

# Social Housing Program Specifications

For funded providers delivering crisis accommodation  
and/or social housing services

Approved: August 2015

# Table of contents

Table of contents .....	2
1. Background .....	3
1.1 Scope .....	3
2. Interpretation .....	3
3. Objective of crisis accommodation and social housing services .....	4
4. Funding requirements.....	4
4.1 Funded outcomes .....	4
4.2 Tenancy Management .....	4
4.3 Asset management .....	6
4.4 Policy requirements .....	6
4.5 Insurance .....	7
4.6 Program specific requirements .....	8
5. Reporting requirements.....	10
5.1 Funded outcome, property and financial reporting .....	10
5.2 Additional reporting requirements .....	11
6. Definitions.....	12

## 1. Background

These Social Housing Program Specifications ('Program Specifications') provide a single reference point for providers delivering crisis accommodation and/or social housing services with funding provided under the *Housing Act 2003* ('the Act'). These specifications identify the common requirements for all crisis accommodation and social housing services delivered with funding provided under the Act.

These Program Specifications are administered by Housing Services, Department of Housing and Public Works (the department) and are available on the department's website at [www.hpw.qld.gov.au](http://www.hpw.qld.gov.au).

### 1.1 Scope

These Program Specifications apply to the delivery of crisis accommodation and social housing services funded under the Act. This includes funding provided under the following programs:

1. Affordable Housing Program
2. Community-managed Housing - Studio Units Program
3. Community Rent Scheme Program
4. Crisis Accommodation Program
5. Long Term Community Housing Program
6. Same House Different Landlord Program
7. Supportive Housing Program.

For existing funding agreements, these Program Specifications supersede previously published program specifications for the above programs, and form part of the funding agreement.

Providers delivering services under other programs not listed above may also be directed under their funding agreement to apply relevant sections of these Program Specifications.

In addition, exemptions to specific requirements under these Program Specifications may exist under a provider's funding agreement with the department.

## 2. Interpretation

Key words which have particular meanings in these Program Specifications are defined in Section 6 of these Program Specifications.

Unless the context otherwise requires:

1. Expressions not defined in these Program Specifications but which have a defined meaning in the Act or Housing Regulation 2003 ('the Regulation') have, when used in these specifications, the same meaning as in the Act or Regulation.
2. Subject to clause 1 above, expressions not defined in these Program Specifications, but which have a defined meaning in the funding agreement have, when used in these Program Specifications, the same meaning as in the funding agreement.
3. The rules of interpretation of the funding agreement apply to the interpretation of these Program Specifications.

4. These Program Specifications shall be read as if they were part of the funding agreement.
5. In the event of any inconsistency between these Program Specifications and the funding agreement, the funding agreement will prevail.

### 3. Objective of crisis accommodation and social housing services

Community housing is a form of social housing service. Crisis accommodation and social housing is delivered by non-government organisations, local governments, churches and other community organisations. The Queensland Government funds crisis accommodation and social housing from the Housing Fund, administered in accordance with the Act.

The objective of crisis accommodation and social housing services is to provide appropriate housing for residential use, which meets the needs of eligible persons (where applicable) for the duration of their need.

## 4. Funding requirements

### 4.1 Funded outcomes

Providers who are in receipt of funding under the Act to deliver crisis accommodation and/or social housing services are required to deliver specified outputs through two funded outcomes:

1. Tenancy Management
2. Asset Management

Providers who receive, or have received, funding to deliver crisis accommodation or social housing service (including, but not limited to, funding provided under the programs listed in Section 1.1 of these Program Specifications) are required to deliver both outcomes – Tenancy Management and Asset Management. Each outcome is described in more detail in the following sections.

### 4.2 Tenancy Management

#### **Definition:**

Tenancy Management includes all the processes, systems and activities required of housing managers to identify and select tenants, respond to tenant needs and deal with tenancy-related matters. This involves a responsive and client-centred approach, actively managing tenancies to promote good client and community outcomes and the effective management of the portfolio.

