

# EDHN Housing Guide: A GUIDE TO LIVING INDEPENDENTLY

Funded by Knox City Council

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# A Guide to Living Independently

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## Welcome to the Guide to Independent Living

Moving out of home for the first time can be exciting, but also challenging! This Guide to Independent Living has lots of information to help you:

- plan your move;
- look at different housing and support options; and
- making the move into your new home as smooth as possible.

The Guide is made up of three booklets that contain activities, tips and links to other resources to help you along your way.

This book is written so that family and friends (or a worker) can work through it with a person with a disability regardless of learning ability.

### *Booklet One: Getting Started – Thinking about Moving Out*

The first booklet looks at some questions you should ask yourself before you move out of home. It provides activities and tips to help you talk with your family and friends about how you all feel about the move and to make decisions that are right for you.

### *Booklet Two: Finding the right home*

The second booklet looks at the different types of housing and support services that are available to help you live more independently. It includes mainstream and disability housing sectors and how to search and apply for different types of homes.

### *Booklet Three: Making the move*

The third booklet has information, tips and tools to help you organise the move into your new home including preparing for moving day, making sure your new home is ready to move into and ongoing management of your new home.

The Guide to Independent Living has been developed by the Eastern Disability Housing Network with funding from Knox City Council. We welcome your thoughts and feedback.

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## Terminology/glossary

Person – person with a disability who is getting ready to move out

Family and Friends – The people that you trust

Advocacy – Someone helping you stand up for your rights

Independence – Being in control of your life

Responsibility – Not blaming others for your choices

Freedom – Choosing what you want to do

Living Independently – Choosing how you want to live

Home – The place where you sleep

Housing Provider – You pay them money to live in their house

Support worker – You pay them to help you do something you can't do

Case Manager – A worker that helps you apply for funding and find services

Support Coordinator – A worker that helps you with your NDIS funding and finding service providers

Service providers – Services are places where you pay to get help and support

NDIS – National Disability Insurance Scheme (the funding)

NDIA – National Disability Insurance Agency (the people who run the NDIS)

Supported Decision Making – when a person with a disability is assisted to make their own valid decisions

## Housing Process

- 1 • Emotional preparation
- 2 • Understand funding options
- 3 • Get ability assessed
- 4 • Apply for funding if applicable
- 5 • Explore housing options
- 6 • Talk to housing providers
- 7 • Apply for housing
- 8 • Prepare for you move
- 9 • Review success

## BOOKLET ONE: Getting Started – Thinking about Moving Out

Why Do You Want to Move Out?

When Do You Want to Move Out?

Who Can Help You Move Out?

Where Do You Want to Move Out to?

Where to Live: Building Type

Accessible Design

Where to Live: Support Workers

Where to Live: Location

What can you Afford?

Where to Live: Housemates or Live Alone

Pets



## Why Do You Want to Move Out?

The decision to move out of home is a big one, especially if you have been living with your family and friends, or in the same home, for a long time.

You may want to think about the changes that living independently might bring to your life and how that makes you and your family and friends feel.

This booklet contains activities and tips to help you think about how you are feeling. It will also help you talk to your family and friends and support people about your thoughts, questions, and ideas for living more independently.

When you live independently you might have more freedom to choose how you live, like:

- what time you go to bed
- what you watch on TV
- who comes over to visit
- what your loungeroom looks like
- what things you do each week

You may also have more responsibilities like:

- remembering to do things for yourself like making your lunch for the next day
- helping with cooking meals or cleaning
- washing your clothes and putting them away
- walking to the train station by yourself instead of family and friends driving you
- looking after your money
- making decisions by yourself or solving problems when things don't go the way you expect

You may have to deal with the unexpected.

When you live independently, you don't always know what is going to happen. That is OK and a normal part of life for everyone. Some things you might not be expecting are:

- you run out of money
- your support worker doesn't turn up
- your train is cancelled
- you forget your lunch

The decision to leave the family and friends home can be as challenging for family and friends as it is for the person making the move.

It is important that your family and friends and any other important people can talk together about how they feel about the move and the changes it will create in their lives.

Be Realistic about your starting point

## When Do You want to Move Out?

The idea of moving out and the reality are very different for the person moving out and their family and friends. It is exciting and scary for everyone, even people without a disability. But it is a part of growing up and becoming independent and people are often surprised at what they can do when they need to.

### *When is the Person ready?*

**Intrinsic skills** such as respect, sharing and understanding private space are important to learn when moving out, especially if moving out with housemates. Living with family is different from living independently. A good way to practice these skills is to stay overnight away somewhere else such as with a friend or a holiday with workers.

**Physical skills** such as travel on public transport, sweeping floors, and cooking can be practiced before moving out. You can start learning how to look after a house and yourself by asking the family and friends that you live with to teach you.

**Safety skills** such as hygiene, diet, budget and problem solving can be learnt by taking notice when your family and friends help you or when they are planning something. You can use lists or signs or a diary of notes and pictures to help you learn to be independent.

*Skills can be learnt in the new home. Support staff can help until the skill is learnt.*

**Being independent** means being in control of your life and choosing how you live. It does not mean doing things alone. Workers and friends and family can help you to be independent by asking you what you want and helping you to do it. They should not make decisions for you unless you are in danger or you ask them to help you decide.

**Being responsible** means not blaming others for your choices. It is part of being independent and part of growing up. When you are responsible for your own home and your own living, you need to look after and care for the home and your health. Being independent means you can choose to eat ice cream every day but being responsible means you will choose to eat healthy meals as well as the ice cream.

### *When are the family and friends ready?*

Developed trust in Person

Allowance for Person to make decisions and speak for themselves

Ability to stand back while they try

Safety (financials and other) planned for

## Who can help you Move Out?

<b>Help you might need (support):</b>	<b>Workers that can help</b>
Working out your housing goals	Support Coordinator LAC – Local Area Coordinator (free) Case Manager Support Worker
Working out how much support you will need in your new house	OT - Occupational Therapist
Exploring housing options - includes budget, location, liaising with Real Estates, moving logistics, exploring supports available	Support Coordinator LAC – Local Area Coordinator (free) CB (NDIS category) – Exploring Housing Options Housing Officer Case manager
House with full access for any physical disabilities	SDA – Specialist Disability Accommodation Home Modifications Dept Families, Fairness and Housing
Assistance with SDA application	Support Coordinator OT – Occupational Therapist Psychological Assessment Behaviour Assessment
Connecting to housing or support providers	Support Coordinator LAC – Local Area Coordinator (free) CB – Exploring Housing Options provider Case Manager Dept Families, Fairness and Housing
Signing lease agreement with Real Estate OR Signing service agreement with housing provider	Support Coordinator LAC – Local Area Coordinator (free) CB – Exploring Housing Options Case Manager Dept Families, Fairness and Housing
Creation, signing and monitoring of private agreements (ie host, shared house etc)	ILO – Individual Living Options
Support workers	SIL – Supported Independent Living CORE – Support workers for daily living

## Person's Team

Create a team of people to help you.



**GOAL OF EVERYONE**  
To Help you find the housing you want  
To Help you be happy and safe

## Where Do You want to Move Out to?

Once you have made the decision to move, you can think about the type of home you want to live in.

There are **four key stages** to help you find the right home.

### Where To Live Stage ONE:

Building Type – Decide what type of building you want to live in and what extra features you may need to suit your disability

### Where to Live Stage TWO:

Supports – Decide what type of help will you need in your home

### Where To Live Stage THREE:

Location – Decide what you want and need to live near

### Where To Live Stage FOUR:

Housemates – Decide who you want to live with

#### **Tips for guiding the conversation**

If possible, let the person draw and write ideas in their own way so that it becomes their journey. Keep reminding them that this is just research, or learning, like window shopping and that no decisions are being made just yet. You may learn that your person has different ideas about their home than you thought. Just keep an open mind and create together. Booklet Two will define this exploration more as you explore what is available in the market.

### Where to Live: Building type

The type of building you live in can have a big impact on your quality of life. It can affect how easily you move around in your home and in and out of the building and how comfortable and safe you feel.

Types of residential buildings:

- Stand-alone houses
- High-rise apartments
- Low-rise units
- Townhouses, villas, and duplexes

If you have never seen some of these types of buildings, you can drive around and try to find them. They are in all neighbourhoods. You may have never noticed or known that there were lots of different types of places to live. If you watch tv or movies you can try to work out what type of building people live in.

**In Booklet Two, the process of finding housing is described. One part of that is inspecting houses to see if you like them. This can also be a good way to see which types of buildings you would like to live in.**

### Accessible Design

Accessible design features allow people of all abilities to live more independently in their homes.

Some common accessible design features are:

- stepless entrances
- ramps
- wide hallways and doorways
- adjustable benchtops
- accessible toilets and showers
- voice activated doors and light switches

*See the resources page for more information and accessible design ideas.*

It is important for you to work out what type of accessible design features you will need in your home so you can live independently and safely. The level of accessible design you need may also influence your eligibility for some types of housing.

