

Transfers

Operational policy and procedure

Supportive Housing Programs (Common Ground)

Purpose

These procedures are used when transferring an existing tenant from the Supportive Housing Program (Common Ground) (SHP(CG)) to another unit within the Common Ground complex or to alternative social housing accommodation.

What is a transfer?

A transfer takes place when a tenant moves from one social housing property to another and the likely duration of assistance does not change.

A **client-initiated** transfer takes place when the tenant needs to move because:

- they are homeless or at risk of homelessness (e.g. fleeing domestic violence)
- they are at risk of violence from members of the local community or neighbourhood
- they need to access essential services and/or employment, meet cultural obligations or gain access to children or family/informal support
- the design or size of their current housing does not meet the household's need.

A **provider-initiated** transfer takes place when the tenant needs to move because:

- the property requires significant maintenance or upgrades
- there are persistent neighbourhood disputes or harassment
- there is a health and safety issue or fire or natural disaster
- the initial allocation of transitional housing is deemed inappropriate
- there are other exceptional circumstances, as approved by the delegated officer of the provider.

The classification of the transfer as client initiated or provider initiated depends on the reasons for the transfer, not whether a client asks for it.

Transfer process

Tenants must fill out an [Application for Transfer Form](#) and submit it to the SHP(CG) provider. The SHP(CG) provider must fill in the [Transfers Checklist](#).

The SHP(CG) provider must:

1. for client-initiated transfers, assess the tenant's eligibility for social housing under the criteria described below

2. for clients who were initially from the low to moderate income group, who had a social housing application, but were over the income limits, assess the tenant's eligibility for social housing under the criteria described below
3. for clients who were initially from the low to moderate income group, with no application for social housing, assess the tenant's eligibility for social housing under the criteria described below
4. assess the tenant's need for transfer
5. attempt to transfer the tenant within their own portfolio if this is appropriate (for Brisbane Common Ground this is likely to only be relevant in a situation where the accommodation still meets the tenant's needs but they need to locate to a different floor. An example of this might be to manage on-going neighbourhood disputes)
6. if a transfer cannot take place within the provider's own portfolio, attempt to transfer the tenant to another community housing provider in a suburb matching the tenant's needs
7. if a transfer cannot take place within the community housing sector, lodge the [Application for Transfer Form](#) (with the tenant's consent) and [Transfers Checklist](#) with the Fortitude Valley Housing Service Centre.

Providers should request a 'read receipt' on any emails sent to the Housing Service Centre.

Eligibility for a transfer

For transfers 1 – 3 as outlined above (Transfer process), the SHP(CG) provider must assess the tenant's eligibility under:

1. Australian citizenship or permanent residency
2. Queensland residency
3. Assets test (property ownership and liquid assets)
4. Independent income
5. Household income limits
6. Appropriateness of current housing:
 - fleeing domestic violence
 - irreversible family breakdown
 - need to access essential facilities, support services and employment, meet parole conditions, enable care of children, meet cultural obligations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people)
 - design/size of the housing does not meet the household's needs
 - formation of a new household, where a tenant with a disability needs to move to establish a new household under advice provided by Disability Services, Project 300, Young People Exiting Residential Aged Care Facilities Initiative, Adult Lifestyle Support Packages, or General Accommodation Support Program. 1
 - the rent in affordable housing exceeds 30% of the gross household income.

Verifying the tenant's circumstances

The SHP(CG) provider must seek to verify the tenant's circumstances by sighting appropriate evidence, such as a current Domestic Violence Protection Order or letter from a doctor. If evidence

cannot be obtained, (for example, where domestic violence has occurred) the SHP(CG) provider may apply discretion in processing the tenant's application.

Prioritising tenants for transfer

Provider-initiated transfers may take place as soon as an appropriate vacancy arises.

The SHP(CG) provider must consider the relative priority of client-initiated transfer applications on the following basis:

1. Very high need for a transfer:
 - a. homeless or at risk of homelessness due to domestic violence or violence/abuse from another family or community member or neighbour, and/or
 - b. four reasons from the transfer appropriateness criteria above.
2. High need for a transfer:
 - a. homeless or at risk of homelessness due to irreversible family breakdown or being split between family and friends, or
 - b. three reasons from the transfer appropriateness criteria above, or
 - c. need to access essential facilities and support services, meet parole conditions, enable care of children, meet cultural grounds relating to a death in the tenant's dwelling or an issue with the design of the housing.
3. Moderate need for a transfer:
 - a. need to access employment, cultural reasons excluding a death in the tenant's dwelling, family and informal support, physical amenity (housing size/overcrowding) or formation of new household.

