OPERATIONS: Specialist Disability Accommodation Policy

Policy statement

Haven Home Safe (HHS) will provide Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) for participants with disabilities as per NDIS requirements, HHS policy and governance standards and in accordance with the legal and human rights of each participant.

Guiding Principles:

HHS will ensure that all SDA housing is designed as per the relevant legislation, standards and requirements, giving people with disability the ability to live independently

To achieve this, Haven will:

- Ensure that any SDA development and supply is overseen by robust governance and operational management systems.
- Ensure that each participant has access to SDA housing which is consistent with their legal and human rights, and they will be supported to exercise informed choice and control.
- Facilitate supported decision making for people with disability by supporting each person with disability to identify an independent advocate or trusted support person to assist them to communicate their intentions, help them to understand the available choices and make decisions, including the right to access and advocate
- Ensure that all SDA housing meets SDA design standards, the National Construction Code, the building code of Australia, facilitating the assessment and supply of home modification and assistive technology or relocation to more appropriate housing to meet any changing requirements
- All SDA houses will have an Emergency Management Plan and dependent on support needs may also be assessed for a Personal Emergency Plan.

Purpose

The purpose of this Level 2 policy is to ensure that Haven Home Safe (HHS) meets obligations to provide SDA supports in accordance with client, statutory, regulatory, and third-party requirements.

Scope

This *Policy* and its associated *SOP* apply to all HHS Directors, Executive, staff, consultants and contractors engaged for, or on behalf of, HHS and any outlets where SDA is provided.

Roles & Responsibilities

The Head of Housing is responsible for the administration of this *Policy* and any associated *SOP* and monitoring compliance with this *Policy*.

Details

HHS is registered with the NDIS to provide Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) and certified against the NDIS Practice Standards Module 5 Specialist Disability Accommodation. The policy addresses core requirements that apply to providers of Specialist Disability Accommodation under NDIS Practice Standards Module 5, and additional policy settings developed by HHS.

Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) refers to housing designed in accordance with the SDA Design Standard to meet the needs of people with extreme functional impairment or high support needs, and delivered in accordance with the NDIS Act 2013 and Rules and other laws as they apply.

Governance

HHS shall adhere to the NDIS Business Rules, The NDIS Act 2013 and Rules, Practice Standards, Code of Conduct, Worker Screening Requirements, the Residential Tenancies Act and other laws and guidelines as they apply to the delivery of SDA.

All HHS SDA development and supply shall be overseen by robust governance and operational management systems, with opportunities provided for people with disabilities to contribute to the governance of the organisation.

Recommended by: COO	October 2024	**Endorsed by: Executive**		
Scheduled review:	October 2026	**Policy level:** 2	**Version:** 3	**Risk Rating:** MEDIUM

This policy has been approved by Haven Home Safe's Executive.

Signed: **Name/Position:** Trudi Ray, CEO 291024

Rights and Responsibilities

When developing housing policy, procedures and programs, HHS shall prioritise the legal and human rights of people with disabilities. In addition, each participant's access to SDA housing shall be consistent with their legal and human rights and they shall be supported to exercise informed choice and control.

HHS shall not, as far as possible, limit a participant's choice and control over other support provision by their choice of SDA dwelling. Where such limits exist, they will be clearly communicated to the participant and family.

HHS shall facilitate supported decision-making for people with disability by supporting each person with disability to identify an independent advocate or trusted support person to assist them to communicate their intentions, help them to understand the available choices and make decisions, including the right to access an advocate. Each participant's housing rights, including security of tenure, shall be upheld, irrespective of any decision the participant makes about the provision of other NDIS supports within their SDA dwelling.

Communication with each participant about the provision of SDA support shall be responsive to their communication needs and provided in languages and formats which people are most likely to understand. Conflicts of interest, perceived or actual, shall be proactively managed and documented.

Tenancy Management

Each participant accessing SDA shall be supported by effective tenancy management. A Residency Agreement shall be in place that meets the requirements of the Residential Tenancies Act 1997, and the NDIS Act 2013 and Rules. HHS recommends and prefers the use of an SDA Residency Agreement. This is strongly preferred for people with intellectual disability, acquired brain injury and cognitive impairment. However, a resident has the right to enter into a standard Residency Agreement if that is their choice.

HHS shall, where required, have a documented Service Arrangement (Collaboration Agreement) in place with each support agency that delivers support for independent living support within the SDA. The Collaboration Agreement shall detail the roles and responsibilities of HHS and the support agency, and how the parties will work together to assure service quality and safety for SDA residents.

Asset Management and Maintenance

All SDA properties shall be designed and enrolled with the NDIS in accordance with the SDA Design Standards and the National Construction Code, Building Code of Australia, and other standards as they apply. As the housing needs of people change, HHS shall facilitate the assessment and supply of home modification and assistive technology, or relocation to more appropriate housing and support to meet requirements.

SDA properties shall be maintained in a good state of repair having regard to the safety, security and privacy of residents. Each SDA property shall have a sprinkler system installed as required by the National Construction Code and Building Code of Australia. For the avoidance of doubt, HHS policy requires each SDA dwelling to have fire sprinkler system installed and maintained in dwellings head leased or managed by HHS. On case-by-case basis, HHS may head lease or manage SDA dwellings in the absence of a fire sprinkler system, having demonstrated in consultation with an appropriately qualified consultant and the property owner that safety features and emergency procedures are in place and appropriate to manage the safety and evacuation of occupants. Where a fire sprinkler system is not installed, HHS must implement an appropriate emergency management plan and procedures to manage the safety and evacuation of occupants in the event of fire.

Emergency Management

Each SDA shall have an Emergency Management Plan as applicable to meet HHS' obligations as an operator of a care facility under AS 3745:2010, and otherwise as deemed appropriate. In September of each year, prior to the onset of bushfire season, an appropriately qualified consultant shall be engaged to assess bushfire risk for SDA dwellings located in bushfire prone areas.

Residents with mobility impairment and high support needs shall be assessed for the need for a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan to be developed. Each participant shall be provided with information regarding the arrangements for continuity of supports and services, the dwelling safety features, and evacuation procedure for their SDA home. HHS shall

ensure support and services can continue as far as possible without interruption or impact on service quality or safety in the event of an emergency or significant disruption to the HHS business.

Risk and Compliance

Due diligence including risk-assessment shall be undertaken on all properties owned by third parties seeking management service from Haven; Home, Safe to ensure that the SDA policy criteria are met.

HHS shall have a complaints management and resolution system in place which meets the requirements of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (Complaints Management and Resolution Rules) 2018.

HHS shall maintain an incident management system in accordance with the National Disability Insurance Scheme (Incident Management and Reportable Incidents) Rules 2018 and includes procedures for identifying, assessing, recording, managing, resolving and reporting incidents.

Relativities

Related Policies and SOPs

Privacy Policy and *SOP*
Equal Opportunity Policy
Tenancy Management Policy and *SOP* (in development)
Code of Conduct
Charter of Consumer Rights
Codes of Practice and Conduct
Accessible Rights Service Based Delivery Policy
Emergency Response Policy and *SOP*
Duty of Care Policy
Specialist Disability Accommodation Residency Agreement
39C SDA Transitional Management Template
SDA Tenant consent to collect and share personal information

Related Legislation and Standards

NDIS Act 2013
NDIS Practice Standards
Residential Tenancies Act 1997
Guardianship and Administration Act 1993
Disability Act 2006 (Vic)
The Mental Health Act 2014

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