

|  |
| --- |
| **Tenancy plus – Tenancy support program**  Operational guidelines  November 2021  **OFFICIAL** |
|  |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| Tenancy plus – Tenancy support program  Operational guidelines |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| To receive this document in another format, email phip@dffh.vic.gov.au,  Authorised and published by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne.  © State of Victoria, Australia, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing November 2021.  **ISBN** 978-1-76096-725-3 **(pdf/online/MS word)**  Available at <https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/tenancy-plus-tenancy-support-program-operational-guidelines> <https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/tenancy-plus-tenancy-support-program-operational-guidelines > |
|  |

Contents

[Purpose of these guidelines 1](#_Toc94705794)

[Tenancy plus – Tenancy support program 1](#_Toc94705795)

[Program aim 1](#_Toc94705796)

[Target group 2](#_Toc94705797)

[Service requirements 2](#_Toc94705798)

[Client support plans 2](#_Toc94705799)

[Sector Interface 3](#_Toc94705800)

[Screening and referral process 3](#_Toc94705801)

[Access and waiting list management 3](#_Toc94705802)

[Active holding 3](#_Toc94705803)

[Family violence 4](#_Toc94705804)

[Children who left care before 1990 (Forgotten Australians/care leavers) 6](#_Toc94705805)

[Funded activities 7](#_Toc94705806)

[Establish Successful Tenancies 7](#_Toc94705807)

[Intervene when tenancies are at risk 8](#_Toc94705808)

[Assisting renters with priority transfer applications 8](#_Toc94705809)

[Advocacy 8](#_Toc94705810)

[Staff training 9](#_Toc94705811)

[Program Unit pricing 9](#_Toc94705812)

[Data collection and privacy 9](#_Toc94705813)

[Data collection and reporting 10](#_Toc94705814)

[Data collection 10](#_Toc94705815)

[Reporting 10](#_Toc94705816)

[Programs/initiatives that can be accessed to assist renters 11](#_Toc94705817)

[The Multiple and Complex Needs Initiative 11](#_Toc94705818)

[The Support for High Risk Tenancies Program 11](#_Toc94705819)

[Complex Needs Coordinators and the central team 12](#_Toc94705820)

[Public Tenant Employment Program 12](#_Toc94705821)

Left blank intentionally

# Purpose of these guidelines

This document provides the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (department) funded Tenancy plus – Tenancy support program (program) service providers with an understanding of the purpose, aims, target groups and key service requirements for the program. These guidelines are designed to be used in conjunction with other key documents that outline the range of responsibilities and requirements that apply to funded organisations, including department policy, policy and funding plans, service agreements and legislative and regulatory requirements.

These guidelines detail the program framework, funded activities and funding guidelines, and are designed to assist the program’s service providers to be aware of and understand:

* the program’s aims and structure
* how the program is managed at the government level
* how the program relates to other key department initiatives
* expectations of continuous development, data collection, planning and review
* standards of service delivery and active partnerships with department and sector services
* activities funded under the program
* the basis upon which funding levels are determined.

# Tenancy plus – Tenancy support program

Many people rely on support to sustain their housing tenancy and live independently. The ability to engage renters in their community and link renters to support when required, underpins successful tenancies.

The program responds to the Victorian Government’s commitment to ensuring that social housing renters are supported to maintain their tenancy. Social housing is the generic term for public and community housing.

# Program aim

The aim of the program is to provide early intervention to support social housing renters to sustain their tenancy and reduce the risk of homelessness.

To be successful program service providers require a partnership approach between the department’s housing program, other department program areas, community housing agencies participating in the Victorian Housing Register and the general service sector. These partnerships will focus on achieving outcomes for renters through early intervention and integrated service delivery. This partnership approach should be characterised by collaboration, information exchange, and engagement with renters.

The relationship between the department’s housing program, community housing providers and service providers should be professional and able to accommodate the robustness of the landlord and support roles.

Specifically, service providers will achieve the program aim by:

* assisting new renters with a high level of complexity, including people who left care before 1990 (care leavers) and those fleeing family violence with support to establish and sustain their tenancy
* intervening when social housing tenancies are at risk by providing individual support to stabilise the tenancy and reduce the risk of the tenancy breaking down
* providing support to renters whose tenancies are at risk due to unsuitable housing (this could be locational, or property based) and renters who are fleeing, have fled family violence or are under direct threat to apply for a transfer
* providing advocacy for social housing renters with complex tenancy issues that place their tenancy at risk at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (the tribunal)
* providing advocacy for persons requiring assistance and who may qualify as a department tenant under the department’s *Transfer of Tenancy* policy, for example persons known to be residing in the property and who have a reasonable claim to a tenancy under existing policy guidelines
* attending quarterly round tables with department housing, community housing, and support services at an Area level to promote active partnerships to streamline support to renters.

# Target group

The target group for the program are social housing renters, that is: renters and residents who are either commencing a tenancy or residing in public housing or long-term community housing properties including rooming houses owned by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing or a Registered Housing Agency. A list of the registered providers will be published on the department’s web site as required under the *Housing Act 1983 - Part VIIIA - Social Housing’ Information sharing*

Where a public housing resident would qualify as a renter under the department’s *Transfer of Tenancy Policy* provide assistance to establish them as a renter under the lease. The program does not provide services to renters living in private rental.

