



Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation

Service Charter





Acknowledgement To Country

Tharawal Aboriginal Housing Corporation acknowledges the Dharawal people who are the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work and live, and recognise their continuing connection to land, water and community.

We pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging

About

Who we are

Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation is a Community Housing Provider that specialises in providing social housing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.

Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation aims to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to successfully sustain tenancies by linking clients into support services where applicable.

Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation aims to educate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by providing pathways into improved housing outcomes delivered in a culturally appropriate manner.



Operating Hours

Monday	9am to 5pm
Tuesday	9am to 5pm
Wednesday	9am to 5pm
Thursday	9am to 5pm
Friday	9am to 4:30pm



Location

187 Riverside Drive,
Airds NSW 2560



Contact

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www.tacams.com.au/housing



Alison Croall
Housing Manager



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Our Objectives

- Provide a holistic service to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tenants by providing access to quality housing, healthcare, childcare, education and emotional and social and emotional services.
- To educate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by providing pathways into improved housing outcomes delivered in a culturally appropriate manner.
- Apply for grants/funding and assistance where possible to provide quality housing to Aboriginal people.
- Promote and encourage training and employment opportunities for Aboriginal people.
- Work with government and non-government organisation to ensure a viable Aboriginal social housing sector into the future for Aboriginal people.

CHANGING THE WAY HOUSING IS DELIVERED TO OUR MOB

Service Standards

Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation is committed to providing all clients with outstanding customer services.

This is achieved by:

- Treating everyone with dignity and respect
- Actively seeking feedback on ways to improve service delivery
- Providing a safe and secure environment
- Following the Code of Practice for Housing for Community Housing Providers, relevant laws and standards
- Ensuring accountability for actions
- Making sure policies are accessible and up to date
- Listening to the issues

Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation staff are experienced workers who are trained to deal with difficult situations and understand the importance of valuing each person's experience with the organisation.

- We will be courteous and respectful when working with you
- Listen to your concerns and provide the best advice possible
- Follow the Code of Conduct
- Refer or link tenants to support services when required
- Respond to enquiries in a timely manner
- Provide tenants with accurate housing information
- Regular communication with tenants e.g. by phone, SMS or home visits
- Work within the guiding principles of the Housing Act 2001 and the Residential Tenancies Agreement 2010.
- Value the privacy and confidentiality as set out in the Privacy Act 1998 and the Health Records Act 2002 NSW.

Tenant Rights & Communication



As a tenant you have the following rights...

- To be provided with a written lease agreement
- To be provided with a Property Condition Report at the commencement of your tenancy
- To be assisted to understand any information you are provided with
- To be advised of your rights and responsibilities
- To be provided a copy of the Housing Service Charter.
- To provide feedback, complaints and appeals.



As a tenant you are responsible for...

- Providing accurate and up to date information relating to household occupants and any changes to income to Tharawal Aboriginal Housing Corporation within a timely manner
- Reporting any issues you may have with maintenance, property damage or nuisance and annoyance
- Report any issues you may have with staff or the service you are delivered by Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation.



Keeping tenants informed...

Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation aims to keep all tenants informed of any changes to processes or policies or upcoming events. We do this by:

- | | | |
|-----------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| • Letters | • Newsletters | • Notice Boards |
| • Emails | • Updating our Website | • Social Media |
| • Text Messages | | • Tenant Forums |

Our Wrap Around Services

Tharawal Aboriginal Corporation have the convenience that all of their services are in the one location. Through the Aboriginal Medical Service you have access to all medical, General Practitioner, clinical, allied health and specialist services, as well as our Dental services. Tharawal Aboriginal Corporation provide services for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community from birth to senior years.



MEDICAL SERVICES

- General Practitioners
- Specialists - Confirmation of Aboriginality required to use service
- Nurses
- Pathology



DENTAL CLINIC

- Dental Services
- Confirmation of Aboriginality is required to use service



BULLABULLA

- Antenatal and postnatal clinics
- Antenatal and postnatal home visits
- Breastfeeding support for parents
- Immunisation
- Nutritional and health education during pregnancy
- Child health checks

It is acknowledged that tenants may not wish to access internal support services available, in these cases tenants will be referred to external support agencies.

THARAWAL HOUSING ABORIGINAL CORPORATION PRIVACY STATEMENT

Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation values the right and privacy of all clients. Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation will not share your personal information with anyone unless required to by law or consent has been given. Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation complies with NSW privacy legislation when collecting and managing personal information. We may use your information within our organisation when coordinating and planning ways to provide better service delivery.

As a tenant you have the right to access your personal information.