An occupational therapist can complete a Functional Assessment to recommend any accessible designs that would be beneficial.

**The Booklet One Activities section has some questions and activities to help you think about the accessible design features you would like to have in your home and how important these will be to your independence.**

## Where To Live: Support workers

### What in-home support staff will I need?

If you get help from your family and friends each day, you may need professional support services to help you when you move out. A support worker is paid, so you are their boss.

Some common support services that people use are:

- daily help with personal care such as washing and dressing
- daily help with household tasks such as cooking and cleaning
- help to organise activities and appointments
- help with transport and getting around

You can hire a support worker to visit you for several hours every day or only a few times a week. You will still be independent, even if you have a support worker, as long as you are making the decisions.

- A support worker is there to help you do the things you can't.
- A support worker is not there to do the things you don't want to do.
- They are not your slave, and they are not your best friend.
- A support worker will help keep you happy and safe in your home.

The amount of in-home support you need may influence the types of housing you search for. If you need a lot of support (overnight) you may choose to use a disability service to set up the house for you.

*The Booklet One Activities section has some questions and activities to help you understand what type of in-home support you will need and how often you will need it.*

*In Booklet Two the process of finding support workers is described with some useful tips and questions to ask before you hire. Remember your team can help you do this too.*

#### **Tips on working out how much support you need:**

- Remember to include the support that you currently get from family and friends.
- Be honest about what you can and can't do.
- Many people find that when they start living independently, they learn to do more things for themselves. You may only need supports while you are learning.

## Where To Live: Location

### Where do you want to live?

Where you live has a big impact on your independence and lifestyle.

Think about what you do outside of the house and what you want to be close to.

You can live anywhere you want to

- near the beach
- near the shops
- close to work
- near public transport
- near your family and friends
- close to medical appointments

It is important to plan where you live so that you can plan how you can travel to the other places you want to get to.

You might plan on going up to the shops to get a coffee or do your shopping, so you would need to live near some shops. This might just be a milk bar, or it might be a large shopping centre. It's up to you.

You also might currently attend activities, like work, school, or other hobbies that you want to live close to.

*The Booklet One Activities section has some questions and activities to help you think about the people, services, and facilities that you want to have in your community and close to your home.*

### **Tips for guiding the conversation**

Let your person 'dream big' and draw or talk about all ideas and options without telling them what is not possible. As you work through some of the other location factors, you will find your person begins to make some adjustments and cross some ideas off as impractical. You can also note some big ideas down as potential holiday destinations and let your person know you can do this same planning for a holiday if they want to.



## What can you afford?

### **Rent = Money you pay every week to borrow something (like a house) .**

People pay rent to borrow a house. The owner lets you live in the house as long as you pay rent every week and keep the house neat and clean. The owner pays for things to be fixed if they break down, but the renter pays for things to be fixed if they break them.

The renter signs a lease agreement to agree to how long they will rent the house for and to promise to keep it neat and clean. If you want to stay longer you can sign a new lease if everyone agrees. Or you can move out when the lease is finished and find somewhere else to live.

### **Buy = Owning a House**

A house costs a lot of money. If you own a house, you need to pay rates to the council each year and you need to fix things that break in the house.

If you save up a deposit (not enough to buy the house in full) you can borrow the rest of the money from the bank. This is called a mortgage. You need to pay all the money back to the bank until you own the house. You can live in the house while you pay back the mortgage or you can rent it to someone else.

## Budget

A budget helps you work out how much money you can spend on rent (or a mortgage) and helps you to plan so you don't run out of money. You can only live in a house that you can afford.

Income is the money you earn, and expenses are the money you pay. You always need to earn more than you pay.

You may have a job or get a pension; this is your income. Do you have access to this money?

You may have expenses such as medication, food, entertainment, a mobile phone, pets. Do you pay these yourself?

Example (weekly costs) to work out a budget for rent:

	Income	Expenses
Disability Pension	\$460	
Rent Assistance	\$70	
Food		\$100
Medication		\$30
Bills		\$50
Entertainment		\$50
Totals	\$530	\$230

**Income \$530 – Expenses \$230 = Maximum you can spend on rent \$300**

With this example budget, the housemate can now search for rentals that are \$300 per week or less.

## Where To Live: Housemates or Live Alone

### Who do I want to live with?

One of the most exciting decisions you need to make before you move out of home is whether you want to live with other people or live by yourself.

Do you want to set up a home life that is similar to the one you have now with your family and friends or do you want to live in a completely different way.

You can also think about the type of person you are and the type of home life you want to have. Are you noisy or quiet? Do you like the house perfectly neat or do you like a bit of mess?

It is important to get along with the person you live with, but you don't need to be best friends. Because this will be your own house, you may not want to spend every minute together hanging out. Sometimes people live together based on friendship, but some share based on whether the housemate will be good at sharing chores or tasks in the house.

#### **Housemates should always:**

- **Treat you with respect**
- **Be kind**
- **Be responsible for their share of the chores and bills**
- **Give you privacy and space to do your own things**

*Pets* – If you want or have a pet, make sure you check with your housemate first. A pet is like a housemate, so you need to make sure everyone is going to get along before they move in.

If you want to live alone, think about how you will stay connected with the people and activities that are important to you and how you will organise any support you need, including in an emergency.

*The Booklet One Activities section has some questions and activities to help you decide whether you want to live with other people or live alone.*

#### **Tips for guiding the conversation**

It's important to be aware that family and friends are often anxious about an individual's vulnerability and safety when they move out of home. Try to remain focussed on the individual's ideas and preferences, rather than what you think would be best. Consider things like their personality and habits as well as their skills and capabilities.

*Safety and risk will be explored in Booklet Two when you begin to interview housemates and also in Booklet Three when you set the house up.*

## BOOKLET ONE Activity Section

Explore and have fun talking about different houses and ideas. The key is to listen.

Activity: Why do you want to move out?

Q: Why am I moving?

*Prompt: Is this my decision or have my circumstances changed?*

*Does the idea of moving make me feel excited or scared?*

.....

.....

Q: Why do I want to be more independent?

*Prompts: Do I want more freedom and more responsibility?*

.....

.....

Q: Why do I want to make decisions about my home?

*Prompts: Do I want to be in charge of my own home?*

.....

.....

.....

Q: What worries do I have about moving out?

*Prompts:*

*Are there questions I would like to ask?*

*Am I 'ready' to move out of home?*

*Am I worried about my family and friends?*

.....

.....

.....

### Make a list of all the pros and cons for moving out of home.

Ask your family and friends to make a separate list and compare them. You may be surprised at how different some of your ideas are!

My Pros (Good things)	My Cons (Bad things)

Family and friends' Pros	Family and friend's Cons

### Do you know what your disability is?

Some people call it their weakness, some call it their power. It is good to know your weaknesses and your powers.

If your weakness is	You may need help with
Medical	Sleepovers – someone to check on your medicine
Memory	Prompting – reminders to eat, shower
Learning	Help to learn household skills & books with instructions that are easy to read
Mobility	Showering or personal care or you may need a house modified so you can do these things yourself
Psychosocial	Calming and organising

Activity: When do you want to move out?

*When is the person ready?*

Q. Am I ready now?

*Prompt: Could you pack a bag and move today?*

.....

Q: What do I need to do before I move?

*Prompt: Pack my bag, learn to cook, make sure I like my house...*

.....

Q: What do you think other people need to get ready for you?

*Prompt: Support workers, help setting up utilities..*

.....

Q: What new goals could I have for a more independent life?

*Prompt: Decorate my house, meet my neighbours, vacuum my house...*

.....

Q: How often will I see my family and friends?

*Prompt: What are the most important aspects of our relationship and how can we keep them going?*

.....

Q: How will this move change my life?

*Prompt: Be myself, make my own choices...*

.....

*When are the family and friends ready?*

Q. How do I feel about the person moving out of home?

*Prompt: anxious, relieved, guilty, excited?*

.....  
.....

Q: What am I most anxious, relieved, guilty, excited about?

*Prompt: safety, health, relationships, missing them?*

.....  
.....

Q: Am I confident the person understands what living away from home will be like?

*Prompt: Have I answered all their questions honestly?*

*Have I talked about difficult or challenging issues with them?*

.....  
.....

Q: Do I respect the person's wishes and goals for a more independent life?

*Prompt: Am I prepared to let them live the way they want to live, to take risks?*

.....  
.....

Q: What role will I continue to play in the person's life?

*Prompt: What are the most important aspects of our relationship and how can we keep them going?*

.....  
.....

Q: How will this move change my life?

*Prompt: I will have more time to see my friends, work more, lie down on the floor and close my eyes, have more fun with my child, spend time with my other children.*

.....  
.....

Activity: Who can help you move out?

Think about the different people you would like to talk to about moving out of home. Some people will be good at listening to your thoughts and ideas and others will be good at answering your questions.

Talk to the people that you live with or people that you trust.

You can write down their names here.

Family and friends: .....

Guardian: .....

Other Friends: .....