# Service requirements

Services are required to:

* ensure that staff are suitably skilled in tenancy matters and up to date regarding tenancy, housing and human rights legislation via training provided by Tenants Victoria
* operate during standard business hours Monday to Friday excluding public holidays
* develop client support plans with renters tailored to meet their needs and aspirations in establishing and/or sustaining their tenancy
* refer renters to services and coordinate the service response
* provide advocacy at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal
* where the service is also the landlord develop policy and procedures to mitigate any conflict of interest that may arise
* demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement both at a service level and through broader networks to improve client outcomes.

# Client support plans

Service providers are required to develop client support plans with renters to address the issues that are causing or have the potential to cause failure of their tenancy. Where the renter will not engage with the service or the service cannot gain support from department program areas or other service providers, the service should refer the renter back to the referee for action.

# Sector Interface

It is essential for service providers to ensure that active partnerships are maintained with homelessness and housing reform launch sites, Support and Safety Hubs, the community sector, department, and other services in order to provide relevant and timely support and referrals to renters. The department will facilitate at the minimum quarterly Area based meetings of service providers, department program areas and community housing providers to develop active partnerships that provide seamless support to meet renter need.

# Screening and referral process

The primary point of entry into the program is through a renter’s social housing provider, that is either the department’s housing program, a community housing provider or a Homeless with Support Case manager. The referral pathway will enable renters to self-refer or be referred from a range of different sources, including those from other services. Referral pathways should be streamlined so there are no barriers to access, and there is consistency in decisions about prioritisation.

An initial screening process is to be conducted to inform the referral. Information gathered during the screening process should be captured on the Tenancy plus Risk Identification Tool template and Referral Form, see Appendix 2 and 3.

# Access and waiting list management

Tenancy plus – Tenancy support program service providers will manage access to the waiting list for their service prioritising duty of care, family violence and renters who are identified as having left care before 1990 referrals. Refer to the following table for priority groups. Where the service provider is at capacity or overcapacity a waiting list will be developed and referrals prioritised in consultation with housing providers. These determinations should take place at least weekly.

Decisions regarding prioritisation and allocation may take place during face to face meetings with the social housing landlord, by email, telephone or using any or all of these approaches.

Referrals, including high priority and duty of care referrals will be discussed and prioritised for access on a case by case basis.

## Active holding

In instances where providers have a waiting list, consideration may be given to providing active holding support. Active holding support may provide brief advocacy intervention to immediately settle and respond to the tenancy issue prior to the allocation of a case manager who will work with the renter in a more holistic capacity developing case management plans etc.

### Prioritisation triggers/guidance

| Establishing successful tenancies | Intervening when tenancies are at risk |
| --- | --- |
| Escaping family violence | Experiencing family violence, threats to safety |
| Renters who are identified as having left care before 1990 who have complex behaviours | Renters who are identified as having left care before 1990 whose tenancy is at risk |
| Prolonged history of homelessness (including previous tenancy concerns; debts, breaches) | Eviction imminent or in process |
| Lack of supports and/or connection to area | Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal Hearing pending |
| Poor engagement with support workers | Condition of premises posing a risk to health and safety, property condition only (hoarding and squalor must be referred to the Support for High Risk Tenancies program coordinator for action) |

## Family violence

Tenancy plus – Tenancy support providers should familiarise themselves with the accountabilities related to family violence.

According to Victorian law, family violence is behaviour by a family member that:

* is physically, sexually, economically, emotionally and/or psychologically abusive
* is threatening or coercive or that controls or dominates the family member and causes them to feel fear for their own safety or wellbeing or that of another family member or person
* that causes a child to hear or witness, or otherwise be exposed to the effects of such abuse.

The *Family Violence Protection Act 2008* — Section 5 Meaning of family violence, defines family violence as:

* behaviour by a person towards a family member or person that is:
  + physically or sexually abusive
  + emotionally or psychologically abusive
  + economically abusive
  + threatening
  + coercive
  + in any other way controls or dominates the family member and causes that family member to feel fear for the safety or wellbeing of that family member or another person.
* behaviour by a person that causes a child to hear or witness, or otherwise be exposed to the effects of, behaviour referred to above.

### Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM)

