

POLICY TITLE: AHA Tenancy Relocation – Renter Requested Transfers Policy

Policy Category:	Tenancy and Property Management
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Review Responsibility:	General Managers Housing (Bendigo, Metro, Mallee)
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Version:	V4 ~ created September 2021
Related Policies:	AHA Access to the Services of the Organisation Policy; AHA Eligibility and Allocations Policy; AHA Ending Tenancies Policy; AHA Establishing and Maintaining Tenancies Policy
Related SOP:	
Related Forms:	
Related Standards:	RTA 1997 NCHS: 1.1 Allocation of Housing, 1.3 Changing Needs of Tenants 3.1 Renter Rights 3.5 Confidentiality and Privacy 3.6 Complaints and Appeals 4.1 Tenants’ Access to Support

PURPOSE:

This policy relates to the movement of renters from one property to another and outlines Haven; Home, Safe (HHS)’s approach to renters-requested transfer and tenancy relocation while ensuring the needs of its renters are effectively catered for.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

HHS recognises that the personal circumstances of individuals and families change and alternative accommodation may be required in order for them to sustain their tenancy.

Changes to accommodation under this policy are designed to:

- meet the existing housing needs of the renters
- improve utilisation of housing stock
- plan for future housing needs.

POLICY:

It is HHS policy to respond to the changing housing needs of renters fairly, flexibly and in a timely and confidential manner. It is important to note that all renters, transfers included, are taken from the VHR. Transfers are also subject to allocations policy and VHR eligibility.

Taking into account the reasons for the possible relocation, each request will be treated on its merits. In considering an application, the renter’s individual circumstances and any other extenuating circumstances will be assessed and used as the basis for effecting change.

In addition, HHS must adhere to the following underlying principles:

- All renters requesting a transfer must be eligible and listed on the VHR
- The needs and impact on other renters and applicants for housing must be taken into account when considering any request for relocation.

- Relocation of a renter is dependent on the availability of a suitable property.
- Renters who are experiencing personal issues such as family violence, relationship breakdowns, threats of physical danger or other issues affecting tenancy will be treated in a timely manner, with sensitivity and confidentiality. Renters who are experiencing such circumstances must be given priority.
- When renters are granted a property transfer due to relocation to another area, they will be liable for the required level of rent (determined as the set market rent minus the discount for which they are eligible).
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PROCEDURES:

1. Relocations – Transfers Requested by the Renters.

- Renters are required to put their specific request in writing to the Tenancy and Property Manager (TPM) **and apply for a transfer through the VHR.**
- The (TPM) will assess the appropriateness of the request and formulate a recommendation regarding its possible solution and the required action.
Requests will be submitted to the next Allocations Meeting for consideration and a record of the request documented in Kypera.
- To be eligible for requested relocation, renters would normally be required to:
 - have lived in their current accommodation for a minimum of twelve months
 - have a good rental history
 - have met their obligations under the Residential Tenancies Act (RTA) in relation to care of the property, behaviour towards neighbours, etc.
 - accept responsibility for all removal costs.
 - Supply VHR application number
- If the request is granted, then the TPM will:
 - make the appropriate arrangements and involve other key personnel as necessary
 - provide the relevant referral material as required
 - inform the renter of any resulting change in rental
 - organise for a new Residential Rental Agreement to be signed.
- Unsuccessful requests will be communicated by the TPM and the renters will be informed of the right to appeal with the appropriate processes outlined.

2. Renters Support

- When a tenancy is at risk, due to issues of domestic violence or relationship breakdown, the TPM will assist the client to access appropriate support agencies.
Support provided may include:
 - rehousing the renter – either within HHS or with another provider
 - assistance in rehousing the perpetrator
 - involving other agencies to provide further support and assistance. This would only be done with the consent of the renter.

- When a renter requires immediate alternative housing, the TPM will refer the renter to the appropriate services. This will include referral to financial support services when the tenancy is at risk.
- The TPM will work with the household to maximise their safety. The Residential Tenancies Act will be utilised to support the family as necessary.

APPENDIX

Circumstances under which a transfer application to the VHR may become desirable or necessary include:

- Relocation related to employment.
- The renter's current housing is uninhabitable (e.g. due to fire, flood or vandalism).
- The accommodation becomes unsuitable in a way that is likely to have a long-term detrimental effect on one or more members of the household. This might involve a situation such as when a new member joins the household.
- Family violence, breakdown of a relationship, a threat of physical danger or other extenuating circumstances.
- The development of a medical condition that requires alternative housing (eg. lack of mobility causing difficulty with stairs).
- Circumstances arise that mean that the renter or member of the renter's household would be 'at risk' if they continue to live in that neighbourhood. An example of this would be proximity to an ex-partner who presents a potential danger to the renter.
- A renter has other special needs that would justify relocation. Such extenuating circumstances that could develop include when a member of the household:–
 - needs to attend a Special School and access to that school is not available from the renters current location
 - Requires regular and appropriate access to a medical facility, Medical Practitioner or support services reliant on care provided by family or friends and neither the individual nor the carer is able to travel to the other.
- Current accommodation is preventing the reunification of parents with their dependants. This may occur when:-
 - stipulation by the Community Care Division of DHHS that the family requires stable, affordable housing for their dependants to be reunited with their family OR
 - the sole reason for the client's dependants not living with them is that they do not have appropriate housing in which to live.
- a renter requests a transfer for other reasons and the demand for the renters existing housing is greater than the demand for the housing to which the renter wishes to move.