

H6. ALLOCATING HOUSING

Content:	Illawarra Aboriginal Corporation Policies and Procedures
Version:	2.0
Section:	Housing
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.

Housing Availability

The IAC can have vacant properties as a result of new housing becoming available, tenants moving out, the death of a tenant or other causes. When a property becomes available, the Housing Sub Committee and the Board of the IAC will endeavour to fill this placement quickly from the applicants on the Housing Waiting List. The Housing Sub Committee will take account of all available information including issues of succession, priority housing needs and target groups.

Preselection

The Housing Sub Committee will review the Housing Waiting List and all applicants based on the eligibility criteria and matching principles detailed in the housing policies and then make deidentified recommendations to the Board of the Illawarra Aboriginal Corporation.

Conflict of Interest

Sub Committee members with a conflict of interest will declare this conflict and not take part in the review process. If the Sub Committee cannot form a quorum due to conflict of interest the Board will appoint a current Board member as a stand in on the Sub Committee.

Candidates

The Board will approve and minute the selection of three deidentified potential candidates for housing and will request the Housing Manager to contact each applicant in turn. The Board will minute the criteria that were applied and the process of selecting the successful candidates. Candidates are preselected to ensure that we obtain up to date information about their eligibility status before housing is granted.

Preselection (cont)

Updated Information

The Housing Manager will contact the first candidate and request that they provide updated information on their eligibility status including details of their income, assets and family circumstances. The Housing Manager may contact the second and third candidates (making them aware that they are secondaries) so that they can prepare their documentation should other candidates fail to meet eligibility requirements.

Updated Information Time Limits

The first eligible applicant has a maximum of four weeks from first contact by the Housing Manager to provide the IAC with all of the information listed in the IAC's Housing Eligibility Checklist. An extension of time will only be granted under exceptional circumstances such as family illness or the death of a family member. The maximum extension time is a further week.

The Housing Manager will diarise all attempts at contact with the applicant. The deadline for the provision of required documents is 5pm on the day four weeks after first contact. If the applicant fails to provide all required information by that time they will be advised that their application has been declined. The applicant will not be penalised on the waiting list but may only be reconsidered for tenancy if the other candidates fail to meet the eligibility criteria (and the Board reconvenes to determine a new list of candidates) or if a new property becomes available.

Appeals and Complaints

Applicants that have either been rejected based on the eligibility criteria or that believe they were more eligible than a successful candidate have the right to appeal as per our housing Appeals and Complaints policy.

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Offer of Housing

When the applicant provides all requested information within the specified timeframe, the Coordinator will request that the information be shared with Family & Community Services Housing NSW and/or the Aboriginal Housing Office.

Applicants that refuse to allow information to be shared with Housing NSW or the Aboriginal Housing Office may be considered as ineligible for tenancy unless they can present a compelling case to the Board.

If the applicant meets all the eligibility criteria and the Aboriginal Housing Office gives approval (where required) the Housing Manager will send the applicant an Offer of Housing which will include:

- the name of the successful applicant
- the names of approved household members
- the proposed date of the start of the tenancy
- the amount and frequency of rent
- the amount of the bond, if any
- the lease term and a request to make an appointment to sign the lease as soon as possible
- a summary of the condition of the property and a request to sign the property inspection report within two weeks of signing the lease agreement
- Information pamphlets such as:
 - ◊ tenant rights and responsibilities
 - ◊ our Starting a Tenancy policy
 - ◊ our During a Tenancy policies
 - ◊ our Ending a Tenancy policy

Offer of Housing (cont)

The IAC will:

- respect the privacy of the housing applicant and treat their application confidentiality
- allow applicants a chance to ask any questions, to visit the property, to refuse the offer of housing or to request repairs to the property
- process any refusals of housing offers by:
 - ◊ seeking and recording information from the applicant about their reasons for refusing the offer
 - ◊ assessing whether the applicant's refusal highlights a weakness in our policies and procedures
 - ◊ convening a meeting of the Housing Sub Committee where the refusing applicant has highlighted issues in our policies and procedures
- where the applicant's reason for refusal is unrelated to IAC policies, contact the next preselected candidate for updated eligibility information
- assess any applicant request for repairs to be conducted on the property as per our Repairs and Maintenance policy.
- endeavour to fill vacancies as quickly as possible to meet the needs of applicants and the to reduce the financial impact of vacant properties

COMPLIANCE

This policy complies with:

- NSW Housing Act 2001

REFERENCES

This policy should be read with:

- **Housing Pathways** "Matching and Offering a Property to a Client Policy"
- **National Regulatory Code** - 1. Tenant and housing services, (a) determining and managing eligibility, allocation, and termination of housing assistance