy applies to all rental properties owned or managed by MASP

Policy statement

Approach to eligibility – guiding principles

MASP establishes eligibility criteria for housing to fulfill its social mission and to ensure that its housing is made available to relieve households from housing stress.

Accordingly, MASP will:

- only allocate housing to eligible applicants;
- communicate clearly to applicants and the community as to who is eligible for housing with MASP; and
- comply with its contractual, legal and regulatory obligations relating to eligibility for long-term housing.

Victorian Housing Register

MASP participates in the Victorian Housing Register (VHR). The VHR is a common register for all applicants for public housing and community housing in Victoria.

DHHS has established common eligibility criteria for the VHR that are set out in the Eligibility Criteria Operational Guidelines. The VHR eligibility criteria apply to all properties owned or managed by MASP in Victoria, other than those properties which MASP and DHHS have agreed are outside the scope of the VHR.

All applicants with a current VHR application are taken by MASP to have established that they meet the VHR eligibility criteria.

Applicants without a current VHR application can provide evidence to MASP that establishes they meet the VHR eligibility criteria. MASP will assist such applicants to make a VHR application either through referral to a suitable service or by assisting the applicant to lodge a VHR application.

General requirements for eligibility for long-term housing

To be eligible for long-term housing with MASP which is under the VHR, an applicant must:

- meet the VHR eligibility criteria;
- have no previous debt with MASP, the Director of Housing or another registered housing agency that remains unpaid (unless a repayment agreement has been entered into)

Specific requirements for particular long-term housing programs

MASP has some particular long-term rental housing programs where additional eligibility criteria to the general eligibility criteria apply. The Allocations Schedule in the Allocations Policy provides more detail on these programs and their specific eligibility requirements.

Eligibility for long-term housing programs outside the scope of the VHR

Where MASP owns or manages housing under programs that are outside the scope of the VHR, then:

- MASP will comply with any other legal or contractual obligations that apply to eligibility housing in that program; and
- MASP may within the scope of such legal or contractual obligations:
 - elect to apply the general eligibility criteria as a generally accepted benchmark to establish that the applicant needs affordable housing; or
 - apply some other reasonable eligibility criteria that is consistent with MASP's objects and purposes.

MASP will communicate clearly with applicants and stakeholders as to the particular eligibility criteria that apply to that program.

Procedures

Procedures established by MASP will include processes to ensure compliance with this policy, including to:

- assist people to apply for housing with MASP; and
- identify the program and eligibility criteria that apply to a particular vacancy.

Definitions

In this policy:

Applicant means a person who has applied for housing via the VHR or, where permitted by the Eligibility Policy, through MyGov, a Designated Support Provider or directly to MASP

Community housing Housing owned or managed by a community housing organisation

DHHS	The Victorian Department of Health and Human Services
General eligibility criteria	The eligibility criteria established by MASP under the section of this policy entitled “General requirements for eligibility for long-term housing”
Public housing	Housing owned and managed by DHHS
Transitional Housing	means the Victorian Government program to provide housing on a short-term basis to people at risk of homelessness seeking long term housing options
VHR	The Victorian Housing Register, the statewide common application for people seeking public housing and community housing
VHR eligibility criteria	<p>The VHR’s establish who is eligible for social housing. The VHR Eligibility Criteria relates to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • income eligibility; • asset eligibility; • Australian Citizenship or permanent residency; and • Victorian residency.

Transparency and accessibility

This policy will be available on the MASP website – www.masp.org.au