#### **Outputs:**

The Provider must deliver the following outputs in managing crisis accommodation or social housing service:

- 4.2.1 The Provider identifies and assists tenants able to access and sustain housing in the private market to do so.
- 4.2.2 Only eligible persons in need are provided with and continue to receive a crisis accommodation or social housing service.
- 4.2.3 The Provider identifies and refers tenants in need of support to appropriate services.

- 4.2.4 Tenants have increased capacity to meet tenant responsibilities, independently manage and sustain a tenancy.
- 4.2.5 Disruptive behaviour is addressed with clear and consistent action.
- 4.2.6 Neighbourhood disputes and other tenancy-related problems are prevented or addressed early before they escalate.
- 4.2.7 Tenants continue to be appropriately matched to a property based on housing need and bedroom entitlement.
- 4.2.8 Vacant properties are tenanted in a timely manner.
- 4.2.9 Tenants do not return to social housing after a period of service.

**Performance Indicators:**

To deliver the above outputs, the Provider must meet the following performance indicators and any other performance indicators identified in the performance reporting tool as provided by the department from time to time:

- 100 percent of allocations are made from the Housing Register.
- At least 75 percent of allocations are from the Very High Needs segment of the Housing Register.
- At least 90 percent of allocations, when combined, are from the Very High and High Needs segments of the Housing Register.
- 100 percent of tenancies are reviewed annually to assess their ongoing:
  - eligibility for social housing
  - need for social housing
  - match to the social housing property in which they reside.
- 100 percent of ineligible tenants are exited within four months of being deemed ineligible.
- No more than 4 percent of tenancies in rent arrears of more than four weeks.
- The average time to complete vacant maintenance is 11 days.
- The average time for tenanting a vacant tenantable property is 14 days.
- Less than 10 percent of new allocations have had a social housing tenancy in the previous 24 months.
- 90 percent of tenants identified as able to access and sustain housing in the private market are assisted to do so.
- Zero known exits to homelessness.
- 100 percent of consenting tenants in need of support are referred to an appropriate service.

Crisis Accommodation Program providers are not required to meet all of the outputs and performance indicators set out in section 4.2. Crisis Accommodation Program providers should refer to the Performance Reporting Tool for required outputs and performance indicators.

## 4.3 Asset management

### Definition:

Asset management includes all the processes, systems and activities required to manage the life cycle of funded housing assets and the portfolio as a whole.

### Outputs:

The Provider must deliver the following outputs for all funded properties used to deliver a crisis accommodation and/or social housing service:

- 4.3.1 Properties are maintained in good condition operationally and aesthetically, benchmarked against industry standards for the class of asset.
- 4.3.2 Health and safety issues with properties are rectified as soon as practicable to ensure the safety of the tenant/s.
- 4.3.3 When delivering asset management on funded properties the Provider should have an awareness of the asset management lifecycle.
- 4.3.4 Program funding is used to head lease at least the minimum number of properties provided by the contract.

### Performance Indicators:

To deliver the above outputs, the Provider must meet the following performance indicators:

- 95 percent of funded department owned properties inspected meet the S4 rating as specified within the Queensland Government's Maintenance Management Framework unless otherwise exempted by the department.
- 100 percent of immediate faults are responded to within one hour.
- 100 percent of urgent faults are responded to within four hours.
- 100 percent of changes to properties are advised to the department.
- 100 percent of the minimum head lease quota range is achieved.

## 4.4 Policy requirements

The Provider must comply with its obligations to keep and implement policies as set out in the Regulation.

Each respective policy requirement detailed below must be read in conjunction with the Provider's funding agreement and any regulatory requirements.

In addition to complying with the Regulation, the Provider must comply with the following policies published by the department from time to time:

- Social Housing Rent Policy for funded community housing providers
  - All providers, including providers delivering crisis accommodation, must implement the Social Housing Rent Policy for funded community housing providers, or other rent policy as published by the department from time to time, as its rent policy required under the Regulation.

