

# Applicant Housing Eligibility Policy (New Zealand)

## 1. Purpose

This policy outlines the eligibility rules for social housing in New Zealand.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to HOME in PLACE (New Zealand) Limited (HOME in PLACE NZ) and the management of vacancies and applications for housing.

## 3. Policy Statement

To be eligible for social housing, all prospective tenants must meet specific criteria, complete preliminary screening and assessment and be identified by the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) as being at risk or having a serious housing need. MSD actively manages the social housing register, this is to facilitate more points of contact with key service agencies including: Work and Income, Senior Services and StudyLink, and designed to offer tenants a broader range of products and services focused on assisting people into alternative housing wherever possible.

HOME in PLACE NZ will work with MSD to ensure fair, efficient, and consistent ways to determine applicant eligibility through:

- matching eligible applicants to suitable properties;
- arranging property viewings for applicants and where appropriate, making property offers;
- informing MSD of all property offers;
- informing MSD of applicant responses to property offers, including the rationale the applicant has given for any declines;
- advising MSD when no property offer is made;
- making arrangements for eligible applicants to sign up for a tenancy agreement, informing them of their responsibilities as a tenant and notifying MSD of the start date of their tenancy;
- maintaining properties in a reasonable condition and ensuring they comply with all building, health and safety standards applicable to the property;
- undertaking tenancy management practices and asset management functions;
- notifying MSD if a tenancy is terminated;
- informing MSD of any suspected client fraud;
- working with the Centralised Unit Housing of MSD to resolve any issues at an operational level if and as they arise, and where necessary escalating to the appropriate department in MSD; and
- complying with the Privacy Act 2020 when collecting, storing, using, and disclosing applicants and tenant information.

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## Eligibility

To be eligible for social housing applicants must generally meet requirements around age and residency, income and assets and have a serious housing need.<sup>1</sup>

- applicants must be 16 years or older.

*Applicants must also meet one of the following residency criteria:*

- applicant is a New Zealand citizen;
- applicant has a resident visa or permanent resident visa and have live in New Zealand continuously for at least 2 years since getting it;
- applicant is recognised as a refugee by Immigration New Zealand;
- applicant is recognised as a protected person by Immigration New Zealand;
- applicant is getting a main benefit from the governments, for example, Jobseeker Support.

Other categories may also apply, visit [www.workandincome.govt.nz](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz) for more information.

### *Income and assets*

Applicants' income and assets must be within the income eligibility for social housing, for current income eligibility rates visit [www.workandincome.govt.nz](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz)

### *Serious housing need*

Applicants must have a serious housing need; the following will be assessed as part of the application:

- applicants current housing situation including:
  - the property's physical condition;
  - if the property has basic living facilities;
  - how secure the tenancy is.
- whether applicants' current property or area is safe for them and suitable for their medical or physical needs;
- whether the applicant could afford to rent privately;
- availability of private rental that meets the applicant's needs;
- whether the applicant could manage long term in a private rental.

## 4. Definitions and Acronyms Glossary

For clarification of any definitions or acronyms contained within this document, please click on the [Glossary](#) for information.

*End of Document.*

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/housing/find-a-house/who-can-get-public-housing.html>