Support workers: .....

Support Coordinator .....

Someone else .....

Advocate .....

**Activity: Where do you want to move out to?**

Ask yourself these questions and talk about your ideas with your family and friends. You may find the type of building you think you want to live in will not give you the lifestyle or the level of independence that you want.

Search up images or talk about people's houses you know, or you've seen on TV, to explain these building designs.

Q: Do I want a large or small home?

.....

Q: Do I want an open plan design or lots of private spaces

.....

Q: Do I want all my rooms to be on the ground level?

.....

Q: Do I want outdoors space like a garden or a balcony?

.....

Q: Do I want to live in a stand-alone building?

.....

Q: Do I want to live near to neighbours or have a lot of privacy?

.....

---



Activity: Where to live: Building type – Accessible

What design features and technology do I need?

Use the table below to make a list of the things you need help with in your home, like getting around, turning on taps, switching on lights.

Have a conversation with your Family and friends about the design features your house needs to help you be more independent.

What is hard for me to do	Accessible design ideas
<i>Example: Turn the tap on</i>	<i>Easy handle on tap</i>

*Activity: Where to live: Support workers*

Things that you need help with to live independently (you are still independent if you have support workers. Independence is about making your own decisions about your life and how you live. You decide what you want and the support worker helps you to do it. They do not make the decisions)

Circle what you need help with:

*A support worker can help you to learn to do these things yourself if that is what you want.*

Medicine

Remembering

Reading

Self-Care – showering or dressing etc

Laundry

Cooking

Cleaning

Money

Shopping

Driving/Transport

Talking

Working with others

Friends



Weekly Schedule and Who Helps You

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
AM							
Lunch							
Appt							
PM							

What do I need help with?	How often do I need this help? (daily, several times a week, occasionally)	Who can help me? (Family and friends, support workers, other services)

Activity: *Where to live - Location*

Who do I want to live close to	Name	Where do they live?
Family friends my boyfriend/girlfriend People I work with People I share hobbies and activities with		
What services and facilities do I want to live close to?	Name	Where are they?
My workplace My school, uni., Tafe, education course My sports facility My club, group My regular activity My church My library My doctor/health providers My support services My favourite restaurant/take away Do I have a choice of utility services in the area e.g. for my phone, internet?		
What transport do I need to live close to?		
train		

<p>public bus</p> <p>community bus</p> <p>tram</p> <p>taxis</p> <p>private car</p> <p>adequate car parking or nearby pick up and drop off points</p> <p>walking paths (safe, well lit, even ground)</p> <p>bike paths</p>		
<p>What type of environment or community do I want to live in?</p>	<p>Can you give any more details?</p>	<p>Can you think of any examples e.g. a certain park, suburb</p>
<p>Lively and full of people</p> <p>Somewhere with lots of shops, busy night life</p> <p>Quiet and leafy</p> <p>Near the water</p> <p>Near the hills</p> <p>Flat with lots of parks</p> <p>A gated community</p>		

*Activity: Where to live – Housemates or Live Alone?*

Do you want to live with other people or by yourself?

Circle the statements you like and make notes about other ideas you have about living alone or with others.

Living alone

Having lots of responsibility

Being able to decide what I do each day

Being able to make my home look like I want it to

Having peace and quiet

Being able to decide who comes to visit and how long they stay e.g. my boyfriend or girlfriend or best friend

.....

.....

Living with other people

Sharing household costs (e.g. rent, food, bills)

Sharing household chores (e.g. cleaning, shopping)

Having company and people to talk to

Being part of a team that works out how your home will run

Having lots of people around to help if something goes wrong

.....

.....

Activity: Finding the right housemates

Below are some questions to help you decide who you would like to live with.

Talk to your Family and friends about your ideas.

Q: How much time do I want to spend socialising in my home e.g. having conversations, watching tv or movies together?

.....

Q: Do I want to have a lot of time to myself and not see my housemates very much?

.....

Q: Do I only want to live with friends or people that I know?

.....

Q: How do I feel about living with a stranger?

.....

Q: Do I want to live with a person who is loud or quiet?

.....

Q: Do I want to live with a person who talks a lot or is shy?

.....

Q: Do I want to live with someone my own age or the same gender as me?

.....

Q: Do I want to live with someone who likes the same food as I do?

.....

Q: Do I want to live with someone who has the same hobbies and interests as me?

.....

Q: Do I want to live with someone who has the same cultural background as me?

.....

Q: Do I want to live with someone who shares the same beliefs as I do?

.....

Q: Do I want to live with someone who likes to keep the house clean and quiet or who doesn't mind a bit of mess?

.....

Q: Do I want to live with someone who likes the same music and tv shows as I do?

.....



## BOOKLET TWO: Finding the right home

### Finding Housing

#### Mainstream Housing

Online Search

NRAS Housing

Housemates

Inspections

Applications

Financials – bond and first Month's rent

#### Disability sector search

Organisations who manage housing for people living with a disability

Applications – Intake or Expression of Interest

Inspections and Housemate Introductions

#### Social Housing and other low-income Government assistance for housing

Public Housing and Community Housing

Moveable Units

#### SDA – Specialist Disability Accommodation

NDIS funded housing

Online Search

SDA Providers

Modifications after construction

### Supports in the House

#### Types of Support workers

The role of a support worker

#### Finding the right Support staff

What are you looking for?

How do you find it?

What should you ask?

What will they ask you?

## How to Find Mainstream Housing

If you do not require a specially built house, then using real estate agents or online search engines is the easiest way to look for a home. This also means you can choose your own support staff.



You can search for a house by looking online or going directly to a Real Estate agents office.

### Online Search

Online housing search engines are used by all real estate agents to advertise property all over Australia. You can search for rentals or houses to buy. You can change your filter to search within your budget or location, or even how many bathrooms or other special features you want.

Real Estate.com - <https://www.realestate.com.au/>

Domain - <https://www.domain.com.au/>

If you like a house, then you look for their inspection times. If there are no inspection times listed, then click on a link to send a message to the real estate agent and ask to inspect the house.

You should not apply for a house until you have inspected it.

**NRAS housing search** (National Rent Affordability Scheme) reduced rentals for low income (usually apartments) – privately owned housing subsidised by the government.

- <https://help.realestate.com.au/hc/en-us/articles/360001108323-National-Rental-Affordability-Scheme-NRAS-rental-listings>

### Housemates

If you want to move in with other people, it is good to find them before you look for a house. Then you can search, inspect, and apply all together.

OR you can move in with other people using a housemate search engine.

Flatmates.com - <https://flatmates.com.au/>

**Make sure your person has choice and control at all times.**

If choices are not practical, don't just say no - bring them back to the activities in Booklet One to work it out together. It is important you walk through this together.

Example 'Yes, I love that house too, so that is \$500 per week, can you afford that? Let's look at the budget section again'.

## Real Estate Agents

Real Estate agents help the owner find a renter or sell their property.

Tips for working with a Real Estate agent:

- Drop in weekly and ask for their rental list
- Talk to the Real Estate agent and tell them what you are looking for
- If you inspect a house you like make sure you ask for an application form
- Make sure the Real Estate agent remembers you and likes you.
- Do not overshare personal information. They do not need to know all about your disability
- Real Estate agents need to know you can afford the rent and you will keep the house clean.
- You can tell them you have NDIS or family who help you maintain the house if you want to.

## Inspect Mainstream House

- Arrive on time, dressed in clean clothes and looking your best
- Say hello to the Real Estate agent
- Walk through the house:
  - Is the bathroom a good size for you?
  - Does the kitchen have the right cupboards and stove for you?
  - Is the backyard or balcony good?
  - Do you like the carpet and walls and lighting?
- Look outside the house:
  - Is the street clean and safe?
  - Can you get to a bus or train or shops?
  - Can you get to work or family or friends?
- If you like the house ask the real estate agent how you can apply
- If you do not like the house, say thankyou to the real estate agent and leave

You may inspect lots of houses to find the right one.

Keep expectations realistic so the person knows they still need to apply. Inspecting a property does not mean it is theirs. People often get rejected after their application. It is important to know that this is not personal, there are lots of people applying for every house. Just keep trying.

## Mainstream Application

To apply for a house that you like through a real estate agent or online search engine, you will need to fill in a form. Sometimes this is an online form (such as 1form) or sometimes they have a paper version. The real estate agent will tell you how to apply after you inspect the house.

The application form goes to the Real Estate agent who checks all your details are correct. Then they send all the application forms to the landlord to choose one. You usually don't meet the landlord so the application form and your relationship with the Real Estate are the only things that the landlord will know about you.

### Tips:

- Remember the Real Estate agent does not look after your disability needs. Any expectation on them to do this could make you lose the property.

- The application form is to show that you can pay the rent and they can trust you to look after the house.

- References can be Character references (see Appendix 1 for an example) to show that you are clean and responsible or that you have a team of people who will be checking in and helping you.

- A cover letter is a very important addition to your application and will help the landlord get to know who you are (see Appendix 2 for an example)

- Try to send the application form in within 2 days of inspecting the house.