- Social Housing Tenancy Management Policy
  - The Provider must implement the Social Housing Tenancy Management Policy as published by the Department from time to time.
  - Providers delivering crisis accommodation are not required to implement the Social Housing Tenancy Management Policy or similar policy as published by the Department from time to time, unless otherwise directed to do so in the Provider's funding agreement. Where the provider delivers multiple programs, the provider must implement the policy in all community housing program properties except for those properties funded under the Crisis Accommodation Program.
- Allowable Expenditure and Surplus Policy
  - The Provider must only use receipts in accordance with the Allowable Expenditure and Surplus Policy or similar policy as published by the Department from time to time, and the Provider's funding agreement, which meets the objective of the community housing service.

The following are requirements for all crisis accommodation or social housing services:

- Providers must not lease or purchase a property from:
  - any of the Provider's employees, officers, board or committee members or agents ("Members");
  - any associate of a Member, which includes:
    - the relatives of each Member;
    - the business partners of each Member;
    - any spouse or child of those business partners, any company a Member or their associates control or influence and any trust the Member or their associates control; or
  - an entity of which the Provider has either whole or majority control.

A relative of a Member means any of the following:

- a parent, grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, lineal descendant or adopted child of the Member or their spouse; and
  - a spouse of any individual specified above.
- The Provider must not use funding to outsource property or tenancy management without prior written approval by the department.
  - The Provider must not commit itself to contracts or other financial obligations that extend beyond the period of funding or the term stated in the funding agreement if the Provider is reliant upon funding or receipts in order to meet its obligations under such contracts or financial obligations, without first obtaining the consent of the department.
  - The Provider must make provision to ensure that eligible persons are safe and secure in accommodation, for example, by implementing a protocol to notify the Queensland Police Service of violence underway in the funded crisis accommodation or social housing service.

## 4.5 Insurance

The Provider must hold public liability insurance for a minimum amount of \$20,000,000 (twenty million dollars), or a greater amount if specified in the Provider's funding agreement.

## 4.6 Program specific requirements

The Provider must provide crisis accommodation and/or social housing services in accordance with the objectives of the relevant program set out below.

### 4.6.1 Longer term housing assistance

This section applies to Providers who are funded under the following programs:

- Affordable Housing Program
- Community-managed Housing – Studio Units Program
- Long Term Community Housing Program

The department, through the above mentioned programs, gives assistance to Providers to provide rental housing that is secure, appropriate and affordable, for eligible persons whose needs are not adequately met by other housing options.

The objective of programs delivering longer term housing assistance is to provide appropriate and affordable housing for eligible persons in the greatest need for the duration of that need.

### 4.6.2 Transitional housing assistance

This section applies to Providers who are funded under the following programs:

- Community-managed Housing – Studio Units Program
- Community Rent Scheme Program
- Same House Different Landlord Program

The objectives of transitional housing are to:

- provide timely housing assistance that is responsive to eligible persons with a Very High or High Need and urgently need housing;
- complement and support the effective delivery of crisis and longer term housing assistance by helping to connect and improve the pathways between the homelessness and social housing systems; and
- assist eligible persons to stabilise their circumstances and build their capacity to progress to longer-term living arrangements, in the private or social housing accommodation.

Transitional housing does this by providing intensively managed and closely monitored housing services based on assessed need.

Transitional housing providers must deliver a tenancy planning and review outcome, where households are assisted for the duration of their need. This tenancy planning and review process should:

- ensure the prospective tenant has a clear understanding of the type of housing assistance on offer;
- review the tenant's barriers to accessing and sustaining long-term housing;
- work with the tenant to identify an appropriate exit outcome and pathway;
- build the tenant's capacity to access and sustain a long-term tenancy;
- support the average current tenancy being less than 21 months and the average tenancy being less than 24 months;



- work towards achieving 90 percent of tenants exiting within the duration of need specified in their tenancy plan;
- monitor and review progress made in working towards an appropriate exit outcome; and
- support the tenant to make a smooth transition to the identified long-term housing option.