Programs offered by Tharawal Aboriginal Corporation may change from time to time.

Tenants will be updated of any changes to programs and any additional financial support systems or services that become available.



DHIIYAAN BRIGHTER FUTURES

- Family case management
- Early intervention
- Parenting programs and support



WARANWARIN & OORUNGA WANDARRAH

- Early Learning Centre's
- Multi-disciplinary children health service including Child Psychologist, Speech Therapist, Occupational Therapy and Children's Health Checks
- Developmental Paediatric Clinic
- Parenting Programs
- Family cooking classes
- Playgroups
- Early links and support for children with additional needs.



SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

- Drug and Alcohol Counselling
- Social Worker
- Psychologist
- Psychiatrist
- Youth Worker
- Bring them Home Coordinator
- Mental Health Workers
- Healthy Eating Programs
- Financial Assistance



Outreach Services

CENTRELINK

Centrelink Community Engagement Officers provide services to vulnerable members of the community. We can help you:

- Manage your business with us
 - Access government and community services for assistance and other support
- Centrelink Community Engagement Officers provide help in locations where you feel comfortable and can have the support of others.

MACARTHUR LEGAL CENTRE

Macarthur Legal Centre believes that it's important to be a part of the community they service, so our solicitors provide face-to-face legal advice sessions at various outreach locations throughout the Macarthur region. You may make an appointment with the Social & Emotional Well-being Reception.

SOUTH WEST TENANCY ADVICE & ADVOCACY SERVICE

South West Sydney Tenants Advice and Advocacy Service provide advice to tenants, duty advocacy in the Tribunal, and community education to frontline workers as well as tenants. Also, as appropriate, SWSTAAS provides advocacy referral, and representation in the Tribunal – conciliation and/or formal hearing.

MISSION AUSTRALIA HOMELESSNESS

Mission Australia provides support for individuals and families across Fairfield, Liverpool, Campbelltown, Camden, Wollondilly, Wingecarribee and Bankstown who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to find appropriate, affordable and sustainable housing.

Welcome to your home

LOOKING AFTER YOUR HOME

Tenants are obligated to maintain their property in a clean and safe manner, including the maintaining of internal and external cleanliness. It is a tenant's responsibility to ensure their lawns and gardens are maintained.

Tenants can expect at the commencement of their tenancy that the property will be in a reasonable condition free from pests and vermin.

Tenants are encouraged to take pride in their home. Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation supports all tenants to achieve the best possible outcome for their families. Tenants are encouraged to contact their Housing Officer if they need any support or assistance. We understand that at times we may all struggle don't be ashamed or afraid to ask for assistance.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS A TENANT

As a tenant you are responsible for the below:

- Meeting all payment responsibilities including rent, water, bond (if applicable) and tenancy charges
- Paying the electricity and gas
- Personally occupying your home
- The behaviour of your family and visitors
- Advising of any changes to your household or income within 28 days

BEING A GOOD NEIGHBOUR

Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation is committed to ensuring that all tenants are treated fairly and not discriminated against.

There is zero tolerance for harassment or discrimination towards any tenant. This includes verbal and physical abuse, discrimination, and threatening behaviour relating to racial, religious, cultural or personal difference. All tenants are responsible for their own behaviour as well as additional occupants and visitors



Maintenance to your home

Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation outsources maintenance to Hume Community Housing. Hume Community Housing works in close partnership with Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation to provide outstanding service delivery to our people. All maintenance work is undertaken by their accredited contractors.

Tenants are to report any maintenance or repair needs to their home as soon as practicable. Any maintenance issues reported will be managed in accordance with the Repairs and Maintenance Policy.



REPORTING MAINTENANCE

Maintenance issues can be reported by:

- In writing by completing the Repairs Request Form
- By calling our maintenance service provider (Hume Housing) on (02) 9727 0688, 24 hours 7 days a week.



Time Frames for Maintenance Works

CATEGORY	TIME FRAME	MAINTENANCE COVERS
Emergency	4 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Health, safety and security related emergencies such as (but not limited to) electrical danger, fire, storm etc. - Gas leakage - Significant water loss due to a major water pipe failure - Major sewer overflow internal to premises including internal common areas - Significant security threats to the premises and/or persons - Long term damage to the property
Category 1	24 hours	<p>Safety or security threats to occupants requiring prompt action.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No lights working in the home - Blocked drain outside the home
Category 2	72 hours	<p>Situations where there is a functional failure of an essential item or appliance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hot-water heaters - Stoves - External door locks - Common area washing machines and dryers
Category 3	20 days	<p>For general repairs and maintenance requests that cannot wait for the planned works</p>