The delegated officer of the SHP(CG) provider may use discretion in applying the transfer process.

Tenants who do not want to remain in community housing

If a community housing tenant does not want to remain in community housing, the SHP(CG) provider must:

1. inform the tenant that transfer applications, accepted by the Housing Service Centre, are placed on the housing register in order of need and it is likely that the tenant will have to wait longer for assistance than if they move within the community housing sector
2. assist the tenant to lodge the Application for Transfer Form at the Housing Service Centre
3. provide any relevant information on the tenant's current housing to the Housing Service Centre.

Rejection of offer

If a transferring tenant rejects an offer of alternative housing, the SHP(CG) provider must assess whether the reason is considered valid or invalid under the Department of Housing and Public Works' guidelines. Tenants who reject offers of housing assistance for invalid reasons may have their transfer priority reassessed.

Offering other assistance to tenants

For provider-initiated transfers, the SHP(CG) provider may offer financial assistance to help tenants move, unless prohibited by the terms of their assistance agreement with the department. The SHP(CG) provider may make arrangements directly with suppliers for removals, storage, cleaning and rubbish removal.

Record-keeping

The SHP(CG) provider must keep records of:

- any assessment of the tenant's eligibility
- attempts to transfer the tenant within portfolio (if appropriate) and to other providers.

When a transfer application needs to be processed by the Housing Service Centre, the SHP(CG) provider and Housing Service Centre should share information so tenants do not have to supply the same information more than once. The SHP(CG) provider should request tenants' consent to share information with the department.

Enquiries

For enquiries, contact the Department of Housing and Public Works.

BNCR – 3007 4377	HS ODCM Brisbane North Coast HSODCMBrisbaneNorthCoast@hpw.qld.gov.au
Central – 4848 7054	HS CDM ODCM Central Region HSCDMODCMCentralRegion@hpw.qld.gov.au
Northern – 4036 5538	HS ODCM Northern HSMailboxODCMNorthern@hpw.qld.gov.au
Southern – 3437 6047	HS ODCM Southern HSODCMSouthernregion@hpw.qld.gov.au

Appendix – Pro forma letters

Ref:

Date

Title Initial Surname

Postal Address

CITY/SUBURB STATE POSTCODE

Dear NAME

TRANSFER TO ANOTHER PROPERTY

This letter is to inform you that you will be required to move from your current property into another social housing property for the following reasons:

<INSERT PROVIDER-INITIATED TRANSFER REASONS>.

Your tenancy manager will attempt to find a suitable alternative property for you.

There may be some time to wait before a suitable property becomes available and we recommend that you do not start moving out of your current home until you are advised to do so.

Contact us on INSERT PHONE NUMBER if you would like to discuss the transfer process.

Yours sincerely

Name

Position

Community Housing Organisation

Ref:

Date

Title Initial Surname

Postal Address

CITY/SUBURB STATE POSTCODE

Dear NAME

TRANSFER APPLICATION APPROVED

This letter is to inform you that your application for a transfer to another property has been assessed against the eligibility and need criteria. Your application has been approved from <INSERT EFFECTIVE DATE>.

Your tenancy manager is required to attempt to find a suitable property for you in community housing.

If an appropriate community housing property is not available and you have indicated that you wish to be considered for public housing, your application may be forwarded to the Department of Housing and Public Works' Housing Service Centre.

There may be some time to wait before a suitable property becomes available and we recommend that you do not start moving out of your current home until you are advised to do so.

Contact us on INSERT PHONE NUMBER if your situation changes or you wish to cancel your transfer application.

Yours sincerely

Name

Position

Community Housing Organisation

Ref:

Date

Title Initial Surname

Postal Address

CITY/SUBURB STATE POSTCODE

Dear NAME

TRANSFER APPLICATION NOT APPROVED

This letter is to inform you that your application for a transfer to another property has not been approved. The reasons for this decision are:

<INSERT reasons why the application was not approved. For example:

You have been assessed as ineligible for continued housing assistance due to your income>

If you wish to discuss this decision and/or options for finding alternative housing, please contact us on INSERT PHONE NUMBER. This decision can be appealed.

If your situation has changed or your original transfer application did not reflect your situation accurately, you may request a re-assessment of your circumstances.

Information on other housing services can be found on the Department of Housing and Public Works' website at www.hpw.qld.gov.au

Yours sincerely

Name

Position

Community Housing Organisation