

ELIGIBILITY Policy and Procedure

QA REFERENCE	P&T P&P No 10
INTRODUCED	28 th March 2019
LAST REVIEWED	28 th March 2019
NEXT REVIEWED	28 th March 2022
RESPONSIBILITY	Property and Tenancy Management are responsible for the review and currency of this policy and associated procedures. <i>This policy is valid from the date of introduction and remains in force, as amended from time to time, until such time as formally revoked by resolution at a meeting of the Operational Leadership Group.</i>
APPROVED	Approved by the Chief Executive Officer on 28 th March 2019
ENDORSED	Endorsed by the Operational Leadership Group on
REFERENCES –	
Related Legislative Acts and other sources of Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Act 1983 (Vic) Part VIII A – Social Housing • Residential Tenancies Act 1997
Related Standards, Guidelines and other References	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Standards for Registered Housing Agencies • DHHS Victorian Housing Register Operational Guidelines • Guidelines for Registered Housing Agencies published by DHHS • Legal agreements between MASP and the Director of Housing relating to the VHR
Related MASP Policy and Procedure Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility Modifications – P&T P&P No 04 • Allocations – Internal – P&T P&P No 07 • Allocations – VHR – P&T P&P No 06 • Bonds Management – P&T P&P No 11 • Code of Conduct – HRM P&P No 12 • Conflict of Interest – HRM P&P No 28 • Complaints & Appeals Tenants & Prospective Tenants – P&T P&P No 03 • Inspections – P&T P&P No 12 • Maintenance and Repairs – P&T P&P No 08 • Privacy and Information Security – P&T P&P No 01 • Property Damage by Tenant – P&T P&P No 02 • Rent Arrears Management and Evictions – P&T P&P No 09 • Rent Setting and Collection – P&T P&P No 05
Related MASP Instructions and Guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being a Good Neighbour – P&T B&P No 05 • COVID 19 Maintenance P&T I&G No 01 • Urgent After-Hours Repairs – P&T I&G No 02
Related MASP Forms and Templates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Condition Report – Entry – P&T ED • Condition Report – Exit – P&T ED • Residential Rental Agreement – P&T ED • COVID 19 Health Declaration Contractor Maintenance Worker – P&T F&T No 06 • COVID 19 Health Declaration MASP tenant – P&T F&T No 03 • COVID 19 Letter to contractor or tradesman – P&T F&T No 05
ACRONYMS/DEFINITIONS	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant 	A person who has applied for housing via the VHR or, where permitted by this policy, directly to MASP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHHS 	Victorian Department of Health and Human Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Housing 	Victorian government statutory authority that owns all public housing land in Victoria and which is the principal funding body for community housing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nomination rights 	Arrangements between MASP and third-party support providers where the support provider nominates applicants for certain vacant properties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority Access 	<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"> • Emergency Management Housing • Priority Transfers • Homeless with Support • Supported Housing • Temporary Absence • Special Housing Needs • Special Housing Needs (Aged 55 years and over)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public housing 	Housing owned and managed by DHHS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted Social Housing 	The properties that are considered Targeted Social Housing under agreements between MASP and the Director of Housing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transitional Housing 	Victorian Government program to provide housing on a short-term basis to people at risk of homelessness seeking housing options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VHR 	The Victorian Housing Register, the statewide common application for people seeking public housing and community housing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MASP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mallee Accommodation and Support Program

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

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.

Transparency and accessibility

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