Tenants Responsibilities during their tenancy

TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE FOR
From Commencement of tenancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Light globes - Gardens and lawns - Cleaning - Connection costs and subsequent accounts
After first two weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fuses where customer's appliances have caused the fuses to blow. - re-ignition of pilot lights
After first 3 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stove elements (where fault is caused by abuse)
After 6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pest sprays and vermin control. As a general rule pests or vermin are deemed to be the responsibility of the customer. However, Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation is flexible with these decisions, and we are aware of the impact on neighbours of infestations next door. <p>Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation will on occasions carry out control measures if an infestation at a Hume managed property presents a problem to a neighbour, or where Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation is spraying an adjacent property and an infestation occurs in the immediate vicinity</p>

Planned maintenance

Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation undertakes property surveys of all properties managed every 3 years. The data from these surveys is used to plan upgrade works to properties.

PLANNED WORKS INCLUDES BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO:

- Major repairs or replacement of kitchen
- Major repairs or replacement of bathrooms
- Major repairs or replacement to flooring
- Major repairs or replacement of fencing
- Internal and external painting

Alterations to your property

Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation would like all tenants to make their properties feel like a home as such the following minor alteration are able to be carried out without the consent of Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation.



Minor Alterations

- Hanging of photos and pictures
- Child safety locks
- Child safety gates that are portable
- Telephone line
- Internet access
- Foxtel or pay TV
- Portable shed



Major Alterations

- Erecting of carport or garage
- Building a pergola
- Concrete slabs
- Permanent sheds
- Swimming pools
- Internal or external painting
- Changes or modifications to any permanent fixtures

Tenants are not permitted to carry out any of the above listed alterations without written consent from Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation refer to During a Tenancy Policy for more information.



Access to the property

Tenants are required to give access to Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation Staff or any other persons authorised by Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation to enter the property to carry out routine inspections. Properties are not generally inspected more than 4 times in a 12 month period providing written notice is given to the tenant 7 days in advance.

Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation staff or any other person authorized by Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation may enter the property without the consent of the tenant in the following circumstance

- To carry out urgent repairs to the property
- In an emergency
- If all reasonable attempts have been made to enter the property with consent of the tenant and has reasonable cause for serious concerns about the health or safe of the tenant or occupants.
- In accordance with Tribunal orders.

Your Rent



RENT AND TENANCY CHARGES

As a tenant you have the following rights:

- To have your rent and tenancy charges assessed and determined in a fair and transparent manner in accordance with Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation Rent Charge, Water Charge and Tenancy Charges Policies.
- To have your rent reassessed when there are changes to your household or income.
- To be advised in writing of any tenancy charges and or cost you may be liable for.
- To be able to appeal tenancy charges and tenant repair costs.
- To be advised of any changes to policies or procedures that relate to tenancy charges.
- To be provided with a rent and water ledger every 3 months.

As a tenant you are responsible for:

- Paying your rent and water charges on time in accordance with our tenancy agreement
- Advising Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation staff of any changes to your household or household income within 28 days of the change occurring.
- To provide requested document in order for your rental subsidy to be assessed correctly.
- To apply for Commonwealth Rent Assistance.

PAYING RENT AND WATER CHARGES

Ways to pay your rent:

- Direct Debit
- Centrepay Deduction.

PAYING BOND CHARGES

All tenants will be charged bond. Bond is charged at the market rent value not the subsidies rent for Affordable Housing Tenants. Bond is 4 weeks market rent.

Social Housing Tenants of Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation are charged bond on all properties managed. Bond is charged at the amount of 4 weeks rent (that is, the amount of rent you agreed to pay at the start of the tenancy).

Tenants of Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation are given 3 months to pay the bond off. Once the bond is paid in full it will be lodged with NSW Rental Bond Board. Failure to pay your bond off in the required time frame could result in your tenancy being terminated.

Don't be afraid to ask for help or to speak with your Housing Officer. Everyone goes through hard times. We are here to help and support our tenants in sustaining their tenancies.

Social Housing Rental Subsidy

Social Housing tenants are entitled to apply for a rental subsidy. Rent subsidies are granted to tenants who cannot afford market rent based on their household income. A rental subsidy is the difference between the rent collected by the tenant and the market rent charged for the property.

Commonwealth Rent Assistance

Household members in receipt of Centrelink payments, residing in Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation are eligible to be assessed for Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) by Centrelink. CRA is an additional payment granted to tenants residing in Community Housing. Centrelink will assess the amount each household member is paid based on household type and rent charged. Tenants will only be charged CRA based on the amount they received from Centrelink. Tenants on subsidies rent will be charged rent based on their eligibility for a rent subsidy plus 100% CRA. Rent charged cannot exceed market rent.

