

## PURPOSE

This policy establishes the approach of Salvation Army Housing Victoria (SAHV) to eligibility for its long-term rental housing programs.

## 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 determining eligibility for the housing program; and
- temporary or crisis accommodation.

## POLICY

### Approach to eligibility – guiding principles

SAHV establishes eligibility criteria for long-term housing to fulfill its social mission and to ensure that its housing is made available to relieve households from housing stress.

Accordingly, SAHV will:

- only allocate long-term housing to eligible applicants;
- communicate clearly to applicants and the community as to who is eligible for long-term housing with SAHV; and
- comply with its contractual, legal and regulatory obligations relating to eligibility for long-term housing.

### Victorian Housing Register

SAHV participates in the Victorian Housing Register (VHR). The VHR is a common register for all applicants for public housing and community housing in Victoria.

DHHS has established common eligibility criteria for the VHR that are set out in the [Eligibility Criteria Operational Guidelines](#). The VHR eligibility criteria apply to all properties owned or managed by SAHV in Victoria, other than those properties which SAHV and DHHS have agreed are outside the scope of the VHR.

All applicants with a current VHR application are taken by SAHV to have established that they meet the VHR eligibility criteria.

Applicants without a current VHR application can provide evidence to SAHV that establishes they meet the VHR eligibility criteria. SAHV will assist such applicants to make a VHR application either through referral to a suitable service or by assisting the applicant to lodge a VHR application.

### General requirements for eligibility for long-term housing

To be eligible for long-term housing with SAHV which is under the VHR, an applicant must:

- meet the VHR eligibility criteria;
- have no previous significant debt with SAHV, the Director of Housing or another registered housing agency that remains unpaid. The applicant can be accepted with minor rental debts or if the applicant agreed to repay the debt.

### Specific requirements for particular long-term housing programs

SAHV has some particular long-term rental housing programs where additional eligibility criteria to the general eligibility criteria apply. The Allocations Schedule in the Allocations Policy provides more detail on these programs and their specific eligibility requirements.

### Eligibility for long-term housing programs outside the scope of the VHR

Where SAHV owns or manages housing under programs that are outside the scope of the VHR, then:

- SAHV will comply with any other legal or contractual obligations that apply to eligibility housing in that program; and
- SAHV may within the scope of such legal or contractual obligations:
  - elect to apply the general eligibility criteria as a generally accepted benchmark to establish that the applicant needs affordable housing; or
  - apply some other reasonable eligibility criteria that is consistent with SAHV’s objects and purposes.

SAHV will communicate clearly with applicants and stakeholders as to the particular eligibility criteria that apply to that program.

## Definitions

In this policy:

<b>Applicant</b>	means a person who has applied for housing via the VHR or, where permitted by policy, directly to SAHV
<b>Community housing</b>	Housing owned or managed by a community housing organisation
<b>DHHS</b>	The Victorian Department of Health and Human Services
<b>General eligibility criteria</b>	The eligibility criteria established by SAHV under the section of this policy entitled “General requirements for eligibility for long-term housing”
<b>Public housing</b>	Housing owned and managed by DHHS
<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

**VHR** The Victorian Housing Register, the statewide common application for people seeking public housing and community housing, which can be accessed via SAHV, DHHS, the mygov portal or designated support providers

**VHR eligibility criteria** The VHR's establish who is eligible for social housing. The VHR Eligibility Criteria relates to:

- income eligibility;
- asset eligibility;
- Australian Citizenship or permanent residency; and
- Victorian residency.

## Legislation and standards

This policy implements SAHV obligations under:

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