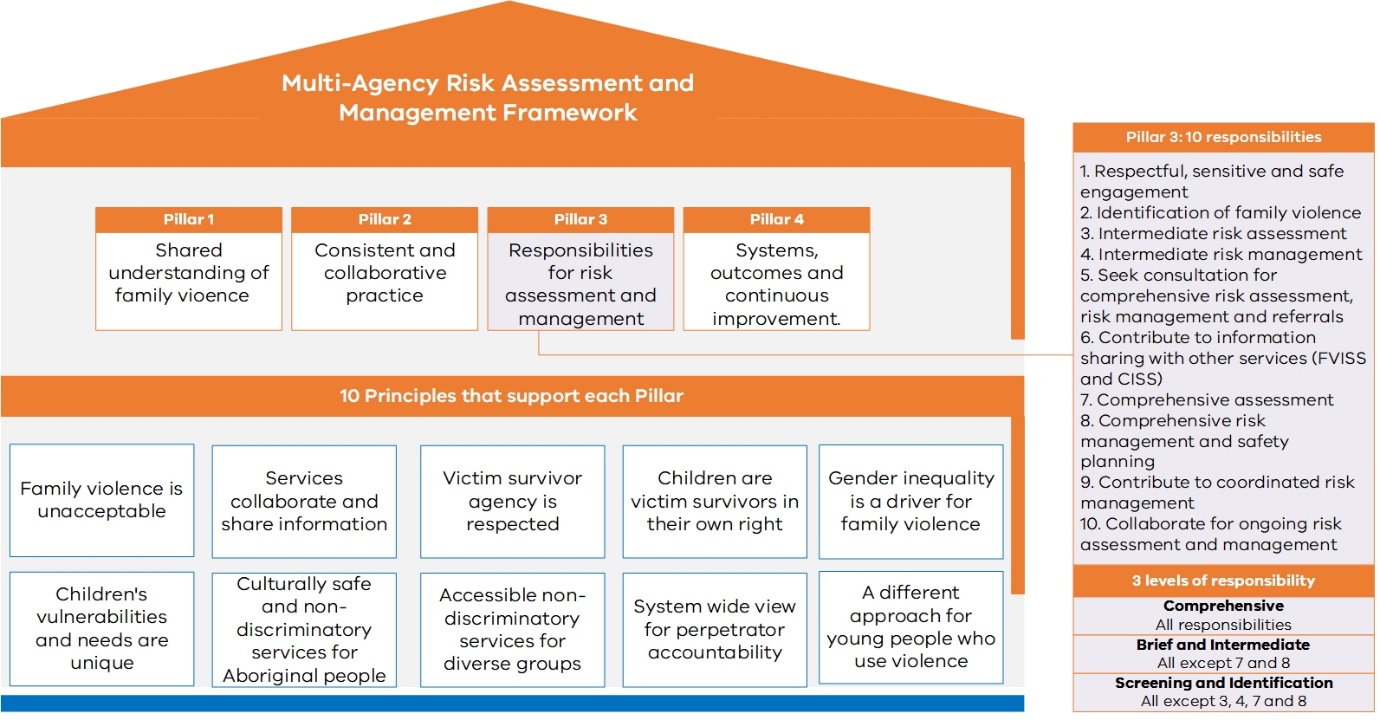
The MARAM framework is established in law under Part 11 of the *Family Violence Protection Act 2008.* It provides policy and practice guidance to organisations that have responsibilities in identifying, assessing and managing family violence risk, including those that have been prescribed under regulation as framework organisations. A framework organisation is required to progressively align its policies, procedures, practice guidance and tools to MARAM.

MARAM is one of three interrelated reforms to reduce family violence and promote child wellbeing and safety. The Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS) enables prescribed Information Sharing Entities (ISEs) to share information to promote the wellbeing and safety of children. The Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS) enables ISEs to share information to facilitate assessment and management of family violence risk. MARAM guides information sharing under both schemes wherever family violence is present.

MARAM describes best practice for family violence risk assessment and management that is based on current evidence and research. For example, MARAM acknowledges children as victim survivors in their own right, and provides specific evidence-based risk factors, and tools, to support the identification and assessment of family violence risk in children

MARAM sets out 10 principles to guide the service system response to family violence, four pillars to embed into policies, procedures, practice guidance and tools, and 10 responsibilities for family violence risk assessment and management. Framework organisations are required to understand which of the 10 responsibilities apply to them, and ensure their workforces have the necessary tools, resources and training to meet those responsibilities.

Taken together, the principles, pillars and responsibilities address the right of all people to live free from family violence. The figure below provides a summary of the MARAM Framework components, the full text for each principle is at Appendix 2.



How Tenancy plus – Tenancy support providers are prescribed as a MARAM framework organisation and as an ISE under FVISS and CISS is provided in the table below.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Type of prescription** | **Regulations** | **Regulations web site link** |
| As a MARAM framework organisation | Schedule 3  Regulation 17  Item 18 | [*Family Violence Protection (Information Sharing and Risk Management) Regulations 2008*](https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/statutory-rules/family-violence-protection-information-sharing-and-risk-management/003) <https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/statutory-rules/family-violence-protection-information-sharing-and-risk-management/003 > |
| As a FVISS ISE | Schedule 1  Regulation 5  Item 24 | [*Family Violence Protection (Information Sharing and Risk Management) Regulations 2008*](https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/statutory-rules/family-violence-protection-information-sharing-and-risk-management/003) <https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/statutory-rules/family-violence-protection-information-sharing-and-risk-management/003> |
| As a CISS ISE | Schedule 1  Regulation 5  Item 48 | [Child Wellbeing and Safety (Information Sharing) Regulations 2018](https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/statutory-rules/child-wellbeing-and-safety-information-sharing-regulations-2018/002) < https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/statutory-rules/child-wellbeing-and-safety-information-sharing-regulations-2018/002> |

#### MARAM responsibilities

MARAM requires that all staff in prescribed organisations have a shared understanding of family violence risk and impact. As such, all Complex Needs Coordinators must have an understanding of the spectrum of family violence types, the evidence-based risk factors used to determine risk, and the complexity of experiences across the community. This foundational knowledge promotes an effective and integrated service response to family violence.

The third MARAM Pillar establishes three levels of responsibilities for family violence identification, risk assessment and risk management.:

* Responsibilities for **Screening and Identification** of family violence, which applies to Framework organisations that deliver services addressing the universal needs of service users
* Responsibilities for **Brief and Intermediate** family violence risk assessment and management, which applies to Framework organisations that deliver services that intersect with family violence risk, but is not focused on family violence risk, and
* Responsibilities for **Comprehensive** family violence risk assessment and management, which applies to specialist family violence services whose sole focus is to support people experiencing family violence, as victim survivors, perpetrators, or both.