- Call the real estate the next day to make sure they got the application form and that it had all the information they need. Tell them you really like the property and give them your contact details in case they need anything else to help your application.

- If you are the carer or worker, you can advise the real estate agent that your person 'hires you to assist them with applying for housing and maintaining their house' and that you will be the real estate's second point of call throughout the tenancy as needed.

- **It is vital that the person applying is shown as someone who has choice and control in their life** and that anyone supporting them is led by that person. Real Estate agents and landlords do not want to know if someone is incapable of looking after themselves.

Sell the person's strengths, do not share their weaknesses.

## Financials – Bond and First Month's rent

Mainstream rentals require a bond to be paid in case of damages to the property. The bond is usually equal to 4 weeks rent and is returned to you when you leave the property if there are no damages.

You will also be expected to pay each months rent in advance. So before you move in to a property you will need to have money for

Bond (4 weeks rent) + 1<sup>st</sup> month rent

If you need financial assistance you can apply through Housing Vic <https://www.housing.vic.gov.au/>

## Finding Housing - Disability sector search

If you need a specially built house, or you need someone to manage your rental property for you, then you can use disability organisations to find a house.



---

### Disability Organisations who manage housing

If you want an organisation to manage the rental and the supports in the house, then it is best to go through a disability organisation. They will usually rent the house for you, so you do not need to apply or use real estate agents yourself.

Usually, the disability organisation will also manage the inhouse supports, which fall under Core or SIL supports within NDIS. This means that you are locked into that disability organisation for supports while you live in that house. The house and the supports go together.

Disability organisations can also help you find housemates. They can:

- Find the house
- Apply for the house
- Find housemates
- Arrange support staff
- Maintain the house (including bills, food, health and safety, appointments etc)
- Keep the rent low – shared between housemates and staff room, or capped at 25% DSP

### Disability sector Applications or Intake or Expression of Interest

Disability organisations will find about you first, and then search for the house or the housemates.

You can search for disability organisations that advertise SIL (Supported Independent Living) or call some of the organisations you already work with. They will take you through intake and find out what you need and want.

Once they get to know you, they will find houses and offer them to you. You should inspect the house and meet the housemates before you commit to any house.

## Disability Sector House inspections and Housemate introductions

Before you commit to moving into any house, it is important you inspect the house and meet the housemates. If you do not like anything or you want to change something, then you have a chance to do this before you move in.

### Inspecting the house

Use all the same guidelines in the Mainstream House inspections section.

If this is a share house, then there may already be people living there.

You can ask:

- Which one would be my bedroom?
- Do I have my own bathroom or share?
- How do I keep my belongings safe and private?
- Does a carer/support worker sleep over? Which one is their room?
- Who does the cooking?
- Do the housemates share food or have their own sections in the kitchen?
- Can I put my decorations up too?

### Meeting the housemates

Sometimes this happens when you inspect the house, but this can happen over the phone or via a video call.

You can ask:

- Are you noisy or quiet in your house?
- Do you go to bed late or early?
- What do you like to watch on tv?
- Do you like pets?
- What do you do during the weekdays?

**Remember:** Your housemate does not need to be your best friend, and the house does not need to be your dream house. You need to think about being happy and healthy in the house and will find this somewhere that you can be yourself.

**Carers and family remember:** Incidences cannot be avoided completely. They will happen and that is life. We can only put safety measures in place so that when they do happen, they are handled well. The next section on supports includes risks and how to keep your person safe, but free.

## Social Housing and other low-income Government assistance for housing

DFFH – Department of Fairness, Families and Housing

<https://www.housing.vic.gov.au/>

The Victorian Government provides housing assistance for people throughout Victoria. Each state manages housing support themselves.

DFFH provide information, financial aid, and housing with a reduced rent.

Rent is generally 25% total income (plus Commonwealth Rent Assistance)

### Social Housing

Social Housing waiting list <https://www.housing.vic.gov.au/victorian-housing-register>

#### Public Housing & Community Housing

Public Housing is housing owned by the government

Community Housing is housing owned by registered agencies

<https://chiavic.com.au/about/become-a-member/>

How to Apply: Online via MyGov OR printed form

<https://www.housing.vic.gov.au/apply-social-housing>

income assessment + application + area of preference + proof if need priority access

Timeline: 3 months – 10 years+

Application reviewed by DFFH

Decision made to put you onto waiting list for housing – 3 months

The Decision will detail 1BR – 3BR house/apartment in up to 5 preferred areas

Offer of house – 3 months to 10 years

Currently 50,000 people on list – each time someone moves out, the next person in line gets offered that house (27,000 are on priority meaning they will get offered the housing first).

Each area is managed by an office, so the available houses are on a list for each area.

When you get offered a house you can say no, but if you decline 3 offers you go back to the end of the list. Wait times can be years but worth getting put on there.

You will be taken off if your income goes above the threshold.

### Moveable Units

Granny flat style container is lowered into someone's backyard (with council site approval).

Timeline: 2-3 months

Decision: 2 designs to choose from. Instal and set up (and removal) costs are provided. Unit is connected into the main house's water and electricity.

Cost: 25% of pension

## SDA – Specialist Disability Accommodation

### NDIS funded housing

How to Apply: Functional or psychological assessments + Home and Living form + supporting documents to show where/how you want to live (alone/share) – [enquiries@ndis.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@ndis.gov.au)

Timeline: Emailed to SDA panel for decision – 1 to 6 months

Decision: Annual funded amount paid to SDA provider based on category, location, and housing type

- HPS (High Physical Support) – for people who need a hoist
- FA (Fully Accessible) – for people in a wheelchair
- IL (Improved Liveability) – for people who have mobility/vision/sensitivity/low IQ
- Robust – for people who have behaviours of concern (damage walls, need clear line of sight, safe room for workers)

Annual funded amount (for life):

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/providers/housing-and-living-supports-and-services/specialist-disability-accommodation/sda-pricing-and-payments>

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/providers/housing-and-living-supports-and-services/specialist-disability-accommodation/sda-pricing-and-payments>

As with any NDIS funding, if the SDA decision is not what the client wants or needs, a Review of Reviewable Decision (RORD) can be sent.

If the RORD is not satisfactory, an appeal to the AAT (Administrative Appeals Tribunal) can then be made.

SDA housing can be found either already built (using online search engine) or pre-construction directly through SIL or SDA providers.

### *SDA Search Engines*

<http://www.housinghub.com.au/>

<https://gonest.com.au/>

### *SDA Providers*

You can work with an SDA Provider before and during construction so that the house is built specifically to suit your needs. For example, you may want the light switches or bench tops at a certain height, or you want to include a bath, or automated doors.

### *Modifications after construction*

Modifications can be funded under AT (Assistive Technology) by NDIS or at your own cost.

SDA homes can't have NDIS Home Modifications funded as they are already purpose built.



## Supports in the House

Living independently means living with choice, such as deciding what you eat or how you want to decorate the house. Most people still need support to do this.

Supports in the house can be assistive technology, such as alarms to remind you to get up, or cook dinner, or a fingerprint lock so you never get locked out by forgetting your keys.

But supports in the house can also be people who are hired to help you with the things you find hard.

It is important to know what you need help with and make sure support is there to help you so that you can live independently and safely.

## Types of Support workers

Different support staff might be needed for different jobs. You can hire workers to suit what you need.

- Housework such as cleaning or gardening
- Cooking, meal preparation, food shopping
- Personal care such as help showering or dressing
- Organisation such as paying bills or managing appointments
- Encouraging you to do the things you want, like art or getting out to make friendships

## The role of a support worker

A support worker 'walks beside', they do tasks with you. They are not a shadow, or in charge, they help you to build skills and encourage you to do things yourself if you can. Their job is to teach, remind and encourage you to learn and do the jobs, not to actually take over and do them for you (unless, of course, it is a task you cannot physically do).

A support worker is not the 'friend', or the 'boss', or a servant. They are paid to help you be independent. If you do not like the way they are working, then you can find another that works with you the way you want them to.

It helps to write a support worker profile so they can read it and know how you would like them to work. See the Appendix 4 for an example support worker profile.

A support worker needs to be booked in advance, so you need to plan in advance. But what happens in an emergency or when something changes and you suddenly need help? Booklet Three helps you to plan for emergencies.

## Finding the right Support staff

### *What are you looking for?*

See Appendix 4 for an example Support Worker profile

Fun to be with but knows when to give you space when you want to be quiet

Similarities in age and culture or you may want to learn from people who are different to you

Experienced workers are essential, but you may want to train someone new to do things your way

### *How do you find it?*

An online search for support workers will bring up lots of organisations. You can look at their websites or call them to see what they offer.

They will ask you what you want and ask you to complete an intake process.

If you know anybody else using support workers you can ask if they recommend any organisations.

There are support worker organisations that specialise in certain disabilities, or mental health. This can be a help if it is important that your support workers understand your disability.

