

Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation

Allocation Policy – Social Housing

Version Number:	4
Applies to:	Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation Social Housing Properties
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Endorsed by board Date	28/10/2021
Date Last Reviewed:	28/10/2021
Next Review Date:	28/10/2022

Scope:

This policy applies to applicant/s and or tenant/s who are allocated a social housing property with Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation (THAC). The policy should be read in conjunction with Housing Pathways Social Housing and Allocations Policy Supplement. <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/housing/policies/social-housing-eligibility-allocations-policy-supplement/chapters/sustain-a-successful-tenancy>

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure THAC provides culturally appropriate housing to Aboriginal applicant/s and or tenant/s and their families. THAC will achieve this by:

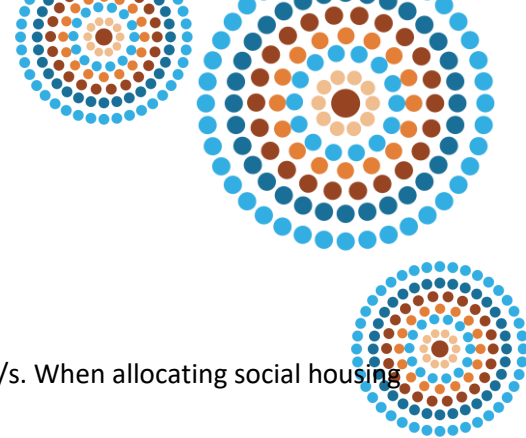
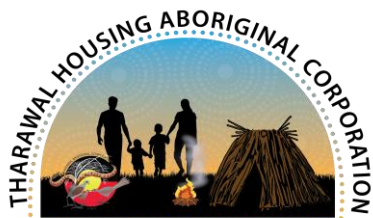
- Open and transparent allocation process that is based on the needs of the applicants.
- Appropriate allocation of social housing resources in accordance with individual needs and government legislation.
- Understanding the needs of our applicant/s and or tenant/s and ensuring properties matched meet housing needs and requirements.
- Provide applicant/s and or tenant/s with information and access to social housing products and services in accordance with Housing Pathways.
- Provide a wraparound housing service to Aboriginal people. This includes and is not limited to; medical, education, support, and social and emotion well-being.

This policy applies to all social housing properties managed by THAC.

General Principles:

THAC will ensure fair and equitable access to eligible Aboriginal people who are seeking social housing assistance. THAC adheres to the following principles in all aspects:

- Ensure clear policies, guidelines and procedures as well as easy access to relevant policies for all applicant/s and tenant/s.
- Ensure all information and records relating to applicant/s and tenant/s are confidential and records are kept secured and protected.
- Ensure that the THAC meets standards according to NRSCH compliance, Aboriginal Housing Office (AHO) policies, Community Housing Policies and legislative requirements.
- Ensure all allocations are documented and allocated in a timely manner to avoid long term vacate and loss of revenue.
- Ensure sufficient systems are put in place for monitoring compliance with NRSCH, AHO Policies, Community Housing Policies, THAC Policies and legislative requirements.
- Ensure all persons understand their rights and process to appeal decision made.
- Ensure allocating of AHO Social Housing properties is in line with Housing Pathways and followed correctly.



Policy:

This policy outlines how THAC allocates properties to applicant/s and or tenant/s. When allocating social housing properties to applicant/s and or tenant/s THAC will ensure the following

- The property meets the needs of the applicant/s and or tenant/s.
- That appropriate supports services are in place where applicable and practical.
- That the bedroom and property style meets the needs of the household.
- Appropriate use and allocation of available housing stock.
- Support and encourage a sustainable tenancy.

THAC currently manages properties on behalf of the AHO. To be eligible for an AHO managed property applicants must have a live Housing Application on the NSW Housing Register. The NSW Housing Register consists of new applicants and transfer applicants who have been approved for social housing by either DCJ Housing or participating Community Housing Providers. Social housing properties are allocated according to priority, date of application and the suitability of the property.