Your organisation determines which level of responsibilities for family violence risk assessment and management is most relevant to your work. There is training and resources available to support their decision making, and to support your understanding of and confidence using the MARAM tools. Note that most Tenancy plus workforces will likely have responsibilities at the Screening and Identification level, therefore practitioners must undertake the training in *Screening and Identification* before using any of the MARAM tools.

#### MARAM and information sharing resources

* For resources to support a better understanding of the MARAM framework go to [www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-multi-agency-risk-assessment-and-management](http://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-multi-agency-risk-assessment-and-management).
* For resources to support information sharing under FVISS and CISS go to [www.vic.gov.au/guides-templates-tools-for-information-sharing](http://www.vic.gov.au/guides-templates-tools-for-information-sharing).

## Children who left care before 1990 (Forgotten Australians/care leavers)

### Why prioritise children who left care before 1990 (Forgotten Australians/care leavers)?

The Victorian Government is committed to providing ongoing support to Pre-1990 Care Leavers to address the impact of past practices.

It is estimated more than 90,000 children were placed in care in Victoria between 1928 and 1992. Many Pre-1990 Care Leavers experienced various forms of abuse such as physical, psychological, emotional and child sexual abuse during their time in care.

The challenges Pre-1990 Care Leavers faced have been documented in numerous inquiries including:

* [*Forgotten Australians: A report on Australians who experienced institutional or out-of-home care as children*](https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Community_Affairs/Completed_inquiries/2004-07/inst_care/report/index) (2004) <https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\_Business/Committees/Senate/Community\_Affairs/Completed\_inquiries/2004-07/inst\_care/report/index>
* [Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into the Handling of Child Abuse by Religious and Other Non-Government Organisations (Betrayal of Trust)](https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/fcdc/article/1788) (2013) <https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/fcdc/article/1788>
* [Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse Final Report](https://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/final-report) (2017) <https://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/final-report>

On 9 August 2006 the then Premier, Steve Bracks, issued a formal statement of acknowledgement and apology to ‘Forgotten Australians’ for past practices in Victoria and the enduring detrimental effect their care experience has had on their lives.

On 16 November 2009 the then Prime Minister of Australia, Hon Kevin Rudd, issued a formal statement of acknowledgement and apology, on behalf of the nation, to ‘Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants’ for the abuse and neglect suffered by many children in institutional or other out-of-home care during the last century across Australia.

A ‘Forgotten Australians’ memorial was unveiled on 25 October 2010 at Southbank, Victoria as a lasting recognition of the experiences of Pre-1990 Care Leavers.

# Funded activities

There are two activities of support, long term and short term as follows:

* 91424. Establish Successful Tenancies and Intervene when Tenancies are at Risk provides forty hours of intervention for establishment of or for intervention for at risk social housing tenancies
* 91423: Advocacy provides for ten hours of intervention for at risk social housing tenancies or where a public housing resident would qualify as a renter under the department’s *Transfer of Tenancy Policy*.

## Establish Successful Tenancies

The program service providers will promote successful social housing tenancies by providing new renters, including renters transferred to another location or younger renters aged 15 to 18 who have taken on a new tenancy for the property in which they were a resident/dependant, identified by the department, housing association or community housing provider as having a high risk of tenancy failure with support to establish and sustain their tenancy.

This will require the program service provider to be present at sign up so that the new renter is supported from the start of their tenancy.

Referrals to the program made prior to the commencement of a tenancy, where concerns are identified at the time of the sixweekly home visit, or at any time during the first six months of the tenancy will be considered a response to establish successful tenancy.

Where no other Housing support service is actively involved Establishing Successful Tenancies will involve assisting the renter to:

* acquire basic furniture and white goods
* connect to services and utilities
* enrol children at school
* become acquainted with the local area – that its: public transport, shops, schools, hospitals, community health centres, neighbourhood houses, parks and local government offices

As soon as practicable the program service provider will engage the renter in developing a client support plan. This could involve a coordinated response from the service provider, other relevant support services and/or departmental program areas who will come together to identify their roles and responsibilities within the support plan developed with the new renter.

## Intervene when tenancies are at risk

Service providers will intervene where a social housing tenancy is at risk to identify and assist the renter to address and resolve the underlying factors that are placing the tenancy at risk. This will include:

* developing a client support plan (plan) with the renter
* providing direct support to the renter
* actively engaging with appropriate organisations or department program areas to address the underlying issues that are causing the tenancy to be at risk
* convening a meeting with support providers to determine who will be responsible for actions listed in the plan.
* oversight, coordination and implementation of the plan

Social housing renters experiencing difficulties in their tenancy, including for example: a breach of their tenancy agreement, can approach the program providers directly to request assistance if their tenancy is at risk.

Referrals for hoarding and squalor in public housing properties should be directed from the Department’s Tenancy Manager to a Support for High Risk Tenancies program coordinator who will coordinate the response to hoarding and squalor with departmental program areas, external agencies and service providers. Once the hoarding/squalor issue is addressed and where the tenancy is considered to be at risk of failure, then the renter can be referred to Tenancy plus.