### *What should you ask?*

The organisation will ask you all about yourself as they complete the intake process. It is only fair that you also find out about them. Ask questions such as:

- Where do you advertise for your workers?
- What happens if I don't like the worker you send me?
- Who do I call if my worker is late?
- If my worker is sick, will you send another worker in their place?
- Do you train your workers yourselves or are they trained before you employ them?
- How much do they charge per hour and how much for travel?
- Is there a cancellation fee if I cancel the shift within 24hrs?
- Can you meet the worker first?

**Some workers work for themselves. Ask them the same questions, plus make sure you ask them if they have insurance and if they have a registered ABN.**

### *What will they ask you?*

They will ask you how you will pay for the support.

They will ask you about your disability and how that effects your daily activities.

They will ask you if there are any risks for the worker at your house, such as an angry dog, or a broken step.

They will ask about your goals and what you would like them to help you with.

## BOOKLET TWO Activity Section

### Mainstream Housing Search

*Activity: Mainstream Housing Search*

Research 3 rental properties: [www.realestate.com.au](http://www.realestate.com.au) OR [www.domain.com.au](http://www.domain.com.au)

*Property 1*

Description:  
Bedrooms:  
Bathrooms:  
Weekly Rental: \$  
Address:  
Real Estate:  
Is there an inspection time and date?

*Property 2*

Description:  
Bedrooms:  
Bathrooms:  
Weekly Rental: \$  
Address:  
Real Estate:  
Is there an inspection time and date?

*Property 3*

Description:  
Bedrooms:  
Bathrooms:  
Weekly Rental: \$  
Address:  
Real Estate:  
Is there an inspection time and date?

*Activity: Inspection checklist*

Write a list of things to remember when inspecting a property:

- 
- 
- 
-

*Activity: Housemate online search*

Research 3 share houses: <a href="http://www.flatmates.com.au">www.flatmates.com.au</a>
<i>Property 1</i>
Description of home: Description of housemates: Weekly Rental: \$ What is included in cost: Suburb:
<i>Property 2</i>
Description of home: Description of housemates: Weekly Rental: \$ What is included in cost: Suburb:
<i>Property 3</i>
Description of home: Description of housemates: Weekly Rental: \$ What is included in cost: Suburb:

*Activity: Complete application*

Complete an online or paper form <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• prepare references</li> <li>• copy your ID</li> <li>• write a cover note</li> </ul>
Online form – <a href="http://www.1form.com.au">www.1form.com.au</a>
Paper form – Ask for a paper copy at a real estate agents office

*Activity: Save some money*

<p>Start a savings account</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SAVINGS GOAL = \$</li> <li>• GOAL DATE: / /</li> </ul>
<p>Buy some household items each week  <i>See Appendix 8 for a list of Household items</i></p>
<p>Research government assistance for moving out  <a href="http://Housing.vic.gov.au">Help with renting   Housing.vic.gov.au</a></p>

Disability Sector Housing Search

*Activity: Disability sector search*

Research 3 disability housing websites:

<p><a href="http://www.housinghub.com.au">www.housinghub.com.au</a></p>
<p>1. Search a rental property in Victoria          Suburb:          Bedrooms:          Organisation:          Contact phone number:</p>
<p><a href="http://www.gonest.com.au">www.gonest.com.au</a></p>
<p>2. Search a rental property in Victoria          Suburb:          Bedrooms:          Organisation:          Contact phone number:</p>
<p><a href="http://www.disabilityhousing.com.au">www.disabilityhousing.com.au</a></p>
<p>3. Search a rental property in Victoria          Suburb:          Bedrooms:          Organisation:          Contact phone number:</p>

*Activity: Find 3 disability organisations who offer housing services*

*Tip: Google search organisations you know, or use key words such as 'SIL' or 'ndis housing vic'*

1. Organisation Name: Website: Phone number: Details of housing services:
2. Organisation Name: Website: Phone number: Details of housing services:
1. Organisation Name: Website: Phone number: Details of housing services:

### Social Housing Search

*Activity: Use the Housing Victoria website*

[www.housing.vic.gov.au](http://www.housing.vic.gov.au)

1. Find the Social Housing information a. Find out how you can apply for public housing b. Look up which Victorian Housing Register Area your suburb is listed in
2. Find the Moveable Units a. Find out how you can apply for a Moveable Unit
3. What is the DFFH (Department of Fairness Families and Housing) phone number?

Activity: Disability Accommodation housing search:

Research 2 SDA properties: [www.housinghub.com.au](http://www.housinghub.com.au) [www.disabilityhousing.com.au](http://www.disabilityhousing.com.au)

<i>Property 1</i>
Description: Bedrooms: Bathrooms: SDA Category: Suburb: SDA Provider: SIL/Support Provider: Date Available:
<i>Property 2</i>
Description: Bedrooms: Bathrooms: SDA Category: Suburb: SDA Provider: SIL/Support Provider: Date Available:

### Home Modifications Search

Activity: Find 3 Home Modification websites

Tip: Google search for Accessible bathrooms Victoria, or Accessible kitchens Melbourne

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Website:</li> <li>2. Name of Company:</li> <li>3. Types of Modifications they do:</li> <li>4. Phone Number:</li> </ol>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Website:</li> <li>2. Name of Company:</li> <li>3. Types of Modifications they do:</li> <li>4. Phone Number:</li> </ol>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Website:</li> <li>2. Name of Company:</li> <li>3. Types of Modifications they do:</li> <li>4. Phone Number:</li> </ol>

### Support Worker Search

*Activity: Create a Support worker profile for yourself*

*Tip: Pretend you need someone to take you food shopping every week*

About Me	<p><i>What you do everyday:</i> I am</p> <p><i>Disability:</i> I have</p> <p><i>Reason for needing worker:</i> I want to</p>
Job Description	<i>What you are hiring them to do:</i>
Emotional work	I am looking for a worker whose personality is.... <i>Eg. Calm me down when anxious</i>
Physical work	I am looking for a worker who can.... <i>Eg. Transfer me in and out of the car</i>
Requirements	I need my worker to... <i>Eg. Have a clean car and be a safe driver</i>



## BOOKLET THREE – Moving Out

### Get ready for the move

Moving in Timeline

Changing your address

Budget

Utilities

Getting to Know you community

Belongings (lists)

Safety and Rules

Emergencies

Cleaning

### Moving Day

Stress and worries

Essentials Box

Logistics

Saying Goodbye

### Making a House into a Home

Living in your new Home

Role of Family and friends

House Coordination

House meetings

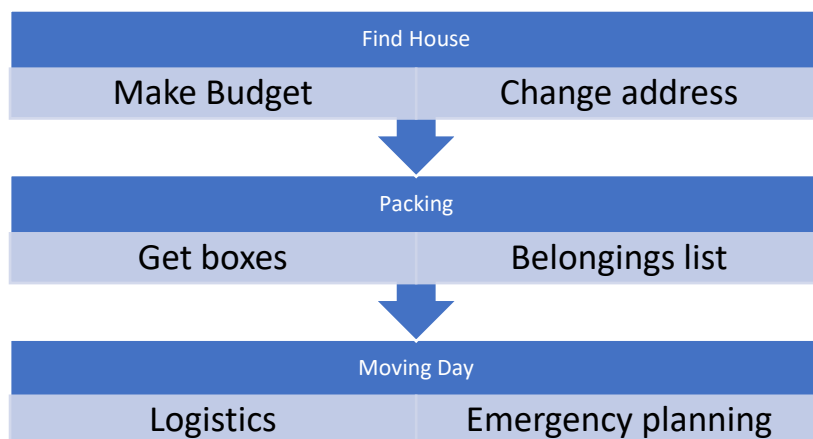
How to handle conflicts

## Get ready for the move

### Moving in Timeline

A moving in timeline can act like an exciting plan where you can't wait to get to the moving out date. But for some it will feel like a long and slow countdown of worry and too many jobs. It is not for everyone, but someone needs to make sure all the moving parts are coordinated.

A moving timeline can be written as a To Do list or can be a calendar, so all the important dates happen on time.



### Moving In Checklist

If this is your first time moving out, it is really helpful to get organised and start planning. The planning process can ease the stress around moving day and help settle you in quicker. Many people (and family and friends) cancel the move on the day or soon after because they had not organised and planned enough.

Start to plan your list as soon as you can to make sure you have everything by the time you move. If you have housemates, they might already have some of the furniture or kitchen items so you can make the list with them if you can.

There are some great examples of moving lists in the Appendix and the Booklet 3 Activity section will help you create your own.

Appendix 5 has an example Moving In Checklist to get you started

### Budget

In Booklet One we explored how to make a budget.

See the Appendix 14 for another budget example.

It is a good idea to look at the budget again when you have moved out and see if it is still working.

### Changing your address

When you move, you need to tell organisations that you work with, so they know you have moved. That way they can send mail to your new address, and you can keep up with bills or any subscriptions you have.

