

H3. HOUSING WAITING LIST - PRIORITY

Content:	Illawarra Aboriginal Corporation Policies and Procedures
Version:	2.0
Section:	Housing - Reviewing Applications (Condensed)
Applies To:	Board, Management and Staff of all IAC Services
Date:	October 2015 (Review October 2018)

Background and Purpose

The IAC's Housing policies articulate our aims, goals and philosophies in providing housing services for Aboriginal tenants and their families. They explain how the Illawarra Aboriginal Corporation works with its staff and other agencies to ensure that our tenants are afforded the best and most appropriate services and that we meet all of the requirements of the Aboriginal Housing Office and the Office of Community Housing.

Waiting List Priority

The IAC may prioritise certain clients on our Housing Waiting list based on:

- The length of time that a client has been on the waiting list
- Matching available housing to client family structure (including children)
- Client age
- Preferred locations
- Special Needs including Disability
- Unstable housing
- At Risk factors
- Inappropriate existing housing

Matching Housing

The IAC will attempt to match any vacant or new properties with the client's family situation. Clients on the Housing Waiting List with family circumstances matching the available property will be considered above those on the list that do not match the available property. The IAC will attempt to match as follows:

Bedrooms	Family Situation
Bedsitter, one or two bedrooms	Single person
One or two bedrooms	Couples with no other household members (eg children)
Two or three bedrooms	Single people or couples with one or two other household members
Three or four bedrooms	Single people or couples with three or four other household members
Four or more bedrooms	Single people or couples with five or more other household members

Matching Housing (cont)

In attempting to meet the bedroom requirements of a client family we will take into account the following considerations for children:

Situation	IAC Consideration
Child is over 18 years of age	The person is considered to be an adult when calculating the minimum bedroom entitlement
Shared bedrooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same sex children up to 18 years of age are expected to share a bedroom • Male and female children are expected to share a bedroom until one of the children reaches age 10.
Children can't share a bedroom	The IAC will allocate an additional bedroom where the client has demonstrated a need for same sex children, or children under 10 years of age, to have separate bedrooms.
Shared custody	Children are considered to be part of the household if the client has shared custody of children for 3 days per week or more.
Access visits from children	The client must demonstrate a need for an extra bedroom for access visits.
Future needs of children who may need separate bedrooms in 2 or 3 years time	The IAC will take into account future needs if it can, however, due to limited housing stock, may not be able to offer clients housing which meets their future needs.

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Client Age

Clients who have met the normal eligibility criteria for IAC housing may be approved for housing assistance as an elderly client if they are aged 55 years and over.

In order to reduce waiting times for eligible elderly clients and settle them into appropriate housing as soon as possible, we will generally offer suitable accommodation as it becomes available to elderly clients ahead of wait turn clients.

Where there are other household members included on an elderly client's application (other than the elderly person's partner), or an elderly person is included in an application with other family members, they will be eligible for this assistance provided that:

- The elderly person is totally dependent on the other members of the household for 24 hour care, and
- They provide documentation from a doctor or other healthcare professional to support the application.

Clients seeking housing as elderly clients must provide the following proof of age:

- Birth certificate, or
- Passport, or
- If none of the above are available, a written estimate of age as recognised by an incorporated Aboriginal organisation or Land Council.

Preferred location

Clients on the Housing Waiting List that nominate a preferred location will be assessed initially as if they had not nominated a preferred location and then contacted to determine if the location of an available property is suitable for the client.

Clients that have nominated a preferred location will not be penalised on the waiting list if they do not accept a property that is outside of their nominated location.

Clients with special needs

A client may have special requirements for their accommodation based on medical, social or other factors. If a client wishes to be housed in IAC housing and can substantiate these needs, we may approve them for the following specific types of accommodation:

- Ground floor.
- Modified property.
- Property with wheelchair access.
- Property with a certain number of steps.
- Property with a yard.

If a client has other needs that require a specific type of accommodation or accommodation in a specific location, or a requirement for an extra bedroom for medical or family reasons, they must substantiate this need. For example, they may need to be close to medical practitioners, or they may need to be housed in an area because of cultural needs and support, or they may have a child that needs to attend a special school.

Unstable Housing

A client has an urgent housing need if they are experiencing unstable housing circumstances, including:

- Homelessness.
- Imminent homelessness.
- Living in crisis or emergency accommodation.
- Living with family or friends who are unable to provide longer-term accommodation.
- Living apart from immediate family members because of a lack of appropriate housing alternatives.

Accepted proof of unstable housing documents are listed on the Housing Pathways website "Evidence Requirements Information Sheet" and include:

- Referral or confirmation from a refuge, crisis or emergency or other supported accommodation provider
- Documents from a government agency such as FACS - Community Services
- Notice of Termination

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At Risk Factors

A client has an urgent housing need if they, or a member of their household, is at risk of harm. There are many situations in which the personal safety or the mental health of a client or another member of their household may be at risk, including:

- Domestic violence.
- Sexual assault.
- Child abuse or neglect.
- Threatening behaviour by one or more household members against another occupant.
- Torture or trauma.

Accepted proof of at risk factors are listed on the Housing Pathways website "Evidence Requirements Information Sheet" and include:

- Police reports or statements
- Apprehended Violence Order
- Request for assistance from a government agency
- Notices from court or a letter from a solicitor
- Medical Assessment form completed by a health professional confirming your situation
- Letter or report from a doctor, health professional, social worker, a recognised domestic violence service, refuge or other support agency worker
- Statutory Declaration form completed by a third party such as a relative, friend, neighbour or local clergy

Inappropriate Existing Housing

A client has an urgent housing need if their current accommodation is inappropriate for their basic housing requirements. We will consider this factor where a client's current living conditions are extremely unsatisfactory due to:

- Severe overcrowding.
- Substandard property conditions (extreme damp, dangerous or unhealthy conditions).
- Lack of essential facilities (water, electricity, bathroom, kitchen).
- Needing secure accommodation to take a child out of care.
- Severe and ongoing medical condition.
- Disability.

For assessment purposes we consider severe overcrowding to occur when:

- An adult or couple share a bedroom with a person aged over three years.
- More than three children share a bedroom.
- More than two unrelated adults share a bedroom.

If the client is renting privately and living in substandard accommodation, the landlord may be liable for repairs. We will explain the client's rights under the Residential Tenancies Act 2010 and refer them to the appropriate Tenants Advocacy and Advice Service.

Accepted proof of inappropriate existing housing are listed on the Housing Pathways website "Evidence Requirements Information Sheet" and are based on your specific situation of overcrowding, severe overcrowding or other factors.

COMPLIANCE

This policy complies with:

- NSW Housing Act 2001

REFERENCES

This policy should be read with:

- **Housing Pathways** "Eligibility for Social Housing Policy", "Social Housing Eligibility and Allocations Policy Supplement"
- **National Regulatory Code** - 1. Tenant and housing services, (a) determining and managing eligibility, allocation, and termination of housing assistance, (e) facilitating access to support for social housing applicants and tenants with complex needs