## Assisting renters with priority transfer applications

Where Tenancy plus is engaged with a client, if the rental property is posing a risk to the client or household member the Tenancy plus provider will assist the renter to lodge an application for transfer and undertake appropriate referrals as part of this process.

## Advocacy

Advocacy will form part of the service provided under short term intervention or support. Services will include but not be limited to providing support at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (tribunal), negotiating agreements with the social housing provider and supporting renters whose tenancies are at risk with short term interventions. This short-term intervention or support may include but not be limited to matters related to rental arrears, repairs and compensation.

Service providers should have appropriately skilled staff within their program to support renters at the tribunal. Where the appropriate staff are not available or where the support service is also the landlord it is recommended where practicable that the service provider, with the renter’s consent, contact another suitably qualified organisation to assist the renter. This is to ensure that the organisation will accept the referral and has the capacity to assist the renter at the tribunal.

# Staff training

Whilst it is the responsibility of the service provider to ensure that staff are suitably skilled for the role and have access to appropriate development opportunities, the department fund Tenants Victoria to provide training to department funded tenancy support staff. The focus of this training is to ensure that those workers are informed about legislation and other requirements that will enable them to support renters whose tenancies are at risk including at the tribunal. It is required that all new staff attend this training and long-term staff attend periodically to refresh their knowledge.

Tenants Victoria is also funded to provide a state-wide telephone service, to assist with complex legal cases and secondary legal advice to program service providers.

The department also provides access to training via the [Specialist Homelessness Sector Training Calendar](Specialist%20Homelessness%20Sector%20Training%20Calendar) <https://www.wodongatafe.edu.au/shs> on the Wodonga TAFE website.

# Program Unit pricing

Unit pricing provides a focus on the program’s desired output of sustaining tenancies. It is expected that providers will support renters for up to six months to sustain their tenancy. This approach also ensures equity across the program providing service providers with like funds for the provision of like services.

| **Activities** | **State-wide targets** | **Outcomes** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Establishing successful tenancies | 2195  combined | Tenancy established and sustained for six months |
| Intervening when tenancies are at risk | As above | Issue resolved and tenancy stabilised for six months. |
| Advocacy | 743  combined | supported at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal, in negotiations with the social landlord and where their tenancy is at risk, including advocating for repairs and compensation. Tenancy sustained for six months |
| Assisting renters with priority transfer applications | As above | Where required transfer application completed and approved. |
| Assisting where a public housing resident would qualify as a renter under the department’s *Transfer of Tenancy Policy* | As above | Resident assisted in negotiations with the department to establish a tenancy. |

# Data collection and privacy

The department requires some personal renter information to be collected for the purpose of funding, monitoring, planning and evaluating services and the program overall. Wherever practicable, information collected for these purposes will be non-identifying for the renter.

The department and its funded programs will operate according to strict privacy protocols as set out in the [*Health Records Act 2001*](https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/health-records-act-2001/045) <https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/health-records-act-2001/045> and the [*Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*](https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/privacy-and-data-protection-act-2014) <https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/privacy-and-data-protection-act-2014/027>

# Data collection and reporting

## Data collection

As the department requires that program service providers keep their data secure, it is recommended that the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare’s (Institute) [Specialist Homelessness Information Platform (platform)](https://www.aihw.gov.au/about-our-data/our-data-collections/specialist-homelessness-services-collection/specialist-homelessness-information-platform) <https://www.aihw.gov.au/about-our-data/our-data-collections/specialist-homelessness-services-collection/specialist-homelessness-information-platform> be used for program data collection.

The institute provides the platform to agencies free of charge. The platform is a web-based system hosted by Infoxchange Australia that offers a secure web link for every session while it is being used by agencies. All platform infrastructure hosted by Infoxchange will also be maintained in a secure environment which meets or exceeds the Australian Government Protective Security Protocols The platform will not be hosted in a public ‘cloud’ environment.

The platform makes sure all client data remains secure and confidential by using:

* + password protection
  + strict access restrictions appropriate for different agency staff
  + comprehensive backup and disaster recovery facilities
  + a time-out system if access is inactive for a period of time
  + 24-hour security to protect servers as well as electronic surveillance, photo IDs to authorise entry
  + battery and generator backup to mains power.
  + agency managers will also be able to run an audit to see who has accessed client records

## Reporting

Reporting is required to inform staff, manage, and plan capacity and allocation, and monitor performance against targets and standards.

The department will ensure that there is an appropriate level of accountability and that service providers are delivering what is intended by the program in terms of levels of service, quality, quantity, efficiency and effectiveness

The department also requires that program providers provide monthly reports via an online service delivery tracking process which involves organisations accounting for monthly service delivery against their service agreement target. Organisations submit their performance data through the on-line Service delivery tracking tool on the Funded Agency Channel (My Agency). Information about service delivery tracking can be found [here](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/funded-agency-channel/data-collection-and-reporting/human-services/service-delivery-tracking-department-of-human-services-only) < https://fac.dffh.vic.gov.au/>

Service delivery tracking ensures that both the organisation and the department have a shared view of service delivery in a timely and regular manner. This supports organisations in managing their progress towards meeting agreed targets and assists the department to manage its reporting commitments.

Organisations submit their performance data on a monthly basis through the on-line Service delivery tracking tool on the Funded Agency Channel (My Agency).