Providers must refer to the *Practice Guide: Tenancy Planning and Review, Tool: Tenancy Planning and Review Process, Transitional Housing Operation Framework, and the Tenancy Plan for Transitional Housing*<sup>1</sup> available on the department's website to provide guidance on how to deliver tenancy planning and reviews.

#### 4.6.3 Supportive Housing

The objective is to provide stable and affordable housing to individuals who have difficulty sustaining tenancies or are at risk of homelessness. Providers must supply low barrier housing, with tenancy and property management services that prioritise sustaining tenancies, and providing access to flexible and individualised support services, focussed on stabilising the housing or on other issues such as employment or health.

Affordable long-term housing is integrated with support services and part of the regular provision of housing. Long-term housing is provided as a priority, with support services provided to sustain the tenancy. Supportive Housing is consistent with the Housing First approach. The core objectives of Supportive Housing are:

1. long-term tenure and affordability
2. safety and comfort of tenants
3. provision of support services which:
  - are accessible and flexible;
  - target housing stability; and
  - promote tenant opportunity to interact with neighbours from diverse backgrounds.
4. promotion of tenant empowerment and independence.

##### *Co-ordination and integration of tenancy management and support services*

5. Tenancy management must be carried out through:
  - Having an integrated system with the Support Provider through a formal instrument of co-operation / partnership, which has a shared vision and purpose, jointly developed policies, protocols and procedures, a shared client interface through a 'tenancy sustainment plan', at the same time delineating roles and responsibilities within and between functions;
  - Providing opportunities for tenants to interact with neighbours;
  - Respecting tenants' choices in the support services they access without this impacting negatively on the terms of their tenancy agreement; and
  - Providing a safe and secure environment with appropriate service partners.

---

<sup>1</sup> [www.hpw.qld.gov.au](http://www.hpw.qld.gov.au)

6. Service co-ordination must occur through the Provider and Support Provider:
  - Engaging with tenants in identifying services in accordance with their individual needs;
  - Establishing processes and tools for assisting tenants to meet their obligations under the tenancy agreement; and
  - Educating tenants on the culture, procedures and maintenance of the housing including emergency plans and security.

The Provider must implement the Allocations Policy - Supportive Housing Program or similar policy as published by the Department from time to time.

#### **4.6.4 Crisis Accommodation**

This section applies to Providers who are funded under the Crisis Accommodation Program.

The objective of crisis accommodation is to provide short term accommodation to persons who are homeless, at risk of homelessness, or in crisis to assist them to move towards independent living.

The Provider receiving funding under the Crisis Accommodation Program must not, without prior written approval from the department, use any funded dwellings to supply services:

- with a specialist clinical, treatment or rehabilitation focus; or
- that exclusively target veterans, people leaving prisons, students, people with disabilities, children under 16 years, the frail, aged or other groups as notified by the department; or
- replace or duplicate assistance already provided by, or which is the responsibility of, other government programs or services.

## **5. Reporting requirements**

The Provider is responsible for reporting on the crisis accommodation and/or social housing services it delivers, or is required to deliver, with funding received under the Act. The department monitors the delivery of these crisis accommodation and/or social housing services through a variety of mechanisms including reporting, Housing Register reports and advice on service performance from within different areas of the department.

Where the department holds or already has access to key information about the service, the Provider will not be asked to supply that information again, except where updated information or clarification is required.

The reporting requirements in this section may not be an exhaustive list of all information required to be supplied by the Provider under these Program Specifications.

### **5.1 Funded outcome, property and financial reporting**

The Provider must provide the following information and reports to the department:

1. Information on funded properties and maintenance as requested by the department. The department must be notified about changes to funded properties including any new properties head-leased from the private market, or any substantial changes to property details such as acquisitions or disposals, within two days after the change has occurred using the form or system provided by the department from time to time.

