

INSPECTIONS

Policy and Procedure

QA REFERENCE	P&T P&P No 06
INTRODUCED	28 th March 2019
LAST REVIEWED	28 th March 2019
NEXT REVIEWED	28 th March 2022
RESPONSIBILITY	Property and Tenancy Management is responsible for the review and currency of this policy and associated procedures
APPROVED	Approved by the Chief Executive Officer on 28 th March 2019 <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>
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 VIIIA – 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 • Eligibility – P&T P&P No 10 • 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 	<p>A person who has applied for housing via the VHR or, where permitted by this policy, directly to MASP</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DHHS 	<p>Victorian Department of Health and Human Services</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director of Housing 	<p>Victorian government statutory authority that owns all public housing land in Victoria and which is the principal funding body for community housing</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nomination rights 	<p>Arrangements between MASP and third-party support providers where the support provider nominates applicants for certain vacant properties</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public housing 	<p>Housing owned and managed by DHHS</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeted Social Housing 	<p>The properties that are considered Targeted Social Housing under agreements between MASP and the Director of Housing.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transitional Housing 	<p>Victorian Government program to provide housing on a short-term basis to people at risk of homelessness seeking housing options</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VHR 	<p>The Victorian Housing Register, the statewide common application for people seeking public housing and community housing</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MASP 	<p>Mallee Accommodation and Support Program</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tenant 	<p>The person who signed the Residential Tenancy Agreement</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Household members 	<p>Other people who have been authorised by MASP to reside at the property</p>

PURPOSE

This policy establishes the approach of MASP to fulfil its responsibilities to undertake property inspections.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all social housing properties managed by MASP

The policy covers the following types of inspections

- **Prospective tenant inspections** where an applicant for housing is shown the premises prior to an offer for housing being made (s86.1a)
- **Follow up (new tenant) home visits:** where a premises is inspected shortly after the commencement of a new tenancy (s86.1c)
- **Routine/planned/regular inspections:** routine inspections that occur twice a year (s86.1f)
- **Pre-exit tenant inspections:** where the premises are inspected before the tenant has vacated the property (s86.2)
- **Post-exit tenant inspections:** where the premises are inspected after the tenant has vacated the property

Communication

MASP will provide clear information to tenants on this policy, and will ensure this policy is readily available to tenants. Should inspections result in MASP seeking to recover the costs for any damage caused by tenants, then tenants will be referred to the Tenant Damage Policy.

Approach to Inspections

Inspections will be undertaken at all MASP properties in accordance with the RTA. These inspections will inform MASP on the condition of the premises and therefore will inform the program of cyclical and responsive maintenance.

Inspections will ensure that MASP is meeting its responsibilities under the RTA to maintain properties in a good condition.

Tenants have a duty under the RTA to report all damage, defects, and any relevant property issues to their MASP for action. This is stipulated in the tenancy agreement and the RTA.

A tenant has a duty to permit MASP staff exercising a right of entry in accordance with Section 89 of the RTA. If access is not permitted, MASP will issue a Breach of Duty Notice. Should the tenant still refuse to comply, CHO will apply to VCAT for a Compliance Order.

Purpose of Routine Inspections

All inspections will be conducted by Property and Tenancy Management Officer to

- determine whether any urgent or routine repairs are required,
- ensure properties are being maintained to the standard outlined in the tenancy agreement,
- assess whether damage has been caused by a tenant and if so, assess whether this damage was intentional or accidental,
- assess whether the property continues to meet the needs of the tenant.

Where a tenant has requested any alterations, these will be checked during the inspection, taking into account

- the requirements of the tenant;
- the cyclical maintenance due on the property;
- the condition and standard of the property.

When undertaking inspections, Property and Tenancy Management Officer will record the matters of concern to tenants, in addition to looking at all standard areas of property maintenance.

Property and Tenancy Management Worker will carry out an inspection referring to previous property condition reports, for reference and maintenance records.

Support Workers

The Housing Access Support Worker will be invited to attend the inspection.

Notice of Entry

MASP will give residents written notice, as per the tenancy agreement and RTA, before an inspection.

The notice will provide the following information

- Why entry is required (i.e. to enable MASP to carry out a duty under the RTA, the tenancy agreement or any other part of the RTA including if MASP has reasonable grounds to believe that the tenant has failed to comply with his or her duties under the RTA or the tenancy agreement).

A notice of entry will be provided by

- Post, or
- In person to the tenant between 8am and 6pm

For the purposes of carrying out a duty under the RTA, MASP is obliged to provide: **at least 24 hours.**

- To show the premises to a prospective renter, and
- If the premises are to be sold or used as security for a loan and entry is required to show the premises to a prospective buyer or lender: **at least 48 hours.**
- Entry is required to enable inspection of the premises and entry for that purpose has not been made within the last 6 months: **at least 7 days.**

MASP will only arrange to enter the premises between 8am and 6pm on any business day.

It is expected that the tenant will be present at the date and time agreed. The Property and Tenancy Management Worker will enter the premises with a duplicate key to undertake the inspection if the tenant is not home.

MASP will send inspection notices using Australia Post standard mail, unless electronic communication has been agreed to by the tenant (for example, by email or text message).

Transparency and accessibility

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