Determining Market Rent

Market rent is based on the rent date, relevant to the type and location of the property. Department of Community Services (DCJ) Housing NSW publishes market rent quarterly in the Rent and Sales Report Data. Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation will use this data to determine market rent settings. In situations where market rent is not available Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation will obtain an independent market rent appraisal.

Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation reviews market rent annually. The market rent for each property is listed on the Residential Tenancy Agreement. If a tenant pays market rent and impact by a market rent increase/decreased the tenant will be given 60 days' notice before any changes will take effect.

Rent Subsidy Reviews

Rent subsidy reviews are to be undertaken every 6 months on all social housing properties. The purpose of a rent subsidy review is to;

- ensure tenants are still eligible to receive a rental subsidy

- take into account any changes in the CPI

- ensure any changes to a tenant household or income are reflected in their rent

Tenants are given 28 days to return their application, failure to return a rent subsidy application could result in market rent being charged. It is the responsibility of the tenant to return their application.

Rent Subsidies:

Tenants who are charged rent based their household income will be charged rent based on a percentage of household income. The below table indicate the percentage of rent payable based on household members and income type:

Assessment Rate	Tenant/Other Household Member
25-30%	The tenant, their spouse or live-in partner, irrespective of their age All other persons living in the household who are aged 21 years or over
15%	People living in the household aged 18 to 20 years inclusive who are not the tenants, their spouse or live-in partner
15%	Family Tax Benefit Part A & B which are not taken through the taxation system (excluding FTB Energy Supplements)
Nil	Persons living in the household aged under 18 years who are not the tenant, their spouse or live in partner are not assessed for rent-setting purposes
100%	Commonwealth Rent Assistance

Determining a Rent Subsidy Eligibility

Table 1: Household member types and weekly income allowances determine the tenant's rent subsidy eligibility. These amounts are linked to the DCJ income thresholds.

Table 1: Household member types and weekly income allowance from 6 July 2020:			
Household member	Weekly income allowance		
	A: 25% Moderate income limit (or threshold)	B: 27% limit (or threshold)	C: 30% Subsidy eligibility limit (or threshold)
First Adult	\$835.00	\$1,044.00	\$1,555.00
Each Additional adult	\$220.00	\$275.00	\$415.00
First child	\$165.00	\$206.00	\$315.00
Each additional child	\$115.00	\$144.00	\$205.00

If a tenant's income is over the subsidy eligibility limit as shown in Table 1 - Column C, the tenant is deemed ineligible for a rent subsidy. When assessing a tenants eligibility for a rent subsidy Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) will not be taken into account.

Applying rent subsidy income limits Rules

For tenants eligible for rent subsidy, Table 2 – Rent Assessment rules, provides the proportion of applicable rent subsidy for each income threshold to use when calculating actual rent payable.

Table 2: Rent assessment rules	
Condition	Rule
Gross assessable household income is less than the moderate income limit (column A in table 1)	Rent payable is 25% of income
Gross assessable household income is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equal to or more than the moderate income limit, and Less than the 30% limit (column B in table 1) 	Rent payable is 27% of income
Gross assessable household income is <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equal to or more than the 30% limit, and Less than the subsidy eligibility limit (column C in table 1) 	Rent payable is 30% of income
Family Tax benefit Part A and Part B	Rent payable is 15% of income
Tenants or household members between 18-20 years old	Rent payable is 15% of income
Gross assessable household income is equal to or more than the subsidy eligibility limit (column C in table 1)	Rent payable is the market rent for the property. These households will not be entitled to a rent subsidy.
Rent payable is calculated as being more than the market rent	Rent payable is the market rent for the property
Maximum rent payable	Market rent for the property
No Market Rent data available from DCJ Sales and Rent report (or Market Rent deemed to be unrealistic)	Market rent will be set based on an independent valuation being undertaken. (e.g. rent listing for comparable property in the same location)
Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA)	Tenants and their household members may be eligible for CRA. Any rent amount payable (market, calculated or subsidised) is the full amount of rent owed. The CRA amount can contribute toward the rent amount. If a person or a household member is not eligible for CRA, then that person's rent payable will not include CRA.
Rounding	All subsidised rents to the nearest dollar.

Managing **Arrears**

Tenants are responsible for paying their rent on time, should you have any difficulties in paying your rent please contact your Housing Officer as soon as possible so they can assist you in resolving the matter.

Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation has a range of support services and links to agencies that may be able to assist you. Please refer to our Hardship Policy and FACTSHEET.

Category	Time	Reminder Notice
Category 1	1 to 6 days in arrears	A first reminder letter will be sent, phone call, SMS or email.
Category 2	7 to 14 days in arrears	A second reminder letter will be sent and a home visit will be conducted. Phone call, SMS or email.
Category 3	15 days or more in arrears	If no contact is made from the tenant and a payment plan has not been entered into. A Notice of Termination will be issued.
Category 4	30 days or more in arrears	An application with the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal may be lodged. A formal order will be requested for the arrears and rent to be paid.



Complaints & Appeals

As a tenant you have the right to:

- Be provided with information on how to make a complaint, appeal and comment about the services you receive from Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation.
- To complain about the services you receive without being penalised or disadvantaged.
- To have your complaint, appeal or comment investigated fairly, confidentially and have the appropriate step and actions taken to resolve your concerns.

LODGING AN APPEAL

All appeals need to be lodged in writing by completing the Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation Appeals Form which is located on the website or can be collected from the office. Not all issues can be appealed refer to our Appeals Policy for more information.

When lodging an appeal you are encouraged to lodge any supporting evidence you may have. All appeals are addressed within 28 days of receipt. If for some reason your appeal will take longer to process you will be advised by a Housing Officer.

External Avenues for Appeals

Housing Appeals Committee (HAC):

The Housing Appeals Committee (HAC) is an independent body that deals with appeals from tenants, applicants and stakeholders who are unhappy with a decision made by a social housing provider.

Before a tenant, applicant or stakeholder can lodge an appeal with HAC, the appellant first must follow the internal policies and process of their housing providers. If the appellant is still dissatisfied with the decision of their social housing provider, they are encouraged to lodge an independent appeal with HAC.

To lodge an appeal with HAC the appellant will need to complete the Appeal Forms. For more information on HAC roles, refer to <http://www.hac.nsw.gov.au/>.

External Avenues for Actions and Information:

NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal - <http://www.ncat.nsw.gov.au/>
 Tenants Advice and Advocacy Services - <https://www.tenants.org.au/>
 Community Justice Centre - <http://www.cjc.justice.nsw.gov.au/>
 Local Member of Parliament.

LODGING A COMPLAINT

Clients are encouraged to first speak with their Housing Officer if any issues arise. All complaints received are actioned within 30 working days of receipt unless otherwise advised by your Housing Officer.

To lodge a complaint with Tharawal Aboriginal Housing Corporation you will need to do one of the following;

- Complete the complaints form (located on our website or local office)
- In writing or via email
- Via phone

EXTERNAL AVENUE FOR COMPLAINTS

If a tenant, applicant, stakeholder or a member of the public is dissatisfied with the service delivery, products or management of social housing by Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation they have a right to follow any other avenues of complaint. These may include:

- **NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal** is able to make decision that relate to tenancy breaches in accordance with the Residential Tenancies Act 2010. The NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal has no jurisdiction over policy related matters. If a tenant believes Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation has not adhered to their obligations as a landlord or has breached the tenancy agreement, tenants are able to lodge an application to have their matter heard. - <http://www.ncat.nsw.gov.au/>
- **Tenants Advice and Advocacy Services** is able to provide tenants with information relating to their rights and obligations of social housing providers in accordance with Residential Tenancies Act 2010 - <https://www.tenants.org.au/>
- **The Local Member of Parliament** is able to provide support.
- **The Community Housing Industry Association NSW** can address complaints against community housing providers who are signed up to the Code of Practice, providing the complainant has attempted to address the complaint with the provider. The complaint needs to relate to a breach of the Code of Practice. - <http://communityhousing.org.au/>
- **The Registrar of Community Housing** is a government body that oversees the compliance of community housing provider that are approved and registered under the Housing Act 2001. The Registrar is able to investigate complaints about a community housing provider's performance against the regulatory Code. - <http://www.rch.nsw.gov.au/>

General & Feedback

FEEDBACK FROM TENANTS

Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation values the feedback of all tenants. It is important that tenants are able to voice their concerns and share ideas on how service delivery can be improved. Tenants are able to provide feedback to Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation in many forms, such as:

- Yearly surveys
- Participating in tenant forums
- Speaking with their housing officer
- Being an active member of the Tharawal Yarning Circle
- Suggestion box

Feedback is used to improve service delivery, identify changes to be made and re-examine aspects of policy and procedure. To ensure that tenants and applicants are aware of their rights, Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation will:

- Give tenants and applicants information on their rights and responsibilities in a format that is easy to understand.
- Have policies that are consistent with the organisation's constitution and applicants' rights and responsibilities.
- Have clear mechanisms and structures by which tenants and active applicants have the opportunity to provide input into the organisation and encourage them to participate in decision-making activities.
- Inform and seek the opinion and ideas of tenants and active applicants when considering important changes.
- Ensure people get enough information and time to make consultations useful.
- Ensure staff know the support options available and have working relationships with key individuals in other appropriate organisation's in their local community.

Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation will utilize the outcomes of complaints and comments as lessons learnt and use this information as way to improve the approach of service delivery to our clients.



Our Commitment to our People

GENERAL FEEDBACK & COMMENTS

Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation recognises the importance of tenant consultation and community consultation. We pride ourselves on the services we deliver to our community. We are here to listen to ways to improve

service delivery to ensure better outcomes for our people. We have an open door policy for all clients. Never be afraid to say what you are thinking or feeling. There is no right or wrong.

LOCAL TENANT GROUPS

Tenants are encouraged to establish local tenant working groups. Tenant working groups will need to establish their own Terms of Reference and can meet as many times a year as agreed. Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation will support local tenant working groups by promoting the groups on the website and newsletters.

Local tenant groups give tenants the opportunity to work closely at a local level. Housing staff from Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation will attend local tenant groups on request from the Chairperson.

Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation holds no delegation or responsibility for local tenant working groups. The purpose of these groups is to give tenants a forum in which they can discuss events, social activities and housing issues. Groups are to be solely run by the tenants.

THARAWAL YARNING CIRCLE

The Tharawal Yarning Circle is made of 10 tenants and 1 Board member who will attend every second meeting, or as requested by the Chairperson from the Yarning Circle.

The purpose of the Tharawal Yarning Circle is a direct link to Tharawal Housing Services Board of Directors. The Tharawal Yarning Circle meets 4 times a year and is guided by the term of reference. It is an opportunity for tenants to participate in ways to improve service delivery, housing outcomes and activities for tenants.

Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation will provide the venue for the Yarning Circle to meet, and tenants will be reimbursed a maximum of \$30.00 for travel expense incurred as a result of attending meetings. Members of the Yarning Circle are not paid a wage, it is a volunteer role.

Affordable Housing

WHAT IS AFFORDABLE HOUSING?

Affordable Housing is a government initiative to assist the needs of people on low to moderate incomes in the rental market. The rent setting on Affordable Housing properties is set below the standard market rent.

The aim of the program is to assist people to be able to meet the basic living costs such as food, clothing, transport, medical expenses and education.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Applicants applying for Affordable Housing with Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Confirmation of Aboriginality
- Be a resident of NSW
- Be a citizen or have permanent residency in Australia
- Be at least 18 years of age
- Proof of Identity
- Household income within the income eligibility limits
- Not own any assets or property which could reasonably be expected to resolve housing needs
- Be able to sustain a successful tenancy, without support or with appropriate support in place

INCOME ELIGIBILITY:

There is no minimum income eligibility limit set for applicants applying for Affordable Housing, however applicants will not be considered for properties that are not affordable based on their total household income. The maximum household income limits is set out in the below tables. Applicants earning above the below income limits will not be considered.



Table 1: Household income eligibility limits for affordable housing: 2021/22

Household members	Gross annual household income		
	Very low	Low	Moderate
Sydney			
Single adult	\$28,600	\$45,700	\$68,600
Each additional adult (18 years or over)	Add \$14,300 to the income limit	Add \$22,900 to the income limit	Add \$34,300 to the income limit
Each additional child (under 18 years)	Add \$8,600	Add \$13,700	Add \$20,600
New South Wales			
Single adult	\$25,400	\$40,600	\$60,900
Each additional adult (18 years or over)	Add \$12,700 to the income limit	Add \$20,300 to the income limit	Add \$30,500 to the income limit
Each additional child (under 18 years)	Add \$7,600	Add \$12,200	Add \$18,300

These tables provide a quick reference guide to maximum income levels for a range of different household sizes and combinations. Table 2 is for households in the Sydney statistical district (as defined by ABS).