In accordance with Housing Pathways THAC will give priority to approved applicants on the Housing Register in the following situations:

- Tenancy Reinstatement
- Priority Transfer at RISK or medical
- Relocation Transfer

THAC does not currently own or manage its own social housing stock. Therefore there is no THAC waiting list.

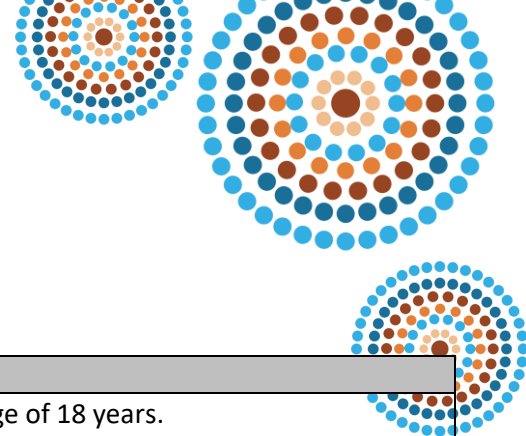
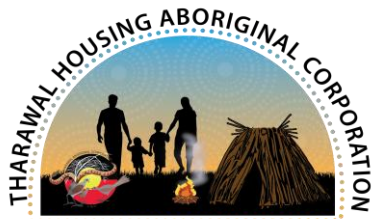
Entitlements:

In accordance with Housing Pathways Social Housing Eligibility and Allocations Policy Supplement, Aboriginal applicants are entitled to access the following, providing proof of Aboriginality is confirmed:

- One extra bedroom to assist in meeting their family responsibilities. This is however subject to available housing stock.
- Placement on the waiting list for senior communities properties if 45 years or older
- If one or more household member is over the age of 55 years seek acceleration on the NSW Housing Register.

The below tables outlines bedroom entitlements based on household compliments:

Household Compliment	Minimum bedroom entitlement
Single person	Studio, one to two bedrooms
Couples	One or two bedrooms
Single person or couple with one additional person residing with them	Two or three bedrooms
Single person or couple with two or more persons residing with them	Two or three bedrooms
Single person or couple with three or more persons residing with them	Three or four bedrooms
Single person or couple with four or more persons residing with them	Three or four bedrooms
Single person or couples with five or more additional persons residing with them	Four bedrooms, if available five bedrooms. However, due to the limited five bedroom stock, more than likely a four-bedroom dwelling will be offered.



The below table outlines bedroom entitlement based on children:

Situation	Tharawal response
Shared bedrooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same sex children up until the age of 18 years. • Male and female children can share a bedroom up until one reaches the age of 10 years.
Children who can't share a bedroom	An additional bedroom can be allocated in circumstances where there is evidence that children are unable to share a bedroom due to either medical reasons or a significant age gap.
Share custody of children	An additional bedroom can be allocated in circumstances where there is evidence the client has shared custody of children for 3 or more days a week.
Access visits from children	An additional bedroom is generally not allocated in situations where the client has less than 3 days access with children. Unless the client is able to demonstrate a need for an extra bedroom for access.
Children were there may be a need for a separate bedroom within 2-3 years	Consideration is given to the future needs of children on a case-by-case basis according to stock and location at the time.

Offers:

All applicants approved for social housing, including transfer applicants will be made two reasonable offers of accommodation, offers are made based on information provided by applicants and properties available at the time of the offer. All clients are responsible for providing up to date information to their housing provider. If a client provides false or misleading information, it is reasonable to withdraw any offers of social housing.

Applicants will be given 42 hours to decide if they are accepting the offer made. If a client rejects an offer that is deemed reasonable they will be only given one more offer. If a client rejects both offers there application for social housing maybe closed.

