

Occupancy and Absences Policy (New Zealand)

1. Purpose

To define HOME in PLACE (New Zealand) Limited (HOME in PLACE NZ) approach to ensure properties are not left vacant for long period of time and that properties are occupied by the tenant named on the tenancy agreement.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all tenant of HOME in PLACE NZ.

3. Policy Statement

HOME in PLACE NZ recognises that social housing is a limited resource and in high demand. HOME in PLACE NZ expects tenants to live in their property in accordance with their obligations under the *Residential Tenancies Act 1986* and their tenancy agreement. To ensure HOME in PLACE NZ meets its obligations as a social housing provider it is essential that properties are not left vacant by tenants for long periods of time.

Absences from property

In accordance with section 6.5 of the tenancy agreement if a tenant will be, or intends to be, absent from the premises for more than 28 days, the tenant is required to notify HOME in PLACE NZ, by calling their local HOME in PLACE NZ office, and the MSD by their local Work and Income New Zealand office. Tenant must make this notification even if other members of the household remain at the property.

Occupancy of property

HOME in PLACE NZ expects tenants to personally occupy the property during their tenancy. HOME in PLACE NZ acknowledges that a tenant's circumstances may change during their term of their tenancy, if there is any change in circumstances that impact the tenant's ability to occupy the property, they are required to notify HOME in PLACE NZ.

Visitors

A visitor is a person who temporarily stays at the property at the invitation of the tenant. Tenants are entitled to quiet enjoyment for the property while they are renting it, this includes having visitors, including those who may stay at the property for a short period of time. If a tenant wants their visitors to stay for longer periods, they should contact HOME in PLACE NZ to discuss this, having visitors in the property for longer periods could impact the rent paid. Tenants are responsible for anything done or omitted to be done by any person who is on the property with the tenant's permission, this includes visitors and occupants.

Additional occupants

Tenants are allocated properties based on their household size and rent is charged based on combined household income. When a tenant signs a tenancy agreement the agreements states the maximum number of people who can occupy the property. This number is based on a number of factors including the type and location of the property, including health and safety issues, household composition including age and gender of household members.

When a tenant wants to add a person to the household, they are required to obtain consent from HOME in PLACE NZ prior to any person moving into the property. HOME in PLACE NZ will assess applications and notify the tenant of the outcome of their request.

Review of decisions

If a tenant does not agree with a decision HOME in PLACE NZ has made, they should first discuss this with a Tenancy Relations Officer. If the tenant is still dissatisfied, they may be able to requires a formal review of the decision. HOME in PLACE NZ staff will provide tenants with information on their rights of appeal/review. HOME in PLACE NZ will also provide tenants with contact details for services who provide independent tenancy Advice.

4. Definitions and Acronyms Glossary

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

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