Practice Guide
Notification of community housing property vacancy

Effective date: July 2013

Contents

1 Background

Under one social housing system, applicants are referred to community housing providers for assistance based on an assessment of their housing needs.

The applicant referral process is used to fill vacancies in community housing (transitional, long- term, and affordable) with eligible and suitably matched applicants from the housing register. The referral process relies on providers and Housing Service Centres working collaboratively to achieve good client and community outcomes.

Providers and Housing Service Centres are required to comply with the policies and procedures established under the Housing *Act 2003* and the *Housing Regulation 2015.*

2 Purpose

This guide serves three purposes:

- to assist providers to use the Notification of Vacancy Form – Community Housing when advising the department of a property vacancy.
- to assist Housing Service Centres to use the information given by providers to undertake a search of the housing register for suitable applicants, and
- to provide all parties with a brief insight into each other's' processes.

3 Vacancy notification and applicant referrals

The applicant referral process applies to the range of community-managed housing programs, including the longer-term and transitional programs.

Under the referral process:

- providers advise the department of the property vacancy details
- Housing Service Centres create referral reports by searching the housing register for suitably- matched applicants. The referral report will contain information relevant to the allocations process
- providers apply their allocations process to ensure the best match from the referral list
- providers advise the department of their intention to make an offer
- following the acceptance of an offer by an applicant, the provider advises the department of the selection process outcome
- Housing Service Centres maintain the housing register, updating applicant details as required.

  Related documents:
- SPPR01 – Allocations procedures for long term, affordable, and transitional housing providers

The following is an explanation of each section of the Notification of Vacancy Form – Community Housing, and why the department needs this information.

4 Fields on the Notification of Vacancy Form

4.1 Service provider details

In this section, providers fill out their contact details.

Service provider details	
Provider name:	**Contact name:**
Telephone number:	**Fax number**
Email address:	

Please nominate a contact person in case further information about the vacant property is required by the Housing Service Centre. If there are any questions, Housing Services staff will call this person.

4.2 Vacant property details

Vacant property details	
House/unit number:	Street address:
Suburb:	Postcode:
Unique Property Identifier:	Program:
Date vacant	Date of allocation
Number of entry stairs	Number of internal stairs
Describe Shared Facilities (if any):	
Note: if this vacancy is due to a transitional housing transfer, the client must update their details with the department	

Term	Meaning and why the department needs to know
Unique Property Identifier (UPI)	This is a code given to a property in the department's referral system (SAP Real Estate). Always include this number if you have it, as this is the quickest and surest way for Housing Service Centres to identify the property in SAP Real Estate
Program	This is the program the property is funded under.
Date Vacant	This is the date the property is vacant from. This doesn't mean anyone can move in, as some maintenance or cleaning might need to happen. It's the date the last tenant moves out
Date for allocation	This is the date when someone can start a tenancy, after any maintenance or cleaning.
Number of entry stairs	This helps with finding applicants who can handle the number of stairs. Not all applicants can manage stairs.

Number of internal stairs	The department needs to know this for the same reasons as entry stairs. Some applicants can't manage internal stairs.
Describe Shared	This is used when finding applicants who are willing to accept some shared facilities.
Facilities	It also helps when describing the property to applicants who are being matched to the vacancy prior to referring to the provider.
Vacancy due to transfer	If a vacancy is due to a transfer the department needs to know so that the Housing Service Centre knows the previous tenant's details should be updated.

4.3 Multi-unit vacancy details (bulk referral requests)

Term	Meaning and why the department needs to know
Multi-vacancy Notification	Check this is the referral request is for a multi-unit vacancy. As per the service provider procedures (refer to SPPR01 for details) there is one notification form per bulk referral required. For example, one for 12x1 bedroom and one for 6x2 bedrooms.
Number of bedrooms and number of units	How many bedrooms are in these units? For example, one bedroom, 12 units
Number of accessible units	The department values accessible units as demand is always high for suitably accessible units. This lets the department know that applicants who require an accessible unit should be referred for some of these. Refer to page 2 of the notification form for further details on accessibility.