Program providers must also use the Institute’s [Specialist Homelessness Online Reporting](https://www.aihw.gov.au/about-our-data/our-data-collections/specialist-homelessness-services-collection/validata) <https://www.aihw.gov.au/about-our-data/our-data-collections/specialist-homelessness-services-collection/validata> tool to provide monthly data reports to the Institute.

# Programs/initiatives that can be accessed to assist renters

The Department of Families Fairness and Housing (the department) leads several programs that seek to support the efforts of local areas to establish innovative, localised and timely responses for individuals with complex support and coordination needs.

Complex needs service responses include the Multiple and Complex Needs Initiative (MACNI), Support for High Risk Tenancies program and broader Complex Needs responses. 

## The Multiple and Complex Needs Initiative

The Multiple and Complex Needs Initiative (MACNI) is a time-limited specialist service for people 16 years and older, who have been identified as having multiple and complex needs. This includes people with combinations of:

* + Mental illness
  + Substance abuse issues
  + Intellectual impairment
  + Acquired brain injury
  + Forensic issues.

Often these individuals pose a risk to themselves and to the community. MACNI's primary purpose is to facilitate better coordination of supports and services to people with complex needs, deliver holistic care and prevent further escalation of need.  Participation in MACNI is voluntary.

## The Support for High Risk Tenancies Program

*[Type a quote from the document or the summary of an interesting point. You can position the text box anywhere in the document. Use the Drawing Tools tab to change the formatting of the pull quote text box.]*

The Support for High Risk Tenancies program strengthens the service system response to public housing renters with complex needs through the integration and coordination of services to sustain tenancies that are at risk.

Support for High Risk Tenancies is a local area-based program providing a point for coordination, advocacy, brokerage, and consultation to public housing teams and/or referrers.

Support for High Risk Tenancies aims to:

* + stabilise housing, health, social connection and safety issues
  + provide a platform for long-term engagement in the service system
  + develop a greater understanding of the needs of high-risk renters and service response options to promote learnings and develop good practice
  + identify gaps and service development opportunities and develop a strategic approach to address these gaps to improve service responses to renter need.

## Complex Needs Coordinators and the central team

Complex Needs Coordinators have operational responsibility at the area level for coordinating service responses for people with complex support and service coordination needs. Services are delivered through the collaboration of government, Aboriginal community-controlled organisations and community service organisations.

Complex Needs Coordinators are supported by the Disability and Complex Clients Practice Advice and Support team in central office who are focused on strengthening the overall service response by providing oversight, policy direction and practice guidance.

Complex Needs service responses are not:

* + a direct client contact service
  + an emergency or crisis service
  + a housing service
  + the Office of Housing
  + a case management service
  + able to pay client debts
  + designed to replace existing supports.

For more information about [MACNI](https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/complex-needs-services) <https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/complex-needs-services>renters

## Public Tenant Employment Program

The Public Tenant Employment Program helps public housing residents across Victoria gain the hands-on experience and training they need to get into the workforce.

The program provides an important pathway for those who want to gain secure employment but may lack the skills or confidence to find work.

The program has had great success in matching hundreds of people looking for work with real jobs, apprenticeship and training.

When people are helped into secure employment many aspects of their lives improve. This has a positive and far reaching impact on other local residents, neighbourhoods and the wider community.

Click on the following link for more information about the [Public Tenant Employment Program](https://www.housing.vic.gov.au/public-tenant-employment-program) <https://www.housing.vic.gov.au/public-tenant-employment-program>

# Appendix 1: Client support plan (example only)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Client’s full name |  | | Organisations name |  | | |
| Address |  | | Contact |  | | |
| Client # |  | | Telephone |  | | |
| **Issue** | | Renter’s goals | Actions to achieve this outcome | Involved service providers/department program/initiative | Review date | Date outcome  achieved |
| Outline the issue/s that is/are placing the tenancy at risk, separate the issue/s out to develop actions to resolve them for example: *Poor living skills resulting in squalor and health issues within the family* | | *Keep the house tidy and cook healthy meals* | *Mentoring/skills development. Apply for brokerage to engage Household Services Inc. to assist the renter with cleaning their house and remove rubbish, provide mentoring skills development in household management and cooking* | *Support for High Risk Tenancies Program (brokerage)*  *Household Services Inc.* |  |  |
|  | |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | |  |  |  |  |  |

I agree to work with to achieve the above outcomes. Client’s signature Date e

(Insert agency name)

**Manager ‘s endorsement of the plan**

Managers name(please print) Manager’s signature Date: :

This page left intentionally blank

|  |
| --- |
| Appendix 2: Risk identification tool Client information |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Full Name: |  |  | | |
| Date of Birth: |  |  | Gender: | Female  Male  Indeterminate  Intersex  Other |

**Risk Factors**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Factor | **Priority (Imminent risk)** | **Secondary** |
| Family Violence | Escaping family violence | Threats from others, victim of violence and or abuse |
| Child Safety | Child under 5 years and/or is pregnant | Child is over 5 years |
| Eviction | Eviction imminent or in process |  |
| Homelessness |  | Client is at risk of homelessness |
| Breach of tenancy | Dangerous behaviour | Anti-social / nuisance behaviour |
| Condition of premises (including history of property damage / uncleanliness / hoarding) | Immediate risk to health and/or safety | Potential risk to health, safety and/or tenancy |
| Mental Health | Unmanaged, posing risk to the safety of self and/or others | Requires ongoing support |
| Financial |  | Unpaid rent, electricity, bank etc |
| Unsuitable housing | Housing which requires major modifications, or level access, or is uninhabitable | Housing which requires additional bedrooms, or minor modifications, or a room for a carer |
| Other (please describe) |  |  |

