

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.

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.¹

- 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 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

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. Responsibilities

All HOME in PLACE NZ workers have an obligation to:

- familiarise themselves with and ensure they have a clear understanding of HOME in PLACE NZ policies and procedures,
- observe and implement such policies, and associated procedures in delivering services to HOME in PLACE NZ clients,
- inform HOME in PLACE NZ's clients of the impact of this policy on them and assist them to understand their rights and obligations, as required,

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

- identify issues that require amendment to this policy document and complete the relevant documentation to propose any amendments, and
- report breaches of HOME in PLACE NZ's policies or procedures.

The relevant Group Executive Manager is ultimately responsible to:

- ensure all stakeholders within their area of responsibility are informed about HOME in PLACE NZ Policies and Procedures,
- ensure appropriate processes and controls are implemented to enable the correct application of and adherence to relevant policies and procedures, and
- ensure appropriate processes and controls are implemented to enable breaches of approved HOME in PLACE NZ's Policy and Procedures to be reported and managed.

5. Implementation and Review

This policy is listed on HOME in PLACE NZ's Controlled Documents Register and is a controlled document requiring approval of any changes. It may not be amended or shared outside HOME in PLACE NZ without approval. The policy is reviewed regularly and published on HOME in PLACE NZ's SharePoint intranet once approved. Employees receive communications and, if necessary, training on new and reviewed policies and procedures.

HOME in PLACE NZ complies with relevant contractual compliance obligations and jurisdictional laws and regulations when implementing this policy. Confirmation of internal compliance with this policy is undertaken regularly.

It is the responsibility of HOME in PLACE Group Executive Services to maintain and update the HOME in PLACE NZ's Master Policy Document, Policy Directory and the Policy Review Register, administer the review and approval process and inform and distribute new and amended policies and procedures once approved (refer PROC-011 Policy and Procedure Development Approval).

HOME in PLACE NZ Workers should refer to SharePoint Company Documents Policy and Procedure site for the latest version which takes precedent over any uncontrolled version. If this document is printed, downloaded, or saved elsewhere from this site it becomes an uncontrolled version.

For further information contact the Responsible Officer listed under Document Information.

6. Resources and related documents

Related documents

- POL-8019 Privacy Policy NZ
- POL-8025-17 Starting a Tenancy Policy NZ

Related legislation/standards

- [Privacy Act 2020 \(New Zealand\)](#)

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- [Residential Tenancies Act 1986 \(New Zealand\)](#)

7. Definitions

Please refer to HOME in PLACE NZ Glossary of Definitions for Policies and Procedures. Terms and definitions identified below are specific to this procedure and are critical to its effectiveness:

Term	Definition
Assessment	Assessment of eligibility to determine housing need, priority and housing requirements.
Community housing provider	Provider of affordable and social housing, which may be for people with specific needs.
Employee	A person engaged under an employment agreement or award by any company in the HOME in PLACE Group.
HNZC	Housing New Zealand Corporation
HOME in PLACE (New Zealand)	HOME IN PLACE (NEW ZEALAND) LIMITED (formerly Compass Housing Services (NZ) Co Ltd) is registered in New Zealand under the Companies Act and as a charity registered with Charities NZ under the Charities Act
Housing register	List of clients assessed as eligible for social housing, waiting to be matched with a suitable property.
Independent contractor	means a party engaged directly by HOME in PLACE pursuant to a contract for services. In the context of workforce engagements, this includes sole traders, companies, or partnerships with whom HOME in PLACE enters into an agreement for the provision of specified individuals to supply specific skills, services, or consultancy arrangements. It does not include individuals engaged through labour hire agencies. Independent contractors are not employees of HOME in PLACE.
MSD	Ministry of Social Development assesses eligibility for social housing provided by Housing New Zealand and registered community housing providers. MSD also calculates income-related rent for social housing and conducts tenancy reviews.
Registration (as a community housing provider)	<p>Registration is used by the Government so community housing providers can demonstrate their compliance against the requirements set out in the Performance Standards of the Community Housing Regulatory Authority.</p> <p>Registration is designed to promote a viable and well-governed social housing sector through the introduction of a systematic approach to measuring and reporting performance. Registration is a legislative requirement, and the registration details of each community housing provider (CHP) will be recorded on a public register.</p> <p>To obtain registration, a provider needs to demonstrate that it has achieved outcomes in performance areas.</p>
Residential tenancy agreement	A legal agreement between landlord and tenant, in respect of a tenancy.
Shortlist	A list of suitable applicants requested by a provider or generated when a vacancy is listed. The shortlist is automatically generated by Business Online Services.
Social allocation system (SAS)	Criteria that determine clients' social housing need and requirements, and their priority rating.

Term	Definition
Social housing provider	Housing New Zealand and approved community housing providers.
Stakeholder	person or organisation that can affect, be affected by, or perceive themselves to be affected by a decision or activity, may also be called 'interested party'.
Tenancy	Occupancy of a property by a tenant and the duration of that occupancy.
Tenant	The person who has the right to occupy residential premises under a Residential Tenancy Agreement.
Worker (New Zealand)	<p>HOME in PLACE NZ have adopted the New Zealand Health and Safety Act (2015) Section 19's definition of a 'worker' where the term is used in policy. The definition of a 'worker' includes an individual who carries out work in any capacity for a PCBU, including work as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an employee; or • a contractor or subcontractor; or • an employee of a contractor or subcontractor; or • an employee of a labour hire company who has been assigned to work in the business or undertaking; or • an outworker (including a homeworker); or • an apprentice or a trainee; or • a person gaining work experience or undertaking a work trial; or • a volunteer worker; or • a person of a prescribed class.