4.4 Property details

Property details (Community Rent Scheme new property and bulk only)		
Lot number:	**Number of floors within building:**	
Floor number of units:	**Number of buildings onsite:**	**Number of rooms in unit:**
Property/dwelling type:		
Bedrooms (e.g., 1x2brm)		

Term	Meaning and why the department needs to know
Lot Number	This number is a Queensland specific unique identifier for the state. Whilst addresses may be duplicated. The lot number will never be. If you know this number, please supply it. This is not the UPI.
Number of floors within building	The building might have six storeys. Please let the department know how many storeys there are. This is in case applicants cannot handle many storeys.
Floor number of units	This is the storey the front door of the unit of accommodations/dwelling is on. Floors are storeys, which means the first storey (1) is the ground floor. The second storey (2) is the first floor.
Number of buildings onsite	There may be two separate buildings on the property. Please let the department know how many buildings there are. This is in case the same address has different blocks with the same unit numbers.
Number of rooms in unit	This is the total number of rooms in the accommodation.
Property/dwelling type	Buildings are constructed in different ways. Sometimes a detached house is more suitable for applicants that require distance from neighbours. Refer to Appendix 1 for descriptions of property/dwelling types.
Bedrooms	This clearly describes the number of bedrooms in the rental unit. The department uses this information to find applicants whose bedroom entitlements match. Refer to the department's website for more information on entitlements. https://www.chde.qld.gov.au/

4.5 Community Rent Scheme only

Community Rent Scheme Only
Transferring application Number:
Is the property existing, additional or replacement stock:
Unique Property Identifier of replaced/relinquished property:

This section is related to housing register management, as tenants of Community Rent Scheme (CRS) properties must maintain a valid application on the housing register. This section lets the department know about a previous property, or an application number of an existing CRS tenant.

Term	Meaning and why the department needs to know

Transferring application number	If a tenant from another property is transferring into this property, supply the tenant's application number so that their address details can be updated. Number, please supply it. This is not the UPI.
Existing or replacement	• **An existing property within the portfolio** - the property is already part of the provider's portfolio and is in SAP. This means a referral report can be generated immediately. • **A new property to the portfolio in addition to current quota** - the property is new and is an addition to the providers existing portfolio. The property does not replace a relinquished property (handed back to the lessor) so it will not be in SAP. For example, the provider adds a new property to their existing portfolio of ten properties - the provider now has 11 properties. • **A replacement property to the portfolio, replacing a relinquished property** - the property is new and is replacing a property that has been relinquished (handed back to the lessor). This is a replacement property. **Do not** record it as an addition to the portfolio. For example, the provider has 10 properties in its portfolio; it loses one but acquires a replacement property. In this scenario the provider still has 10 properties. The new property will have to be recorded in SAP. **Note**: Supplying this information lets the Housing Service Centre know whether to get a record updated, closed, or created in the property management system.
Unique Property	This is the UPI of the property that is being replaced. The department will try to
Identifier of replaced/relinquished property	keep the same UPI for the new property.

4.6 Transitional housing and approved long-term nominations

Transitional housing and approved long-term nominations	
Is there a nomination attached?	**Applications number:**
Note: Long-term or affordable housing providers may only nominate applicants where prior approval has been obtained from the Executive Director, Housing Programs, Queensland Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy	

If you are nominating an applicant, please supply details as listed above.

4.7 Other information and approvals

In this section the provider should supply other relevant information, such as the application of the provider's pet policy to the rental unit.

This section also requires a provider to indicate who requested the referral. If you're filling this out electronically, the signature doesn't need to be supplied. If this form is printed, a scanned or faxed signature must be supplied.

Policy owner: *Social and Affordable Housing Programs*   Effective date: *July 2013*

Other information relevant to allocation	
Signed:	**Position:**	
Name:	**Date:**	

- Information regarding property location, amenity, and proximity to services
- Issues, including any sensitive information, that Housing Service Centres should be aware of when making referrals
- Information about the application of the provider's pet policy to the unit, including whether pets are allowed in the dwelling and if so, whether there are restrictions on the type, number, or size of pet
- Information about whether the property is furnished (CMSU providers only)
- Information about whether the property is to be used to deliver transitional or long-term accommodation (CMSU providers)
- Describing features of ideal applicant/s to suit the vacancy, e.g., 'suit mature single person'.

4.8 Property accessibility features

In this section, record whether the property has full or partial wheelchair access or has had major modifications. This information will be used to identify properties that may be suitable for applicants with accessibility issues. Please ensure this assessment is completed even if the property is department-owned as this will assist the department to ensure the integrity of its property records.

Check each entry that matches the property. This supports the Housing Service Centre in finding well matched applicants that can make best use of the property. Ticking all this section means a property is fully wheelchair accessible.

Note: Providers do not need to measure all access features of a property to determine if it is wheelchair accessible. However, it is recommended that measurements of door clearances for a bedroom door and the bathroom/toilet door are taken to ensure wheelchair accessibility.