**Additional issues to be considered**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Serious physical health condition/s |
|  | Social isolation (lack of family support, family unreachable, estrangement) |
|  | Drug and/or alcohol dependencies |
|  | CALD issues (including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders) |
|  | Self-harm (recent threats, history, suicidal ideation) |
|  | Disability (physical, intellectual, acquired brain injury) |
|  | Age (reduced independence and mobility, social isolation, physical health) |
|  | Criminal justice issues (pending court date/s, history of offending |
|  | Out of area allocation of housing |
|  | History of poor engagement with support services |

Support required  Intervention  Establishment  Advocacy

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date: |  | Completed by: |  |
| Comments: |  | | |

This page left intentionally blank

|  |
| --- |
| Appendix 3: Tenancy plus - Tenancy support program Referral form |

**Referral details**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Referring service |  |
| Worker name & contact details | Name: |
| Telephone: |
| email: |
| Has the renter engaged with your service? | Yes  No |
| Referral category | Establishing Successful Tenancies  Intervention at Risk Tenancies  Advocacy |
| Has the renter’s consent to  refer been obtained? | Yes, written consent  Yes, verbal consent  No (Duty of care referral) |
| Manager’s Endorsement | Yes  No |
| Manager’s name (print) |  |
| Managers signature |  |
| Date |  |

**Primary renter information**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Full Name |  |
| Date of Birth |  |
| Address |  |
| Gender | Please select |
| Telephone number/s |  |
| Email address |  |
| Interpreter required? | Yes  No |
| Preferred language |  |
| Female interpreter required? | Yes  No  N/A |
| Aboriginal status | Please select |

**Additional household member information**

| Full name | Age | Gender | Relationship to renter |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | Please select |  |
|  |  | Please select |  |
|  |  | Please select |  |
|  |  | Please select |  |
|  |  | Please select |  |
|  |  | Please select |  |
| Is the renter or a household member pregnant? | Yes  No | If yes, when is the baby due? | Estimated due date: |

**Current tenancy information**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Housing Provider |  | | |
| Worker name |  | | |
| Telephone |  | | |
| Tenancy start date |  | Tenancy reference no. |  |
| Current weekly rent | $ | Current account balance | $ CR / DR |
| Legal action pending | Yes  No | If yes, what action |  |
| VCAT hearing pending | Yes  No | Date of hearing |  |
| Last home visit |  | Last contact |  |

**Financial**

| Income source, including realisable assets, for example, Centrelink, wages, investments | Centrelink | Fortnightly | $ |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Gross wages |  | $ |
| Investments | Gross interest/earnings | $ |
| Other |  | $ |
| Previous tenancy charges | Rental arrears  Maintenance arrears  Department Bond loan/s outstanding | | $  $  $ |
| Outstanding debts if known | Creditor:  Centrelink, electricity, bank, other | | $ |

**Identified risk and support needs**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Risk/Support need type | **Please check relevant box** | **Risk/support needs details** |
| Family Violence |  |  |
| Forgotten Australian/Care Leaver related issues |  |  |
| Eviction Immanent/ VCAT hearing pending/imminent |  |  |
| Prolonged history of homelessness |  |  |
| Lack of supports/Social isolation/limited family support |  |  |
| Poor engagement with support workers/housing provider |  |  |
| Mental Health (serious mental illness/personality disorder) |  |  |
| Disability – intellectual/physical |  |  |
| Drug and/or alcohol dependencies |  |  |
| Violent or dangerous behaviours to self or others/ Identified safety risk to worker/s |  |  |
| Serious health condition/s |  |  |
| Anti-Social Behaviour |  |  |
| CALD issues |  |  |
| Parenting concerns (including Child Protection involvement) |  |  |
| Current tenancy concerns |  |  |
| Financial counselling |  |  |
| Previous Tenancy Concerns (incl. debts, breaches) |  |  |
| Transfer application assistance |  |  |
| Other (insert here) |  |  |

**Current and previous support provider/s**

| Current support provider (please attach client support plan/s if available) | Organisation: |
| --- | --- |
| Case manager name: |
| Contact details: |
| Previous support provider (please attach client support plan/s if available) | Organisation: |
| Case manager name: |
| Contact details: |

**Personal supports contact details**

| Family member | Name: |
| --- | --- |
| Telephone: |
| email: |
| Friend/carer | Name: |
| Telephone: |
| email: |
| Community Support | Organisation: |
| Name: |
| email: |

**Background, case notes for referral**

(If this referral is being made under duty of care, please note why and how you have attempted to contact the

renter to gain consent)

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Duty of Care: One of the objectives of the Housing Act 1983 (Vic) is to promote security and a variety of tenure for all renters Information to be disclosed pursuant to Information Privacy Principles. Principle 2.1 (d) – the organisation reasonably believes that the use of disclosure is necessary to lessen or prevent serious (and imminent) threat to an individual’s life or their (or the public’s), health, safety, or welfare. Therefore, for the purpose of a referral this section allows for the disclosure of renter information without prior consent and without breaching the Information Privacy Principles.