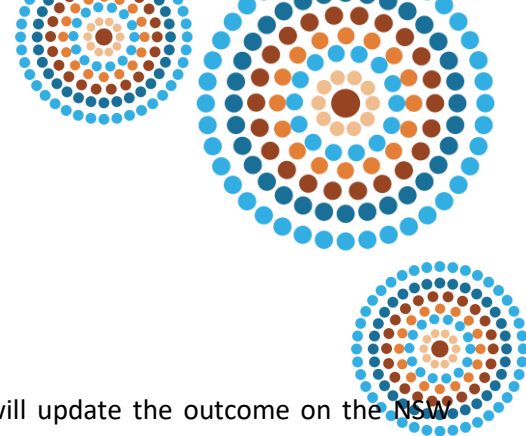
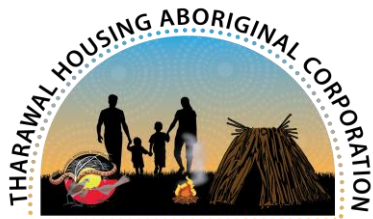
In allocating properties to applicants, the Housing and Compliance Project Officer will consider all aspects of the client's application and the property elements to ensure the most appropriate offer of housing is made.

Before an offer is made, THAC will ensure that:

- Confirmation of Aboriginality is on file for at least one household member
- The property size and type meets the applicant's needs
- The location of the property
- Medical needs and any modifications that may be required
- Social impacts on the applicant and current tenants
- Any future redevelopment or sales
- Matching and Offering a Property to a Client Policy Housing Pathways
<https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/housing/policies/matching-offering-property-client-policy>

THAC will not make an offer of housing to an applicant if:

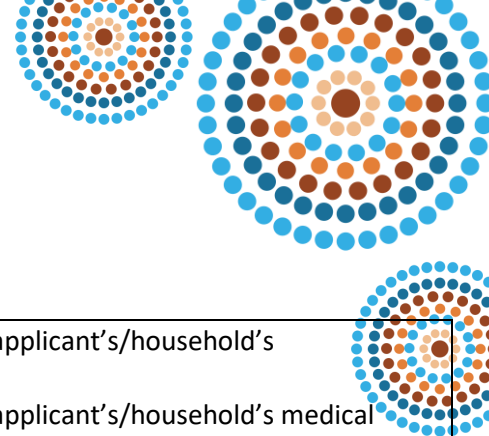
- The confirmation on file does not met the AHO Confirmation Policy and the THAC Confirmation Policy
- The applicant is not Aboriginal and the household member confirmed as Aboriginal is no longer going to reside in the property
- The offer will adversely affect the applicants or household member's medical conditions
- The offer will places the applicant or household member at risk of harm
- The offer is going to have a negative impact on the applicants/household members and/or current



tenant's social and emotional well-being.

Once a decision has been made, Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation will update the outcome on the NSW Housing Register as per the Housing Pathways process.

Outcome	Situation
Offers accepted	Once an applicant accepts an offer, Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation will contact the client within 24 hours of the offer being accepted to arrange sign up. Generally sign-ups will occur within 3 days of accepting an offer.
Offers rejected and considered to be a reasonable offer	<p>When an offer is made to an applicant matching their housing requirements and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant failed to provide new sustainable information about their housing needs within the required time frame. • There are no reasons for the application to be suspended on the NSW Housing Register. <p>An offer is considered being reasonable by Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation when an applicant declines an offer based on a personal preference that does not directly affect their housing needs. Common examples include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wanting a property made out of brick • Wanting gas rather than electricity • Not liking the area • Wanting a bathtub rather than a shower • Wanting a senior property • Wanting a different suburb in the allocation zone chosen without a specific suburb need identified and approved • Not liking cladding, internal and external layout, design, or colour scheme of the property • Wanting to reside near shops, family , school, church where the need has not been previously established or approved • Wanting to live on specific floor in a block of units • Wanting a certain type of property e.g. house, townhouse, villa or unit • Wanting a yard or certain type of property to cater for pets • Wanting a specific street <p>The applicant did not accept an offer that matches their housing needs because they did not like the property or being unwilling to accept the specific requirement of Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Term of lease offered • Not responding to contact to confirm eligibility or needs at offer • Payment of rent in advance • Additional terms attached to the Residential Tenancy Agreement. <p>Applicants will only be given one more offer of social housing. Tharawal Housing does not manage the Housing Pathways waitlist. Final decision will be made by DCJ Housing NSW.</p>
Offers withdrawn	An offer will be consider to be withdrawn in the following situation:



