

MEMBERSHIP ELIGIBILITY & HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY

POLICY DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Policy Name:	MEMBERSHIP ELIGIBILITY & HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY:
Committee/s Responsible	Tenancy C'tee & Member Engagement C'tee
Policy Number	4.7
Date Approved by the Board	25/3/2019 and replaces all Member Eligibility & Housing Allocation Policies previously in effect
Effective Implementation Date:	25/3/2019
Scheduled Review Date:	Asap After the First Member Selection Process After 25/3/2019
Scope of Policy	This Policy applies to all NRHC Membership Applicants

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to set out NRHC's approach to determining eligibility for NRHC Membership and the allocation of long term housing within NRHC that is aligned with the Co-op's vision to be:

“An innovative rental housing co-operative, providing and promoting the model of long term, quality, affordable housing choices in response to the needs of its Members and the community.”

Policy Statement

Approach to Eligibility and Allocation of Housing – Guiding Principles

To support the achievement of NRHC's Vision this Policy aims to be consistent with and a balance between the NRHC Values of:

- **Transparency**

By ensuring applicants for NRHC Membership are informed about NRHC's Eligibility Criteria for selecting Members and allocating housing.

- **Sustainability**

By ensuring the financial resilience and Tenant-Member Governance of NRHC as a Co-operative by selecting applicants for Membership and Housing that are interested and able to contribute to the successful functioning of the Co-operative.

- **Inclusion**

As an inclusive Co-operative, seeks to maintain a diversity of Members without discrimination on the basis of background or ancestry, gender, age, LGBTIQ & orientation, politics or religion.

- **A Safe and Secure Home**

Providing safe and secure homes for NRHC Members appropriate to their needs and circumstances.

Transparency and Accessibility

This Policy will be available on the NRHC website: <http://www.nrhc.coop/policies>

Any Tenant-Member or Applicant for NRHC housing may request a copy of the Policy.

Eligibility for Membership and Housing

General Eligibility

All applicants for NRHC must be:

- Have been accredited by either CEHL or United Housing Co-operative as meeting the General Eligibility for Co-operative Housing by:
 - Attending a Co-operative Housing Information Session run by either CEHL or United Housing Co-operative; and
 - Submitting an application for general Co-operative Housing after attending the Co-operative Housing Information Session.

All applicants for a NRHC Social Housing property must be:

- Be registered on the VHR as well as have been accredited on the VHR by either CEHL or United Housing Co-operative as meeting the General Eligibility for Co-operative Housing as above.

Specific Eligibility – Northcote Rental Housing Co-operative

As a Tenant-Member governed Co-operative NRHC Tenant-Members have the opportunity to be one of the primary decision makers in the organisation by being an elected member of the Board, a Member of one of the NRHC C'tee's or through the Members' Meetings held from time to time.

NRHC's Membership Eligibility Criteria aims to assist the Member Selection C'tee to select applicants that are interested and able to contribute to the successful functioning of the Co-operative.

Consistent with the requirements of the VHR Participation Agreement, 75% of vacancies in NHRC Social Housing properties will be selected from the VHR Priority Access Category.

Any person with a financial interest in a housing property is ineligible to be a Member of or to be housed by the Co-operative.

Any Applicant with household income and / or assets above the VHR Priority Access Category Limits is ineligible for a vacancy to be filled with an eligible Priority Access Category Applicant.

Any Applicant with household income and / or assets above the VHR Register of Interest Category Limits is ineligible for a vacancy to be filled with an eligible Register of Interest Category Applicant.

Any Applicant with household income and / or assets above the NRAS Limits is ineligible for a vacancy to be filled with an eligible NRAS Applicant.

Any Applicant who does not complete and have signed the Household Income and Information Statutory Declaration Form and / or does not provide independent documentary evidence of all household income will automatically be ineligible.

NRHC Member Selection Criteria

The purpose of the selection process is to select applicants who will become valued, responsible members, motivated to participate in the management activities of the Co-operative and be most compatible with NRHC's Key Values.

The Member Selection Criteria are designed to facilitate the most accurate match between NRHC's requirements and the applicant's values, attitude and abilities.

1. Awareness of the 7 Co-operative Principles and a general understanding of how co-operative organisations function.
2. Personal values are aligned with NRHC's Key Values: Participation, Transparency, Empowerment, Sustainability, Co-operation, Inclusion, Quality and Affordability, Safe and Secure home.
3. Experience, background, motivation and interests are likely to enhance NRHC's culture and practices.
4. Displays qualities and behaviours valued by co-operative organisations: creativity, open communication, innovation, problem solving skills, assertiveness, enthusiasm and a friendly consultative approach to decision making.
5. Understanding of what it means to be both a responsible tenant and a responsible landlord and the importance of proactive behaviour in managing and balancing these responsibilities.
6. Commitment to being an actively engaged member, including the desire to join in NRHC activities, have the capacity to attend meetings and a demonstrated willingness to undertake formal/informal training essential to Co-op management.
7. Is seeking longer-term social housing, respects and embraces the value of longer-term, socially and environmentally sustainable housing for the community.