**Referral outcome**

| Referral Accepted | Yes  No  Waitlist |
| --- | --- |
| Reason for non-approval |  |
| Date |  |

|  |
| --- |
| Appendix 4: Support for High Risk Tenancies referral form |

**Referral Details**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Referring service |  |
| Worker name & contact details | Name: |
| Telephone: |
| email: |
| Has the renter engaged with your service? | Yes  No |
| Summarise why this renter is being referred |  |
| Has the renter’s consent to  refer been obtained? | Yes  No |
| Manager’s Endorsement | Yes  No |
| Manager’s name (print) |  |
| Managers signature |  |
| Date |  |

**Primary renter information**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Full Name |  |
| Date of Birth |  |
| Address |  |
| Gender | Please select |
| Telephone number/s |  |
| Email address |  |
| Interpreter required? |  |
| Preferred language |  |
| Female interpreter required? |  |
| Aboriginal status | Please select |

**Additional household member information**

| Full name | Date of birth | Gender | Relationship to renter |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | Please select |  |
|  |  | Please select |  |
|  |  | Please select |  |
|  |  | Please select |  |
|  |  | Please select |  |
|  |  | Please select |  |
| Is the renter or a household member pregnant? | Yes  No |  |  |
| If yes when is the baby due? |  |  |  |

**Identified risk and support needs**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Risk/Support need type | **Please check relevant box** | **Risk/support needs details** |
| Family Violence |  |  |
| Forgotten Australian/Care Leaver related issues |  |  |
| Eviction / VCAT hearing pending/imminent |  |  |
| Prolonged history of homelessness |  |  |
| Lack of supports/Social isolation/limited family support |  |  |
| Poor engagement with support workers/housing provider |  |  |
| Mental Health (serious mental illness/personality disorder) |  |  |
| Disability – intellectual/physical |  |  |
| Drug and/or alcohol dependencies |  |  |
| Violent or dangerous behaviours to self or others/ Identified safety risk to worker/s |  |  |
| Serious health condition/s |  |  |
| Anti-Social Behaviour |  |  |
| CALD issues |  |  |
| Parenting concerns (including Child Protection involvement) |  |  |
| Current tenancy concerns |  |  |
| Financial counselling |  |  |
| Previous Tenancy Concerns (incl. debts, breaches) |  |  |
| Transfer application assistance |  |  |
| Other (insert here) |  |  |

**Attempted and/or achieved interventions**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Intervention | **Please check relevant box** | **Date/s** | **Outcome** |
| Telephone contact | Yes  No |  |  |
| Home visit/s | Yes  No |  |  |
| Meeting/s | Yes  No |  |  |
| **Referral to other services**  **Service name** | **Contact number** | **Date** | **Comment** |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Service currently involved**  **Service name** | **Contact number** | **Date** | **Comment** |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

**Current landlord details**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Department office |  |
| Contact name |  |
| Telephone |  |

**Medical professional support details**

| General Practitioner | Name: |
| --- | --- |
| Address: |
| Telephone: |
| Specialist/s for example (psychologist) | Name: |
| Address: |
| Telephone: |
| Specialist/s | Name: |
| Address: |
| Telephone: |
| Other | Name: |
| Address: |
| Telephone: |

**Personal supports contact details**

| Family member | Name: |
| --- | --- |
| Telephone: |
| email: |
| Carer | Name: |
| Telephone: |
| email: |
| Family member | Name: |
| Telephone |
| email: |
| Friend | Name: |
| Telephone: |
| email: |
| Community Support | Organisation: |
| Name: |
| email: |

**Current and previous support provider/s**

| Current support provider (please attach case plan/s if available) | Organisation: |
| --- | --- |
| Case manager name: |
| Telephone: |
| email: |
| Previous support provider (please attach case plan/s if available | Organisation: |
| Case manager name: |
| Telephone: |
| email: |

**Community engagement activities**

| Education | Course name: |
| --- | --- |
| Provider name: |
| Leisure | Activity name: |
| Activity provider: |

**Statutory Orders (if applicable)**

| Guardian (Guardianship & Administration Act 1996) | Guardians name: |
| --- | --- |
| Telephone: |
| email: |
| Guardian (Children & Young Person’s Act) | Organisation/agency: |
| Contact name: |
| Telephone: |
| Details: |
| Community Treatment Order (Mental Health) | Organisation/agency: |
| Contact name: |
| Telephone: |
| Details: |
| Custodial Sentence/s (current and previous) | Details: |
| Community based orders | Details: |

**Financial**

| Income source, including realisable assets, for example, Centrelink, wages, investments | Centrelink | Fortnightly | $ |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Annual gross salary |  | $ |
| Investments | Gross interest/earnings | $ |
| Other |  | $ |
| Outstanding debts | Creditor:  Department Housing, Centrelink, bank, other | | $ |

**Other comments/information**

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**Note**: The *Client support plan* (appendix 1.) must be completed using the available information and attached to this form prior to submission. Where the renter has not engaged this will not be required

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Requesting Organisation name |  | Renter full name |  |
| Contact person |  | Renter address |  |
| Telephone |  | Telephone |  |

# Appendix 5: Support for high risk tenancies brokerage request form

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Support type/item | Service provider/retailer | Rationale | Brokerage $ requested inc GST |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Total requested |  |

**Attach written quotations to this form**