4.9 Other modifications

If the property cannot be described as having full wheelchair access but has had at least one significant modification (e.g., hob less shower installed), please identify the major modification/s by ticking the boxes supplied.

This information still lets the department find applicants who can best make use of these features.

Note: minor modifications do not need to be identified on the form (e.g., grab rails, handrails, door wedges, handheld shower, level taps and large rocker switches).

Other information on the Notification of Vacancy Form may include, but is not limited to:

- information about neighbourhood and community issues that may impact on the matching and allocations decisions. For example, neighbourhood fatigue.

- information about local support services and access to transport.

Version Control

Version	Date	Comments
v.01	July 2022	

Attachment 1: Contacts

For assistance with the community housing vacancy process, please contact the relevant Housing Service Centre.

For other enquiries, contact the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy via their contract managers.

Brisbane Region
- Phone: 3007 4386
- Email: HHSBRORD@chde.qld.gov.au

South/West Region
- Phone: 3437 6044
- Email: HS-South-West-Region@chde.qld.gov.au

         HHSSWRORD@chde.qld.gov.au

         Central Queensland/North Coast Region
- Phone: 4848 7060
- Email: HHS-SD-CQNCR-ORD@chde.qld.gov.au

North Queensland Region
- Phone: 4724 8578
- Email: HHS-NR-ORD@chde.qld.gov.au

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Unit—Cairns
- Phone: 4036 5570
- Email: HHSATSIHUDeliveryProperty-Staff2@chde.qld.gov.au
         HHSATSIHUDeliveryTenancy-Staff@chde.qld.gov.au
         HHSATSIHUBPAS-Staff@chde.qld.gov.au

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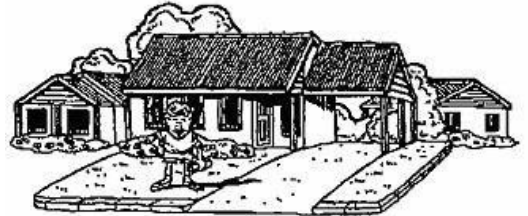
Attachment 2: Housing stock descriptions and pictures

Detailed below are the various types of homes available for rent.

As some types of housing are not available in certain areas, please check with your local Housing Service Centre for full details.

Houses

Detached houses with two to five or more bedrooms with a front and back yard

Duplex

Two dwellings sharing a common wall or roof (without a gap/air space) and contained in one lot on plan. (Strata Title lots will have their own lot on plan). Dwellings usually have a fenced front and back yard and two to four bedrooms

Dual occupancy

Similar to duplexes, however the two dwellings are not physically connected.

Attached housing

Attached houses with one to four bedrooms, in a row of three or more, either single or double storey usually with a small, fenced yard.

Apartments

Apartments (flats) with one to three bedrooms in a row of three or more, in buildings of one or more storeys. No separate yard. The whole unit is contained in one level. May have communal laundry facilities.
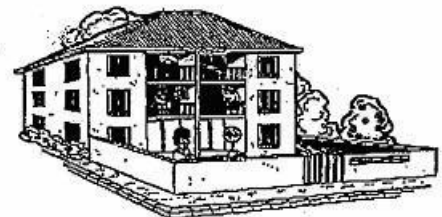
Cluster housing

A cluster house is a dwelling within a multiple housing development. Attached and detached cluster houses contain from two to four bedrooms.

Senior units

Policy owner: *Social and Affordable Housing Programs*   Effective date: *July 2013*

Buildings for the long-term use of people over 55 years of age. Generally, one bedroom or studio units (combined bedroom and lounge/living room) in one or two storeys, however, can also be in other building formats.

Attachment 3: Definitions

Term	Description
Departmental Policy	A set of principles or rules that provides a definite direction for the organisation and that creates a framework for a course of action to be adopted by the department or its business area/s. It is usually prompted by an external driver, e.g., change in legislation, directives, industry or information or accounting standards. Categories of departmental policy documents include human resources; information and communication technology; procurement; finance; disaster management; legal; integrity; communication; planning, performance, and risk; travel and sustainability.
Guideline	Information and guidance that assists a user to undertake a procedure or understand concepts about a process. Guidelines can be specific steps that need to be followed to complete a given process as described in an individual procedure. Guidelines form part of the corporate policy library.
Procedure	The sequence of actions or instructions to be followed when implementing policy to solve a problem or accomplish a task.