Table 2: Household income eligibility limits for Sydney region: 2021/22

Household Type	Very Low	Low	Moderate
Single	\$28,600	\$45,700	\$68,600
Single + 1	\$37,200	\$59,400	\$89,200
Single + 2	\$45,800	\$73,100	\$109,800
Single + 3	\$54,400	\$86,800	\$130,400
Single + 4	\$63,000	\$100,500	\$151,000
Couple	\$42,900	\$68,600	\$102,900
Couple + 1	\$51,500	\$82,300	\$123,500
Couple + 2	\$60,100	\$96,000	\$144,100
Couple + 3	\$68,700	\$109,700	\$164,700
Couple + 4	\$77,300	\$123,400	\$185,300

Affordable Housing **Lease Review**

Tenants residing in Affordable Housing properties with Tharawal Housing will need to undergo a lease review one month prior to their lease ending.

What you will need to provide to assess your eligible for a lease extension in Affordable Housing.

- ☐ Proof of Income for the past 12 months for all household members over the age of 18
- ☐ 6 months bank statement for all household members over the age of 18 years.
- ☐ Complete an Affordable Housing Review Application Form.

As part of the NSW Ministerial Housing Guideline you total household income cannot exceed the below income limits:

Table 5: Ongoing eligibility income limits for Sydney affordable housing tenants: 2021/22

Household Type	Ongoing eligibility maximum income limit
Single	\$85,750
Single + 1	\$111,500
Single + 2	\$137,250
Single + 3	\$163,000
Single + 4	\$188,750
Couple	\$128,625
Couple + 1	\$154,375
Couple + 2	\$180,125
Couple + 3	\$205,875
Couple + 4	\$231,625

Affordable housing tenants are able to earn 25% over the maximum access income limit and still remain eligible. Table 5 shows the ongoing eligibility maximum income limits for Sydney tenants, while Table 6 shows ongoing eligibility maximum income limits for NSW

When assessing your application for a new lease Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation will also take into account the below:

- ☐ Household compliment
- ☐ Tenancy history
- ☐ Property size and type.

HOUSING NEED:

Applicants will need to demonstrate a need for Affordable Housing and be unable to resolve their housing needs in the medium to long term without assistance. Some factors include but are not limited to; currently living in unaffordable and/or unsuitable housing or needing to relocate for employment or family reasons.

The number of people residing in the property that live must be appropriate to the size of the home.

HOW LONG CAN I STAY:

Applicants will be offered a 12 month fixed term tenancy agreement. At the end of the fixed term tenancy agreement tenants will be required to undergo an eligibility assessment to ensure they are still eligible for the program. Providing the tenant/s meet eligibility requirements a new 12 month fixed term tenancy agreement will be offered.

Tenant/s will be required to undergo an eligibility assessment annually to remain in affordable housing. Tenant/s will be required to provide proof of their total household income. In circumstances where the tenant/s no longer meet the eligibility criteria a 3 month fixed term lease will be offered to the tenant/s to allow them time to find alternative accommodation.

BOND:

Approved applicant/s will be required to pay 4 weeks market rent at the commencement of their tenancy agreement plus 2 weeks advance.

HOW TO APPLY:

Applicant/s need to complete an application for Affordable Housing and provide the below evidence. Applications will be assessed within 28 days of receipt. Applicants will be advised in writing of outcome. Approved applicants will be placed on the waiting list.

EVIDENCE REQUIRED:

All applicants over the age of 18 are required to provide proof of all income sources, for example:

Applicant or family members in receipt of Centrelink Income will need to provide 12 months payment history from Centrelink

Applicant or family members in receipt of wages/salary will need to provide 12 months' pay slips or notice of tax assessment or a letter from their employer stating gross annual income for the last 12 months.

Applicants or family members who are self-employed will need to provide profit and loss statement for the last 12 months

- Proof of ID
- Birth Certificate
- Medicare Card
- Drivers Licence
- Health Care Card
- Key Card

PROOF OF ASSETS AND/OR DEBT

- 3 Month Bank Statement
- 3 month of all Loan Repayment Statements

CURRENT RENT RECEIPT

- Proof of recent rent receipts if applicable or a copy of Rental Tenancy Agreement OR details with landlord's full name, address and phone number.

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION RELATING TO PROGRAM

- Confirmation of Aboriginality
- Proof of connection to the area e.g. employment, family, connection to area

RENT CHARGED:

Rent charged on properties is generally 74.9% of the market rent for the property. Rent can be paid weekly or fortnightly. Tenants will be advised of the weekly rent charge prior to accepting the property. Rent reviews are undertaken on all properties annual. Tenants will be advised of any rent increase.

WATER CHARGED:

Tenants are responsible for paying water usage charges. Tenants will be invoiced quarterly and have 30 days to pay their account.

