

Fact sheet: How we calculate and review your rent in affordable housing



As a community housing provider, we offer discounted rent for those who can't afford rent in the private market. The rent we collect goes directly into maintaining homes, paying rates and keeping our organisation running so we can continue to provide suitable and stable homes.

This fact sheet explains how Haven Home Safe (HHS) calculates and reviews your rent when living in a HHS affordable housing property.

What is market rent?

Market rent is the amount of rent your rental property would cost in the private rental market.

Every 12 months Haven Home Safe gets an independent valuer to review market rents.

How do we calculate rents in affordable housing?

Haven Home Safe follows the Victorian Government guidelines when setting rents for affordable housing and determining who is eligible.

Affordable housing rent is set at 74.9% of the property's market rent. This is known as “discounted market rent”. Here's an example.

Each year when the market rent is reviewed, your rent will also be reviewed. Any changes will be clearly communicated to you.

To live in affordable housing, you must meet the income eligibility requirements set out in the *Planning and Environmental Act 1987*. You can learn more in our fact sheet: [How we determine eligibility, assess applications and allocate HHS homes.](#)

Got questions?
We're here to help



For questions about how your rent is calculated, contact the Rent Review Team at: rent@hhs.org.au or call 1300 429 364 (select option 1).

Here is an example of how Joe* and Mai's* weekly rent is calculated.

Weekly rent will vary depending on household / area.

Joe* and Mai* meet the eligibility for affordable housing. They live in a 2-bedroom house and have a combined weekly income is \$2,000.

The market rent of the property is \$500 per week.

Market rent of the property	\$500
HHS discounted rent (74.9% of market rent)	\$374.50

Each year the market rent is reviewed:

Revised market rent of the property*	\$530
New rent amount (74.9% of market rent)	\$396.97

As the market rent of the property Joe* and Mai* live in has increased, their rebated rent amount increased by \$22.47 a week.

**not their real names*

For everything else, contact your Tenancy and Property Manager or call the Housing Team on 1300 429 364 (select option 2).

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Before you move in

What you need to do:

- Meet the affordable housing income eligibility limits.
- Provide proof of income and household details.
- Pay 2 weeks' rent in advance
- Pay a bond equal to 4 weeks of rent. You may be eligible for financial assistance - ask us!
- Some properties have additional costs for shared facilities e.g. water, gas, parking. We will clearly communicate this before you sign a lease.

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During your tenancy

- Pay rent weekly or fortnightly
- Stay 2 weeks ahead on rent
- Make payment via Centrepay, bank transfer, direct debit or in-person at an HHS office or your bank.

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When your rent might change

When?	What Haven Home Safe will do	What you need to do
Every 12 months	<p>Market rent review</p> <p>Each year, an independent valuer reviews market rents for similar properties in your area.</p> <p>At the same time, Haven Home Safe will review your rent to ensure it remains set at 74.9% of the market rent.</p> <p>If the market rent changes, we will advise you in writing. If your rent increases, you will receive at least 90 days' notice before the change takes effect.</p>	<p>No action required</p> <p>You will receive a letter or email advising you of the market rent and your weekly payable rent.</p>
Ongoing eligibility required	<p>Affordable housing income eligibility</p> <p>From time to time, we may ask for updated household income information to confirm you continue to meet the affordable housing income eligibility.</p>	<p>Action required within 14 days (if requested)</p> <p>Send updated household income information for all household members by the requested date.</p>

We recognise that the rising cost of living is putting pressure on people.

If you are experiencing financial difficulties, please contact your Tenancy and Property Manager to discuss your situation and explore support options.



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What proof of income information do I need to provide?

You will be required to provide proof of income for all household members aged 18 and over to confirm eligibility. This can include:

- Payslips or a letter from an employer
- Income statements from Centrelink
- Tax returns or profit and loss statements (if self-employed)
- Other documents showing the amount and frequency of income
- If requested, income information must be provided by the date we specify.

If a household member over the age of 18 has not declared an income, we will assume they are receiving the standard Centrelink payment rate until you provide us information otherwise.

I am a casual worker, how is my income assessed?

You will need to provide us with your income information and we will calculate your average earnings.

- If you are paid a casual wage, this is based on the most recent 12 consecutive payslips.
 - If you work for yourself, this is based on your annual income.
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What happens if I no longer meet the eligibility criteria?

If your circumstances change and you no longer meet the affordable housing eligibility criteria:

- We may review your eligibility for affordable housing, and
 - If you are no longer eligible, your rent will change to market rent.
 - Any changes will be clearly explained to you in writing.
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How long can I stay in affordable housing?

Affordable Housing is intended to provide stable, longer-term housing. To stay in affordable housing, you need to continue to meet the eligibility requirements and follow the rental rules in your rental agreement.

Is affordable housing the same as social housing?

No. Affordable housing rent is based on market rent with a fixed discount of 74.9%. Whereas social housing is based on household income.

Will my rent change if my income changes?

Affordable housing rents are not calculated based on household income. But if you no longer meet the eligibility income criteria to live in affordable housing, you will be charged full market rent.

How often will my rent change?

Your rent will change **if there is a change to the market rent** of your rental property. Market rents are reviewed once per year. If your rent increases, you will receive at least 90 days' written notice.

What if I'm having trouble paying my rent?

Contact your Tenancy and Property Manager as soon as possible. Our priority is to support you to stay in your home wherever possible.

- We can discuss support options with you.
 - If debts remain unpaid, it may affect future rental applications.
 - Learn more in our [financial hardship fact sheet](#).
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