NRHC Membership Application Information Pack

When there is a vacancy, the NRHC Membership Application Information Pack will be provided to those Applicants who are applying to NRHC.

The NRHC Membership Application Information Pack will include the following:

- Background Information about how NRHC operates as a Co-operative and its values, organisational context and structure;
- Income and Asset Eligibility Limits current at the time;
- Membership Application Form including a Household Income and Information Statutory Declaration Form; and
- Application Questionnaire

[Allocation of Housing](#)

[Allocations Schedule](#)

NRHC maintains an Allocations Schedule that sets out the following for each of its housing programs:

Program	A description of the housing program, including how properties have been funded
Approach to Allocation for Program	A description of the approach that NRHC will apply in allocating housing in that program, including any allocations targets
Source of Applicants	A description of where NRHC will source suitable applicants for the program.
Eligibility	A description of any eligibility rules that apply to the program
No of Properties in the Program	A description of the number of properties in the program

The Allocations Schedule is attached to this Policy.

This Allocations Schedule should be read in conjunction with the following:

[Matching Households to the Right House](#)

NRHC to the best of its capacities within its limited stock of properties will seek to match applicants to properties so that an allocation:

- Is the right size for the applicant's household as per requirements of the DHHS Allocations Policy;
- Maximises the utilisation of its stock consistent with the DHHS Allocations Policy;
- Is in an area consistent with the applicant's needs;
- Assists the applicant to access employment or any support services that they need;
- Encourages a sustainable tenancy; and
- Meets any particular expressed needs of the applicant so far as they are known, such as modifications for people with a physical disability or mobility impairment, availability of car parking or room for carers.

NRHC aims to make sure that properties with specific features that are in high demand and short supply are only allocated to those applicants who need them, including properties that are:

- Suitable for older people;
- Built or modified to meet the needs of people with a disability;
- On the ground floor,
- With level access; or
- With a yard/garden.

Promoting Successful and Sustainable Tenancies

NRHC is committed to treating all applicants fairly and will not unlawfully discriminate against any potential applicant or applicant.

NRHC will assess all applicants before making an offer of housing to determine suitability for a particular property that is vacant.

If NRHC declines to offer an applicant housing, it will inform the applicant accordingly.

NRHC will ask applicants to provide reasonable evidence to substantiate any particular requirements, if this is not contained in a VHR application.

Allocations Schedule

Program	Approach to allocation for Program	Source of applicants	Eligibility	No. units
Social Housing (General Lease) <i>Long-term housing owned by the Director of Housing and leased to NRHC.</i>	NRHC targets 75% of allocations of true vacancies of Social Housing to applicants from the Priority Access category under the VHR. 25% of all Allocations may be from the Register of Interest category of the VHR	VHR only	VHR Priority Access Category Income & Asset Limits VHR Register of Interest Category Income & Asset Limits	36
National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS) <i>Funded in part by Commonwealth NRAS funding for affordable housing (no DHHS funding)</i>	NRHC has agreed to ensure that NRAS properties are allocated to households eligible for housing under the NRAS rules. <i>Note: NRAS Income Eligibility is usually less than the VHR Register of Interest Income Eligibility</i>	VHR only	NRAS Income & Asset Limits	2
			Totals	38

Matching Property Size with Household Make-up Schedule

Property Size – No. of Bedrooms	Household
One (1) Bedroom	Single or Couple
Two (2) Bedrooms	Single of Couple with One (1) Child
Two (2) Bedrooms	Single of Couple with Two (2) Children of the Same Gender
Three (3) Bedrooms	Single or Couple with Three (3) Children
Three (3) Bedrooms	Single or Couple with 2 Children of one Gender plus 2 Children of the Other Gender
Four (4) Bedrooms	Single or Couple with Three (3) Children of the Same Gender plus One (1) Child of the Other Gender
Four (4) Bedrooms	Single or Couple with Two (2) Children of the Same Gender plus Three (3) Children of the Other Gender
Four (4) Bedrooms	Single or Couple with Two (2) Children of the Same Gender plus Four (4) Children of the Other Gender
Four (4) Bedrooms	Single or Couple with Six (6) Children of the Same Gender