Some examples are:

- NDIS
- Centrelink
- Bank
- GP or medical
- Support organisations
- Anyone who visits you at your home
- Vic Roads

If you are applying for any Centrelink claim, such as Commonwealth Rent Assistance or Utilities Allowance it is easiest using myGov. Once you are logged in you can find the Claims section and choose which claims you need. You will need a digital copy of your lease to upload so rent assistance is added to your Centrelink payments.

When you change your address with Centrelink a new Health Care card will be posted to you with your new address on it.

You can also pay for Australia Post to redirect mail from your old address to your new address.

If someone else manages your mail you can ask them to show you what they do with your mail and learn how and where they file important documents. Even if you can't understand all the work they do, you may be able to take part in some aspect of it.

### Utilities connection

Utilities is electricity, gas and water. Utilities can also include internet. You need to pay for these in your own house.

1. Choose company (internet search or ask friends and family who they use for utilities)
2. Call and tell them you are moving into a new home and need to set up utilities
3. Do this for each utility (ie water is usually a different company to gas or electricity)
4. Write down when you need to start paying. You can set up a direct debit, or you can wait til they send a bill.
5. When you move out, you need to call and cancel the utilities.

If you are moving in with housemate, it is a good idea to have all your names on each utility bill, so call when you are all together to set it up.

### Getting to Know your community

Before you move into your home, spend some time getting to know the street, the shops, and public transport (if you catch it).

It is a great idea to take walks in the area or even print out a map of the area so you can see where the local places are, like shops or parks. You may even get to know a neighbour before you move in.

Sometimes you need to change GPs (General Practitioner or Doctor) and you may need a new pharmacy (chemist) for your scripts. You can make an appointment before you move out to get to the GP and see if you like them.

#### Steps to changing GPs and Pharmacy:

1. Find GP, book appointment
2. Find Pharmacy, get details (fax, email, phone number)
3. Give new GP permission to request your files from old GP
4. Give new pharmacy permission to request your scripts from old pharmacy
5. Give new GP the new pharmacy details to send scripts directly there
6. Set up account with new pharmacy (if billing direct to bank, NDIS or State Trustees)

Local shops or a friendly neighbour can make family and friends feel better knowing that you have a safe place to go if you are in trouble. Family and friends can give the neighbour or a local shop owner their contact information in case you ever get stuck and need someone to call them for you. Always build a relationship first so you know they are a trustworthy person.

If you like watching sports you can see when the local games are on at the oval, or you might like to find a seat where you can sit and watch people on their walks.

Visiting your new area and getting to know it is a great way to get excited about moving out and all the new things you can do. It is about creating your life the way you want it.

See Appendix 6 for an example Getting to Know your Community sheet that is useful to make before you move.

### Emergencies and safety issues

Getting to know your community is also about finding out where not to go. Some streets are too dark at night, some streets are courts so you cannot get home that way. Some streets cannot be used if you are in a wheelchair or have trouble walking as the ground is not flat. Being independent is about being responsible for your own safety. Knowing how to keep out of trouble, and what to do if you get in trouble, is being safe.

Although it can be scary to talk about emergencies and safety, a safety plan can help you to know what to do if anything ever happens.

An **example safety plan** looks like this:

What if.....	I can....	Emergency details
I get locked out of my house	Call friend with spare key OR Go to friendly neighbours house so they can call friend OR Use spare key that is in key safe OR Change doorlocks to fingerprint locks	Friend's phone number  Friendly Neighbour : 6 Example st  KeySafe code: 0426
Toast catches on fire in toaster	Call worker or housemate to help OR Throw fire blanket over fire OR Unplug toaster OR Get outside and call for help	Fire brigade: Call 000  Fire Blanket: Hangs on side of fridge
Fallen over and can't get up	Call worker or housemate to help OR Press emergency button (crawl to it or press if it is a wearable) OR Get into a comfortable position and stay warm and wait for someone to visit	Emergency button alert contact : automatically alerts 000  Install motion detector to alert family and friends if immobile position detected

See Appendix 7 for another example safety plan.

### Technology to keep you Safe

As you can see from the examples above there is lots of technology that can be used to help keep you safe when you move out.

Technology can:

- remind you to do things, such as take medication or take the bins out
- alert people that you need help
- keep your house safe, such as an automatic locking door
- open doors or blinds
- Turn heating and cooling on and off

## Packing: Belongings and Furniture

If you only have bedroom belongings and you are moving out, you will need to also plan for the rest of the house such as lounge room, kitchen and laundry.

Belongings are personal items such as clothes and hobbies, toiletries, towels and sheets.

Furniture is items that are useful such as a bed, couch, fridge, table.

Crockery & Cutlery is for the kitchen such as plates, forks and tongs.

Not everything needs to be brand new when you move out of home. You can get some really good second-hand furniture from op shops or online shops. Family and friends who have moved out of home, might have odds or bits and pieces that they'd be happy to donate to you.

Appendix 8 & 9 are good moving out lists that include items you need to pack or purchase. You can start packing as soon as you know you are moving out, leaving only the essentials that you need everyday:

1. Buy or collect boxes (online shops, Storage facilities, shops that throw boxes away)
2. Pack decorations and ornaments
3. Pack sheets and towels
4. Pack kitchen appliances that are not used daily
5. Pack kitchen cupboard items
6. Pack bathroom items
7. Pack clothing (leave enough for 1 week – see Essentials Box)

If you only have a bedroom of belongings, just pack everything, leaving just the Essentials box.

## Essentials Box

The Essentials Box is the box that you will need to find first. When you move, all your boxes and belongings need to be unpacked which takes a long time. On your first night you will need to find your toothbrush and pyjamas, and maybe some plates and a fork. If you have an Essentials Box you can easily find the basics.

Dinner on the first night is usually take away pizza while sitting on boxes, usually everyone is too tired to cook or unpack the whole kitchen.

## Essential Items for the Essential Box

- Toilet Paper
- Hand Towel
- Hand Soap
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Bed Sheets and Pillow
- 1 plate, 1 mug, 1 knife and fork and spoon
- Breakfast food
- Pyjamas
- Change of clothes for tomorrow
- Phone charger

## Moving Day

### Stress and worries

Moving out is a major life event. For the person moving and for their family and friends. There is nothing you can do to make the day or moving run perfectly without problems. There will always be fun moments and hard moments. It is how you respond that will matter.

Tips for reducing stress on moving day:

- Be organised – have a plan of the day including logistics and stopping to eat
- Care for each other – look after all the helpers on the day
- If something goes wrong, ask if you can make a new plan
- If something breaks, ask if you can get it fixed (book this in for another day)
- If you are happy but someone else is sad, that is ok
- Thank everyone for helping
- Don't let anyone take over your new house, it is yours to decorate and manage

### Logistics

Day plan:

1. Shower and get ready (including breakfast)
2. Pack any last items and check boxes and furniture is organised and ready to move
3. Truck or friend arrives to help move
4. Help carry boxes, furniture and belongings into moving vehicle
5. Drive to new house
6. Help carry boxes, furniture and belongings into new house
7. Set up bed and couch, plug fridge in
8. Unpack Essentials box (unpacking the other boxes can take a few weeks as moving is very tiring)
9. Relax and order some dinner, you will all be exhausted

### Safety and Responsibilities

Before you unpack even your Essentials box, do a full safety check of the house.

Check all doors are lockable and all windows are secure. Check electricity is on, and you know how to work the heater or air-conditioning.

Check all blinds open and close (especially in the bedroom so you can fall asleep).

If you are renting it is a good idea to video a walk-through of the house inside and out. This will help when you complete the condition report.

If you are renting you will need to complete a Condition Report in the first week that you move in. The report is a record of all the scratches and bumps the house has so that none of those can be blamed on you. If you damage the house after the condition report has been completed, you need to pay for the repair. For example if you accidentally break a window, you will call the glazier and pay to have the glass fixed.

If anything is not working in the house, you (or your family and friends) should call the Real Estate agent straight away.

If the house is not safe (ie doors do not lock) then you should not unpack your furniture until the locks are fixed. Usually, a locksmith can fix a lock in one day.

### Saying Goodbye

Plan ahead for when you will say goodbye to family and friends, or if they are staying. You may plan for them to leave once everything is moved into the house so you can just be with your housemates or alone. You may have a family and friend staying over for the first few days until you are ready. Or you may all agree to have dinner together and then they will leave.

Saying goodbye is very important and will set the boundaries for you to be independent. Your family and friends need to know that this is your house and that you are fine on your own.

If your family and friends are still fussing and unpacking, remind them that you had agreed for them to say goodbye once all the goods were moved in (or whenever you had planned). They may need you to remind them so they say goodbye and leave you. Some family and friends find this very hard.

#### Tip for saying Goodbye

- Say what a lovely new home it is
- Say thankyou so much for all the help
- Plan for when you will see each other next (Say 'OK, see you tomorrow')
- Walk them to the front door
- Say 'I'm fine now, goodbye'
- Send them a photo after they leave of you happy in your new home



## Making a House into a Home

### Safety and Rules

Safety and rules keep your house fun and working for everyone who lives there. You should all have a say in the rules, do not let someone else make the rules up for you in your own house.