2. Completed performance reports in the timeframes specified in the performance reporting tool provided by the department from time to time, within 21 days after the end of the reporting period.
3. A Community Housing Annual Financial Return (CHAFR) or other funding acquittal, on a date specified by the department, in the form or system provided by the department from time to time.
4. Annual Community Housing National Data Collection Survey produced by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, providing all of the requested unit level data in the form or system provided by the department from time to time. The survey is administered by the department in June of each year and survey responses are required to be returned on a date specified by the department.
5. The National Social Housing Survey produced by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare providing all of the requested data in the form or system provided by the department from time to time on a date specified by the department. The sector is surveyed biennially.
6. For department-owned properties managed by the Provider, details of planned maintenance undertaken, within five days after the end of each month in the form or system provided by the department from time to time. The Provider must report on the following building components:
  - Fencing
  - Paving
  - Ramps
  - Patio/Balcony
  - Roofing
  - Painting
  - Bathroom
  - Laundry
  - Kitchen
  - Hot water system
  - En suite
  - Floor coverings.

## 5.2 Additional reporting requirements

The Provider must provide the following information and reports to the department within 21 days of being requested to do so in writing:

1. a copy of requested insurance policies, the receipts for the last premiums and certificates of currency of all such insurance policies; and
2. such other information related to the Provider's operations as the department may reasonably request.
3. Transitional housing providers must provide to the department a list of properties and application numbers for each of the transitional housing programs they deliver, within five days after the end of each month in the form or system as provided by the department from time to time.

## 6. Definitions

The following words have the following meanings unless the context otherwise requires:

1. "**S4 rating**" means the specified condition standard "building to be in good condition operationally and aesthetically, benchmarked against industry standards for that class of asset" as specified in the Queensland Government's Maintenance Management Framework available on the department's website at [www.hpw.qld.gov.au](http://www.hpw.qld.gov.au).
2. "**Act**" means the *Housing Act 2003*.
3. "**Allowable Expenditure and Surplus Policy**" means the document of the same title published by the department from time to time, and available on the department's website at [www.hpw.qld.gov.au](http://www.hpw.qld.gov.au).
4. "**crisis accommodation**" refers to housing services funded under the Crisis Accommodation Program.
5. "**disruptive behaviour**" is behaviour which may or is likely to disturb the peace, comfort or privacy of other tenants, neighbours or members of the surrounding community. This may include harassment, illegal activities and other inappropriate behaviour and includes actions that cause intentional or reckless damage to property or place the property at risk of damage.
6. "**Social Housing Rent Policy**" means the document of the same title or similar policy published by the department from time to time, and available on the department's website at [www.hpw.qld.gov.au](http://www.hpw.qld.gov.au).
7. "**eligible persons**" means those persons who:
  - a. meet the Social Housing Eligibility Criteria; and
  - b. are approved persons listed on the department's Housing Register.This definition excludes persons eligible for crisis accommodation. The eligibility requirements for crisis accommodation is dealt with at section 4.6.4.
8. "**funded property**" has the meaning given in the Regulation.
9. "**funding**" has the meaning given in the Act.
10. "**funding agreement**" has the meaning given in the Act.
11. "**Housing Register**" means the department's waitlist of eligible persons for housing services.
12. "**housing service**" has the meaning given in the Act.
13. "**planned maintenance**" for department-owned properties, has the meaning given in the lease between the department and the Provider.
14. "**property**" means the property or premises described in the funding agreement, or, where the context permits, property or premises in relation to which the Provider receives funding to deliver a crisis accommodation and/or social housing service, and includes funded property.

15. "**Program Specifications**" means this document and includes any amended, additional or replacement Program Specifications notified to the Provider in accordance with the Provider's funding agreement.
16. "**Provider**" means the party to the funding agreement other than the department.
17. "**published**" means published on the department's website and made available at the department's offices.
18. "**receipts**" has the meaning given in the Regulation.
19. "**Regulation**" means the *Housing Regulation 2003*.
20. "**Social Housing Eligibility Criteria**" means the document of the same title published by the department from time to time, and available on the department's website at [www.hpw.qld.gov.au](http://www.hpw.qld.gov.au).
21. "**Social Housing Tenancy Management Policy**" means the document of the same title published by the department from time to time, and available on the department's website at [www.hpw.qld.gov.au](http://www.hpw.qld.gov.au).