

## PURPOSE

This policy establishes the approach of Salvation Army Housing Victoria (SAHV) to:

- the prioritisation and allocation of vacant properties in its long-term rental housing portfolio; and
- successful and sustainable tenancies and communities through the matching of applicants to properties.

## SCOPE

This policy applies to all long-term rental properties owned or managed by SAHV.

This policy does not apply to the following housing programs run by SAHV:

- properties managed by SAHV under the Transitional Housing program;
- properties managed by SAHV on behalf of other property owners where the owner retains responsibility for allocation of housing; and
- temporary or crisis accommodation.

## POLICY

### Approach to allocation – guiding principles

SAHV will allocate long-term housing in a manner which:

- is fair, transparent and equitable;
- relieves households from housing stress;
- is in accordance with its contractual, legal and regulatory obligations; and
- supports the financial viability of SAHV's long term housing programs.

SAHV is committed to promoting a successful and sustainable tenancy when matching applicants to its properties. This means that SAHV will allocate housing in a way that:

- gives appropriate priority to households in need of housing assistance;
- considers the health, safety and support needs of applicants;
- matches individual housing needs with available properties; and
- supports sustainable and harmonious communities.

### Victorian Housing Register

SAHV participates in the Victorian Housing Register (VHR). The VHR is a common register for all applicants seeking public and community housing in Victoria. Under the VHR's allocations framework, SAHV is required to target 100% of allocations of true vacancies of social housing to Priority Access applicants.

## Allocations Schedule

SAHV has established an Allocations Schedule that establishes the following for each of its long term housing programs:

<b>Program</b>	A description of the housing program, including how properties have been funded
<b>Approach to allocation for Program</b>	A description of the approach that SAHV will apply in allocating housing in that program, including any allocations targets
<b>Source of applicants</b>	A description of where SAHV will source suitable applicants for the program.
<b>Eligibility</b>	A description of any eligibility rules that apply to the program
<b>No. of properties in the program</b>	A description of the number of properties in the program

The Allocations Schedule for SAHV is attached to this policy.

### Sourcing applications from the VHR

Where the source of applicants in a program is specified in the Allocations Schedule as “VHR only”, then SAHV will seek all applicants from the VHR unless no suitable applicants are available. For such programs, if an allocation is made for an applicant not on the VHR, then SAHV will ensure that all applicants complete a VHR application before or shortly after being offered housing for the purposes of reporting against the VHR allocations target.

Sources of applications outside the VHR include:

- referrals from support providers;
- real estate listings;
- Transitional Housing Management (THM) program;
- Initial Assessment and Planning (IAP) agencies;
- self-referred clients.

### Eligibility

SAHV will ensure in making any allocation that it complies with legal requirements concerning eligibility for housing. The eligibility rules that apply to programs are specified in the Allocations Schedule.

VHR Eligibility is determined by DHHS. See the Long-term housing Eligibility Policy for further details.

## Promoting successful and sustainable tenancies

SAHV is committed to treating all applicants fairly and will not unlawfully discriminate against any potential applicant or applicant.

SAHV will assess all applicants before making an offer of housing to determine suitability for a particular vacancy (and eligibility if the applicant is not from the VHR). If SAHV declines to offer an applicant housing, it will inform the applicant accordingly.

## Matching households to the right house

In allocating housing, SAHV will also have regard to the VHR operational guideline, [Matching Clients with Housing and Special Accommodation Requirements](#).

SAHV will match applicants to properties so that an allocation:

- is the right size for the applicant's household;
- is in an area consistent with the applicant's needs;
- assists the applicant to access employment or any support services that they need;
- makes the best use of housing stock owned or managed by SAHV;
- encourages a sustainable tenancy; and
- meets any particular expressed needs of the applicant so far as they are known, such as modifications for people with a physical disability or mobility impairment, availability of car parking or room for carers.

