What is the Housing Needs Assessment process?

The Housing Needs Assessment is the department’s method of evaluating the level of need of each applicant for social housing in Queensland. Once an applicant’s circumstances have been assessed using this assessment process, their application is placed on the housing register in a segment that reflects their level of need for social housing.

What changes have been made to the Housing Needs Assessment process?

**People in crisis/emergency housing**

People living in crisis or emergency housing were previously assessed as Homelessness – Category B. These applicants will now be assessed as Homelessness – Category A.

This policy change will enable all homeless people to retain their high need status on the housing register and improve the flow-through from crisis and emergency housing to longer-term and transitional housing assistance.

Applicants are encouraged to contact their nearest Housing Service Centre for more information and to discuss their current circumstances.

**People in temporary housing**

Temporary housing includes private boarding houses, caravans, hotels and motels, ‘couch surfing,’ and transitional housing. The department previously considered people living in temporary housing in the private market differently from people living in transitional housing, even though both types of housing are not for the long term.

The creation of a new Homelessness Category C – Temporary Housing ensures that all applicants housed in temporary forms of housing have their needs assessed in the same way.

**Succession and transition planning for people with a disability**

People with a severe disability whose parents or carers will be unable to look after them in the future are now able to list for social housing as part of a succession or transition plan. While these applicants will be approved and listed on the housing register, their applications will be deferred until a support package is in place for them.
Why have these changes been made?

Since the Housing Needs Assessment process was introduced in September 2008, the department has been monitoring how it assists clients with the highest need.

Some areas for improvement have been identified, which these changes will address. The changes to the process will ensure:

- applicants living in crisis or emergency housing retain their high need status on the housing register
- people living in temporary housing in the private market or transitional housing are assessed equitably
- people with disabilities who need social housing can plan for a smooth transition in the future.

What do the changes mean for existing transitional housing tenants?

Transitional housing tenants need to ensure that their nearest Housing Service Centre and their transitional housing tenancy manager are advised of any changes to their circumstances, so that their application is in the correct segment of the housing register.

Tenants who move to the moderate or lower need segments must review their exit options with their transitional housing tenancy manager when they go through their tenancy review and planning process. Tenants in the moderate and lower need segments should work towards securing a timely exit to the private rental market.

Tenants who believe their housing circumstances have been incorrectly assessed should contact their nearest Housing Service Centre to have their applications reassessed.

What do the changes mean for transitional housing providers (Community Rent Scheme and Community-managed Housing – Studio Units)?

Transitional housing providers must continue to closely review the monthly Tenant Reports which identify an applicant’s segment and indicate those tenants reassessed as having a moderate or lower need.

Providers who believe a tenant’s housing circumstances have been incorrectly assessed need to assist applicants to contact their nearest Housing Service Centre to discuss their circumstances.

Providers must use the Tenancy Planning and Review process to assist tenants whose housing needs have been correctly assessed as moderate or lower need to make a timely and sustainable exit to private rental. This may involve assisting clients to contact their nearest Housing Service Centre for bond loans, RentConnect assistance or to apply for National Rental Affordability Scheme housing.

Exits to homelessness or to specialist homelessness services are to be avoided.
What do the changes mean for Same House Different Landlord providers?

The intent of Same House Different Landlord is to allow tenants to remain in the same property and progress from being more intensively managed by a community housing provider to becoming a long-term social housing tenant in a property managed by the department.

Most vacancies in this program’s properties are filled through the nominations process. Clients nominated for a Same House Different Landlord vacancy will require confirmation from the nearest Housing Service Centre that upon allocation, their segment on the housing register will not be lower than ‘high’ need. This means that clients will require a minimum of two accessibility and sustainability barriers after they have been streamed to Homelessness C – Temporary Housing (in addition to meeting all other housing eligibility criteria).

For more information

More information about the changes to the housing needs assessment for social housing is available on the Department of Housing and Public Works website at [www.hpw.qld.gov.au](http://www.hpw.qld.gov.au) or by contacting us at:

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