Rules such as 'Turn all the lights off when everyone goes to bed', or 'Put food away properly' can save you money.

Rules such as 'Don't eat someone else's food', or making a chores list can stop you from having arguments with housemates or feeling sad in your home.

A Chores List is a list that shows all the house jobs and who does them. A chores list includes putting the bins out, doing the dishes and vacuuming. You can even put feeding the pets on a chores list and write which days people do the chores so it is fair.

Rules around money are important too. Some people look after their own money and sometimes support workers help to manage your money. If a support worker looks after your money, it is important they keep a record of what they spend (see Appendix 10 for a money handling chart).

You can choose to buy your own food and pay bills separately, or you can all save your money for these house items together. Sometimes this is called a 'kitty'.

You can talk about safety and rules for the house at your house meetings.

### House meeting

If you are living with others a weekly house meeting is perfect when sharing a meal. One night a week you can sit together and talk about

- shared bills
- household chores
- anything that is bothering you
- anything that is making you happy
- decorations for the house
- upcoming social events
- privacy
- new ideas for the house
- new ideas for the garden

Sometimes family or friends or a worker come over for the house meetings and help to sort anything out or take notes. You can keep a list of things to bring up at the house meeting if it is hard for you to talk about them at other times.

## Cleaning and Cooking

Cooking and cleaning are fun and fantastic as well as boring and daily. Most people want to learn to cook and clean (and budget) before they move out. It can be hard to learn these things before you move out if your family or friends have always done it for you.

It can be helpful to plan the weeks meals so you know what to include in your shopping list, especially if you only want to shop weekly (see Appendix 11). Some people prefer to shop each day and only get what they need for that meal.

There are many Independent Living courses where you can learn to cook and clean before you move out. Look up your local community centre to see if there is one you can join.

Support workers can help you learn skills before you move out. This is a great way to get to know your workers before you move out. This way your family and friends can also get to know them as they teach you in your home. Maybe you can even cook for your family and friends one night!

## Role of family and friends in your new house

It is important that you decide how much you want your family and friends to be part of in your new house. It is your choice if they have a key, and if they have a key then it is your choice when they can visit. Most people who move out are ok with their family and friends having a key as long they call and ask before coming over and they only use the key in emergencies or with permission.

Most family and friends will come over and wish their person's new house was cleaner or neater, but they will know that it is not their job to fix it up. In saying this, most people will clean their house before their family and friends come over to show them how well they are doing living independently.

If you have support workers, it is important that the family and friends do not expect the workers to keep the house in a way that you do not want. A support worker is there for you, to help you do the things you can't. If you are happy with the lounge room looking messy, then that is not for your worker, or your family and friends to clean up. They should ask if you like it like that and leave it if you say yes.

Maintaining a safe and hygienic house is important though. If you are not keeping your house clean and hygienic then you are not being responsible. In this case a support worker is in charge of making sure your house is hygienic so that you and your housemates do not get sick.

## House coordination

A calendar on the wall is a great start to organising a home. Find a calendar that you love that has great pictures on it (not an organisational chart). On the calendar you can put:

- important dates to remember (birthdays, doctor appointments, when people are going away)
- house reminders (bin night, electricity bill due, budget day, house meeting)
- When people are coming over (support staff, friends, Family and friends)

A House Coordinator can also be a paid support to manage your house.

They can help to manage: Staff rostering; Weekly meetings; Budgeting and bill payments; Emergencies; Family and friends or any other non-paid supports (Circles of Support or microboards); Hygiene and Safety in house

## Living in your new Home

The best part of moving out is living in your new home.

You get to set up your own bedroom and live in a different way if you want to.

You can create your own morning routine, you can find your own special seat in the house, you can plant a garden or buy your own snacks.

You can have friends over and make a barbeque or just have them over for some coffee.

This is the best and most important part of growing up and being independent in your own home.

See Appendix 12 for help making a Forever Plan for your future.

Living in your new home is the best part of moving out. Don't forget to have fun.

### BOOKLET THREE Activity Section

Get ready for the move

*Activity: Create Moving in Timeline*

To Do	Date (or how many weeks/months)	Tick when done

*Activity: Change your address*

Tip: you can prepare for this by writing the organisation down when you receive letters before you move.

Organisations to call	Tick when done

*Activity: Connect Utilities*

Tip: You can research utility companies before you move

Utility	Company	Phone number	Tick when done
Electricity			
Gas			
Internet			

*Activity: Write a list of your belongings to take to the new house*

Eg. Clothes	Eg. TV

*Activity: Get to Know your new community*

**Tip:** Drive or walk or ride around the streets of your new home to see what is close by

**Council:**

**Doctor:**

**Hospital:**

**Local Shops:**

- Milk bar or Grocer:
- Small shops:
- Take away food:

**Supermarket:**

**Things to Do:**

- 
- 
- 

**Public transport:**

**Names of people you live with:**

**Names of neighbours:**

**Names of workers:**

**Challenge 1:**

Know your address off by heart

**Challenge 2:**

Say hi to a shopkeeper

**Challenge 3:**

Say hi to a neighbour

*Activity: Make an Emergency Plan*

Emergency example	What to do
Emergency Contact numbers	

Activity: What Safety and Rules do you want in your new home?

What will keep me safe?	What will keep me happy?
Eg. Keep sharp knives in the knife block, not in the drawer	Eg. Don't wake me up with loud noises

Activity: Make a cleaning roster

	Cleaning job	Day of the week
<b>Kitchen</b>		
<b>Bathroom</b>		
<b>Floors</b>		
<b>Dusting</b>		

### Moving Day

*Activity: Write down what might worry you on moving day*

Worries	What to do if this happens

*Activity: List what you will need in your Essentials Box*

Tip: these are items you can't live without for 1 week (just in case you can't find things in boxes)

Eg. Pyjamas and a change of clothes	Eg. Toilet paper

*Activity: Plan moving day 'Logistics'*

Order	Things to Do	Who is in charge
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		

*Activity: Ask your family and friends if they will be sad or happy on moving day.*

Tip: It is important to make a plan for saying goodbye so everyone knows what happens afterwards.

Friends and family I live with now	Will they be happy or sad?	When will you say goodbye to them?	What will they do when they miss you?







## Appendix

### Appendix 1 Character Reference for Real Estate

25<sup>th</sup> February 2021

To Whom It May Concern,

**RE: Peter Jackson of 31-35 Executive Rd, HAPPY TOWN VIC 3106**

I have known Peter for 11 months as I am employed under NDIS as his Support Coordinator. During this time I have worked closely with him finding him new accommodation and further setting up a new support system in his new location. Peter receives NDIS funding to help manage his bills, his cleaning and his gardening. If Peter is your new tenant your house will always be looked after.

I have found Peter to be quiet and respectful and always smiling. Peter likes to garden and stay at home unless he is visiting the beach. Peter avoids conflict and keeps away from noisy people and disruptive behaviour. He seeks quiet entertainment away from others and is on a first name basis with his local café assistants where he goes for his daily milkshake. He would be a perfect neighbour.

Peter's goal is to find a quiet unit for himself where he can live independently and find a relationship to share that with. I am confident he can achieve this.

Yours Sincerely,

Christiaan Bramblebee  
CEO & Support Coordinator  
Your Community Home  
Ph: 0422 556 867  
Email: ChristiaanB@yourcommunityhome.com



## Appendix 2 Cover Letter for Real Estate application

Cover Letter for Rental Application

Rental Property:

c/o - RE Agent

Date:

To The Landlord:

I, Client Name, am writing this letter to express my interest in renting your property located at Address, advertised for \$ per week. I found the property advertised on realestate.com and went to view it on the 5 March 2021. I am a single man, 42 years old, who is looking to live on my own in a property close to my family such as yours is. Other criteria met were a car park and a small garden.

I do not work due to my disability (Multiple Sclerosis), but have a Disability Support Pension that is a regular stable income for life. I lead a quiet life, keeping myself fit at the gym 2 days a week and visiting my Dad in Knox. My family and I are close so they drop around sometimes too.

I am easy-going and make a great tenant as my previous landlord will attest to. I will provide a regular cleaner and gardener to keep the house as nice as it is the day I move in.

