Overview

Local government housing providers have to comply with a range of requirements under the Housing Act 2003 and Housing Regulation 2003. The proposed National Regulatory System for Community Housing (NRSCH) will reform this current approach to the registration and regulation of community housing providers across Australia.

All states and territories participating in the NRSCH are required to pass legislation to implement the new system. The proposed legislative changes are currently before the Queensland Parliament. A formal start date for the NRSCH has yet to be announced by the Housing Ministers of Australia, however, it remains on track for a potential mid-2013 start.

The NRSCH will introduce a consistent national framework for the regulation of community housing providers that recognises the scale, scope and risk of their operations. There will be opportunities for some community housing providers to expand their community housing delivery, however this will be dependent on maintaining registration under the NRSCH.


What is the NRSCH?

The NRSCH is a new system for registering and regulating community housing providers. It creates a consistent, nationwide framework that establishes common standards for:

- tenant and housing services
- housing assets
- community engagement
- governance
- probity
- management
- financial viability.
Local governments will not be eligible for national registration, since the new system is designed for non-government organisations.

However, local government providers will still be registered on a state basis, and will be held to the same standards as those that apply to non-government organisations.

You can find more information on the new system at [www.nrsch.gov.au](http://www.nrsch.gov.au)

**Will local government providers still need to be registered?**

Yes. Local governments that continue to deliver community housing using funding from the State Government will need to maintain their registration. A form of state-based registration is being retained to support local governments to deliver community housing in their communities.

Nationally registered non-government providers and local government providers will have a common set of performance standards to ensure consistency across the community housing sector.

**How does the regulatory system apply to us?**

Queensland has a long-standing commitment to fund local governments which will be retained and supported by a form of state-based registration. Local governments will be required to comply with the same regulatory standards as registered community housing providers.

Currently, local governments have a considerable range of reporting obligations under numerous sets of existing legislation and public accountability measures. Under the NRSCH, local government housing providers may be able to use existing reporting when demonstrating compliance and performance. These reporting requirements will be identified by the working group established by the Office of the Registrar and the Local Government Association of Queensland.

**What should we do if we do not plan to continue delivering housing services?**

If you no longer wish to continue delivering funded social housing services, you will need to discuss your options for ending the funding relationship with the Department of Housing and Public Works. The department is committed to working with providers to find a suitable resolution and protect tenants and funded assets.

**What should we do if we plan to expand our role?**

There are a number of options available to local governments who wish to expand their role as a housing provider, which includes, but are not limited to the following:

- Form a company structure and becoming nationally registered. This may open up more opportunities for partnerships and help to manage the risks associated with expansion.

- Continue direct service delivery and form partnerships with other local governments or community housing providers.

Local government providers should seek independent legal and financial advice to inform their decisions.
More information

Please contact the Office of the Registrar by email at registrar@housing.qld.gov.au for any enquiries about the NRSCH in Queensland and state-based registration of local government providers.