SAHV aims to make sure that properties with specific features that are in high demand and short supply are only allocated to those applicants who need them, including:

- properties that are suitable for older people
- properties that have been built or modified to meet the needs of people with a disability;
- properties on the ground floor,
- properties with level access; or
- properties with a yard/garden.

SAHV will ask applicants to provide reasonable evidence to substantiate any particular requirements, if this is not contained in a VHR application.

## Supporting sustainable and harmonious communities

SAHV may, to the extent necessary, adopt different strategies in allocation in response to:

- a high concentration of public and community housing stock in a particular area;
- a high concentration of tenants with multiple health, social or economic issues in a particular area or building;
- existing tenancy management issues (or a potential for them to develop);
- existing neighborhood tensions or disputes which may be exacerbated if allocations are not sensitively handled; and
- a mismatch of supply and demand making the property hard to let.

## DEFINITIONS

In this policy:

<b>Applicant</b>	means a person who has applied for housing via the VHR or, where permitted by this policy, directly to SAHV
<b>Community housing affordable housing program</b>	The housing program of SAHV described in further detail in the Allocations Schedule.
<b>DHHS</b>	means the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services
<b>Director of Housing</b>	means the Victorian government statutory authority that owns all public housing land in Victoria and which is the principal funding body for community housing
<b>Nomination rights</b>	means arrangements between SAHV and third party support providers where the support provider nominates applicants for certain vacant properties
<b>Priority Access</b>	Applicants on the VHR who have been assessed as having a priority housing need. The Priority Access Categories are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency Management Housing</li> <li>• Priority Transfers</li> <li>• Homeless with Support</li> <li>• Supported Housing</li> <li>• Temporary Absence</li> <li>• Special Housing Needs</li> <li>• Aged (55 years and over)</li> </ul>
<b>Public housing</b>	Housing owned and managed by DHHS
<b>Social housing</b>	The housing program of SAHV described in further detail in the Allocations Schedule.
<b>Transitional Housing</b>	means the Victorian Government program to provide housing on a short-term basis to people at risk of homelessness seeking long term housing options
<b>True vacancy</b>	means all vacancies excluding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tenant to tenant transfers (but not Priority Transfers via the VHR); and</li> <li>• tenancies started by relocated tenants that are returning.</li> </ul>
<b>VHR</b>	The Victorian Housing Register, the statewide common application for people seeking public housing and community housing

## LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

This policy implements SAHV's obligations under:

- Housing Act 1983 (Vic)
- Performance Standards for Registered Housing Agencies
- DHHS Victorian Housing Register Operational Guidelines

### ALLOCATIONS SCHEDULE

Program	Approach to allocation for Program	Source of applicants <sup>1</sup>	Eligibility <sup>2</sup>	No. units
<p><b>Social Housing (Owned)</b></p> <p><i>Long term housing owned by SAHV with assistance from the Director of Housing under capital grant, stock transfer programs and which is designated as “social housing”.</i></p> <p><i>Social housing is appropriate to the needs of people who are unable to access suitable accommodation in the private rental market.</i></p>	<p>SAHV targets 100% of allocations of true vacancies of Social Housing to applicants from the Priority Access category under the VHR.</p> <p>Allocation into the program is based on <a href="#">Matching Clients with Housing and Special Accommodation Requirements</a>.</p>	VHR only	VHR	54
<p><b>Social Housing (General Lease)</b></p> <p><i>Long-term housing owned by the Director of Housing and leased to SAHV.</i></p>		VHR only	VHR	54
<p><b>Social Housing (Rooming House)</b></p> <p>Long-term rooming house accommodation owned or managed by SAHV.</p>		VHR and Rooming House referrals	VHR	106
			Total	214

<sup>1</sup> Under the Allocations Policy, where a property is specified as “VHR only”, SAHV may seek all applicants from other sources if no suitable VHR applicants are available. In these circumstances SAHV will ensure that all applicants complete a VHR application before or shortly after being offered housing for the purposes of compliance and reporting.

<sup>2</sup> See Eligibility Policy for further details.