Looking forward to hearing from you soon,

From Client Name

Current Address

Phone Number

## CHECKLIST FOR INSPECTING THE PROPERTY

- Measure dimensions
  - fridge
  - washing machine/dryer
  - shower width (for chair)
- Power points - location and quantity
- Windows
  - flyscreens
  - block-out blinds
  - heavy to open
- Accessibility
  - lift reliability
  - entry points
  - bins
  - cupboards
  - taps
- Kitchen
  - dishwasher suitable model
  - rangehood suitable
- Utilities
  - gas, electricity & water setup
  - internet
- Parking space
  - access
  - storage cage
- Building security
  - evacuation plan (check stairwell if in apartments)
  - buzz in/view visitors from lounge

## SUPPORT WORKER INFO FOR NEW WORKERS

About Me	<p>I'm Chrissy and my cat is Samantha.</p> <p>I have cerebral palsy which makes my body hard to move. It is especially hard on cold days or if I am stressed. I live alone and am used to doing most things on my own, even if it does take me longer to do it. I just like to be independent.</p> <p>I used to work at the council and have studied design though TAFE but I don't work anymore. I still like to be involved in local matters when I can.</p>
Job Description	
Emotional work	<p>Be positive: I have had a hard life with lots of hard and sad moments. For this reason I need you to avoid arriving at work and telling me your horrible morning or news story, even if it is just bad traffic. Don't be fake happy, just please 'leave your bags at the door'.</p> <p>Be proactive: Learn what jobs are yours and actively do them. It is tiring if I need to write a To Do list each shift for you. If you see washing to fold, please do it.</p> <p>Listen: If I need to talk, please let me talk. Sometimes I don't see anyone else all week so I just need to tell someone my story. Please don't talk over the top of me or only focus on physical work if I need you for emotional work.</p>
Physical work	<p>Driving me to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Groceries</li> <li>• Appointments</li> <li>• Outings</li> </ul> <p>House Work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fold washing and put away</li> <li>• General tidy up</li> <li>• Clean spills or mess I have not been able to clean up</li> <li>• Cook meal and separate into containers for week or freeze</li> </ul>
Requirements	<p>Clean neat car</p> <p>Safe driving practices</p> <p>Good hygiene and presentation (no crop tops or gym wear, no heels)</p> <p>On time (or good communication if emergency makes you late)</p> <p>Respectful of my privacy</p> <p>Supportive of my needs and my independence</p>

## Appendix 5 Moving In Checklist

### Set Moving Dates

- Lease start date, pick up keys
- Moving truck/large furniture delivered
- First night to sleep in house
- Collection of other belongings if stored
- End lease/living in old location (may need to give 2 weeks – 1 month notice)
- First grocery shop for new home

### Switch Utilities on (needs to be done 1 week before moving in date)

Consider your daily schedule and reorganise to suit new location (ie will you need to have supports pick you up earlier to get to appointments)

Change address with all relevant contacts and organisations

Complete property condition report (preferably before moving furniture in)

### Tip for Moving Day

- Pack an overnight bag as if you were travelling for 2 days.

Include toiletries, toilet paper, basic food supplies (tea, snacks).

This way you can still look after yourself when you are tired and you have not finished unpacking.

- Plan first weeks meals – make them easy in case kitchen is not fully unpacked

## Appendix 6 Getting To Know Your Community

**Council:** Knox City Council

**Doctor:** Knox Medical Centre (4 min drive)

**Hospital:** Angliss Hospital (18 min drive)

**Local Shops:** Springhill Shopping Centre (4min drive, 14 min walk)

- Coles

- Chemist, Indian supermarket, beauty shop, hair salon, bottle shop, gym, Newsagency, TAB, TSG, gluten free bakery

- Take Away: pizza, fish and chips, Sri Lankan, Café, McDonalds

**Supermarket:** Coles Westfield Knox Shops

**Things to Do:**

- Upwey Community Centre: Mens Shed, Arts courses etc (9 min drive)

- Boronia RSL: Live music and a meal

- Village Cinemas – Knox Ozone

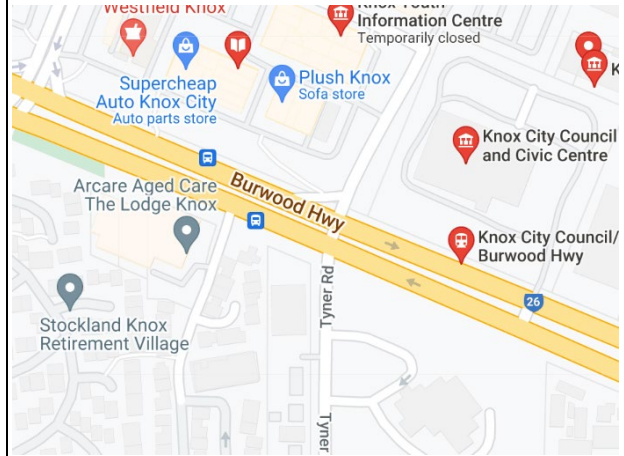
**Public transport:** Boronia station (7 min drive, 28 min walk)

**Names of people you live with:**

**Names of neighbours:**

**Names of workers:**

Getting To Know Your Community continued:



### Notes and Questions



## Appendix 7 My Safety Plan

### *Staying safe at home*

Things that could make me unsafe at home:

The safest way to leave my house is:

Places I can go if I need to leave my house until it is safe:

If I can't leave my house the safest place in my house to go is:

If I need to call for help, I can call:

### *Action:*

Go to safe place in house

OR

Leave house and go to bus stop/catch taxi

Go to my friends or family's house

Call friend for help

Wait 2 hours then go home if safe



## Appendix 8 Household Item examples list

## Bedroom Furniture

- Bed
- Bedside Table
- Blanket
- Doona and pillow
- Washing basket

## Belongings

- Clothes
- Toiletries
- Sheets x2
- Towels x2
- Bathmat
- Handtowels
- Medicines and Vitamins
- Hair dryer?

## Kitchen

- Microwave
- Toaster
- Kettle
- Fridge
- Tea towels
- Crockery
- Cutlery
- Cooking pots, pans, trays
- Cooking utensils
- Containers
- Dish Rack
- Knife set with holder
- cutting boards (1 fruit/veg, 1 meat)

## Lounge room

- Decorations
- DVD/Blu-ray + DVDs and movies
- Couch
- Coffee table
- Dining table + chairs
- Entertainment unit
- TV
- Occasional table
- Lamp

## Bathroom

- Toilet brush
- Shower caddy

## Laundry

- Washing machine
- Clothes horse
- Vacuum
- Outdoor broom
- Cobweb brush
- Dustpan and broom
- Iron
- Ironing board

## Appendix 9 Moving In example Shopping List

### Kitchen

- Paper towel
- Cleaning cloths
- Scourer
- Dish brush
- Dishwashing soap
- Dishwasher powder

### Cooking

- Cooking paper
- Glad wrap
- Foil
- Oil
- Butter
- Bread
- Coffee
- Tea
- Milk
- Cheese

### Bathroom

- Hand soap
- Shower soap
- Shampoo/Conditioner
- Deodorant
- Toilet spray (scent)

### Toilet

- Toilet paper
- Toilet brush
- Toilet cleaner soap

### Cleaning

- Bathroom spray
- Cleaning cloths (different from kitchen)
- Window Cleaner
- Duster

Extra Items:

### Staff and Client Financial Transaction Record

Date	Money Received	Price of Item Purchased	Description of Item Purchased	Money Returned	Client Name and Signature	Staff Name and Signature	Notes

# Meals

# Shopping

Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	
Saturday	
Sunday	

# My Forever Plan

What I want to do:

What is stopping me from doing it now:

What plans do I need to make now to make it happen?

How long will this take?

Who can help me?

Name	Where do they work	Phone	How they will help

Appendix 13 Provider and Contact List

<i>Support or Service Type</i>	Provider	Contact details	Comments
Family and Friends	Family		
	Friend		
Support Workers			
OT			
GP			
Physio			
Emergency contact	Equipment repair		
	Health		

*Tip: Make sure you adjust all \$ into weekly amounts. For example, if you get paid fortnightly you need to divide your income by 2 (2 weeks).*



**Money In (Income):**

Where does my money come from?	How much do I get per week?
Disability Support Pension	\$475
Extra from Mum	\$50
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$525</b>

**Money Out (Expenses):**

Where does my money go each week?	Total Income	\$525
Description	Cost	Money Left
Rent	\$200	\$325
Utilities	\$50	\$275
Food and Groceries	\$100	\$175
Mobile phone	\$25	\$150
Medical	\$25	\$125
Entertainment (movies and snacks)	\$50	\$75
Vet bills	\$25	\$50
Transport (bus)	\$25	\$25
Savings	\$25	\$0
<b>Total money left</b>		<b>\$0</b>

## Advocacy

This book is based on the principles of the Disability Act 2006 whereby a person with a disability has the right to choice, safety and privacy in their own home.

If you need help asking for your right to choice, safety or privacy, an advocate may be able to help you. An advocate is someone who helps you to stand up for yourself.

### **Melbourne East Disability Advocacy**

Phone: (03) 9877 7990

<https://meda.org.au/>

### **Independent Mental Health Advocacy**

Phone: 1300 947 820

<https://www.imha.vic.gov.au/>

### **Victorian Advocacy League for Individuals with Disability (VALID)**

Free Call: 1800 655 570

Web: [www.valid.org.au](http://www.valid.org.au)

### **Youth Disability Advocacy Service**

Phone: (03) 9267 3709

Web: [www.ydas.org.au](http://www.ydas.org.au)

### **Disability Advocacy Resource Unit (DARU)**

Phone: (03) 9639 6856

Web: [www.daru.org.au](http://www.daru.org.au)