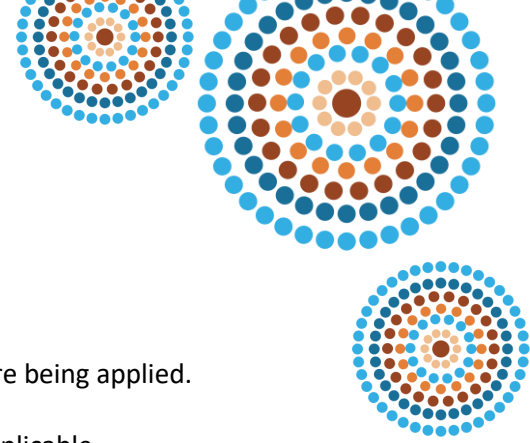
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The property does not meet the applicant's/household's requirements • The property does not meet the applicant's/household's medical needs • The property will have a negative impact on the client's social and emotion well-being <p>Applicants are required to provide supporting documentation to confirm the property did not meet their needs such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Medical Assessment Form • A letter from their doctor or health care provider • A letter from their support worker • A letter from their employer <p>If an applicant declined the offer in accordance with the <i>Residential Act 2010</i> (NSW) relating to the <i>Residential Tenancies Regulation 2010</i> Clause 7 section (a) and (c).</p> <p>Tharawal Housing will advise DCJ Housing that the offer has been withdrawn. Applicants will not be impacted and will still receive two offers of social housing.</p>
Application suspended	<p>An application for housing assistance will be suspended if the applicant demonstrates that they are temporarily in a situation where they are unable to accept an offer due to circumstances beyond their control. These circumstances include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is overseas or on holidays • Is in prison, nursing home or rehabilitation facility • Is experiencing illness or hospitalisation. <p>When an application is suspended, the client does not lose their position on the waiting list. It merely means no offers will be made until there application is made live again.</p>

Appeals:

If an applicant/s and or tenant/s believes the decision made by THAC was incorrect, they should first discuss their concerns with their local office. If the tenant still believes the decision is wrong the tenant has the right to ask for a formal review as per THAC Appeals and Review decision.

Responsibility:

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| Housing and Compliance Project Officer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain shortlist of approved applicants for AHO properties from DCJ Housing. Liaise and raise any concerns surrounding allocations with the AHO. Manage the allocation of vacate properties in a timely manner Monitor and review the allocation of properties to ensure policies are being adhered to. Conduct annual reviews of policies and make any necessary changes in accordance with policy and legislation changes. |
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Housing Manager

Ensure policies and procedures are being applied.

Provide training to staff where applicable.

Report to CEO any issues or matters that need to be escalated.

Provide reports to the board on the allocation of properties including void and vacancy rate.

Board

Monitor the policies efficiency and effectiveness to ensure improve practice and positive outcomes for Aboriginal people.

Report any findings and recommendation within its annual report.

Reference:

Legislation:	Related Policy
<i>Residential Tenancies Act 2010</i>	Social Housing Eligibility and Allocation Policy Supplement
<i>Aboriginal Housing Act 1998</i>	Manage The NSW Housing Register Policy
<i>Residential Tenancies Regulation 2010</i>	Matching and Offering a Property to a Client Policy
	Community Housing Resource Allocation Policy
	Aboriginal Housing Access policy

Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation staff must always adhere to the Confidentially Policy and Privacy Policy.