Employment Related Accommodation

ERA Housing

APPLYING FOR ERA ACCOMMODATION, YOU MUST:

- be an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person
- be over 18 years old
- have a connection to a remote community
- prove your enrolment in an education or training course at an approved institution such as university or TAFE
- show that the employer offers long-term opportunities.

If you have a connection to a remote area and you want to move to a regional area where there are more opportunities for work and study, the ERA program aims to assist you with secure and affordable accommodation for the duration of your education or training, or while you become established in your new job.

If you're a single person taking up this option you will move into a fully furnished share-accommodation house.

You will have your own room and share the living, kitchen, laundry and bathroom areas with other people in a similar situation.

HOW LONG CAN I STAY IN THE HOUSE?

If you are taking up ERA accommodation to study, you can stay in the home for the duration of your course or study.

If you are taking up ERA accommodation to accept a work offer, you will be allowed to stay for up to 12 months or for the duration of your employment contract if less than 12 months.

HOW IS RENT CHARGED?

The weekly rent for a room in ERA property is \$135.00. You will be required to pay bond being 4 weeks rent \$540.00. At the end of your tenancy the bond will be refunded to you providing there is no rent or damages to the property.

WHAT ABOUT UTILITY BILLS?

Electricity and gas will be covered by Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation up to the value of \$350.00. Each tenant will pay an equal amount to meet the cost of bills in excess of \$350.00. Water charges will be paid by Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation up to the value of \$300.00. Each tenant will pay an equal amount to meet the cost of bills in excess of \$300.00.

THE FOLLOWING FURNITURE WILL BE PROVIDED IN THE PROPERTY:

- Dining table and chairs
- Coffee table
- Two sofas
- Washing machine
- Fridge
- Single bed and mattress in each room
- Bedside cupboard
- Bookcase
- Desk and chair

The cost of replacing or repairing damaged or stolen items is to be met by the tenant.

Tenants are able to bring their own furniture for their bedrooms if they do not wish to use the furniture provided. You will need to move the furniture from your room into the garage.



CAN VISITORS STAY WITH ME? IF SO, FOR HOW LONG?

Yes. We understand that you may get homesick or need some support from home. You can have one friend or relative stay with you for a period of up to two weeks – though you will need to get approval beforehand.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I LOSE MY JOB OR DECIDE TO LEAVE UNI/TAFE?

If you lose your job we will continue to provide housing while you to find a new job and then settle in for three (3) months. If after this time you have not secured employment we will go through the options with you.

If you decide to leave university, TAFE or other training, and do not plan to return to study, you will be asked to vacate your accommodation.

If however, you plan to find a job, we can continue to provide accommodation for up to three (3) months while you seek employment. If you do find employment, you can then continue to stay in your ERA house for up to 12 months.

WHO WILL CLEAN THE HOUSE?

You and your housemates will be responsible for keeping the house clean, tidy and in good condition. You will have to negotiate a roster of chores with your housemates to ensure dishes are washed, floors are cleaned, rubbish is taken out and the house is generally kept clean and tidy.

Key Partnerships

Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation would like to thank the below organisation for their on-going support and commitment to working together to deliver better outcomes for Aboriginal People in NSW.

THARAWAL ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

Home to Stay – Neami National and Department of Community & Justice (DCJ) Housing
NSW ABORIGINAL HOUSING OFFICE (AHO)

HUME COMMUNITY HOUSING

DCJ HOUSING SOUTH WEST SYDNEY DISTRICT

DUBAY GUNYAH – AHO, NSW Community & Justice and Marrin Weejali Aboriginal Corporation

HOUSING ACTION NETWORK – John Stott (Consultant)



Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation policies and procedures are all written in line with all government policies settings and guidelines.

Key Contacts

Tharawal Aboriginal Corporation

Medical, Dental, Social and Emotion Support and Emergency Relief Assistance

Address: 187 Riverside Drive Airs 2560

Phone: 02 4628 4837

Housing NSW Call Centre

General Enquires Line: 1300 468 746

Link2home Homelessness: 1800 152 152

Aboriginal Housing Office

Address: Level 6, 33 Argyle Street Parramatta 2150

Phone: 02 8836 9444

South West Sydney Tenant Advice and Advocacy Services

Phone: 02 4628 1678 or 1800 631 993

Greater Sydney Aboriginal Tenant Services

Phone: 02 9833 3314 or 1800 251 101

Department of Fair Trading

Address: 60 Station Street Parramatta 2150

Phone: 13 32 20

NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal

Hotline: 1300 006 228

Aboriginal Legal Aid

Address: Level 8, 33 Argyle Street Parramatta 2150

Phone: 02 8836 3400

Police Hotline

Phone: 13 14 44