

Private rental bond assistance

The Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities helps eligible Territorian's access rental properties through private rental bond assistance.

What is private rental bond assistance?

Private rental bond assistance is an interest free loan to help pay the security deposit for a private rental property in the Northern Territory.

Public housing tenants moving into a private rental property can also apply for private rental bond assistance.

Private rental properties include community housing, permanent caravans, and other non-government organisation accommodation.

Who is eligible for private rental bond assistance?

To be eligible for private rental bond assistance you must meet the following criteria:

Income and asset limits

You must meet the income and asset limits as per the table below:

Maximum income and asset limit:

Household size	Gross income limit* (per week)	Asset limit
1	\$1,046	\$5,000
2	\$1,359	\$5,000
3	\$1,581	\$5,000
4	\$1,815	\$5,000
5	\$2,039	\$5,000
6	\$2,269	\$5,000

* Income limits last changed on 09 October 2023.

Residency

You must be an Australian Citizen or permanent resident of Australia. This includes if you are on a Special Category Visa (applicable to New Zealand residents) or Temporary Protection Visa.

You must also be a resident of the Northern Territory for 3 months before submitting your form.

Age limit

You must be aged 18 years or older.

Outstanding debt

You must not have an outstanding debt with the Department.

If you have a debt with the Department, you can speak to your local Housing office. You may be able to enter an agreement to repay this debt.

How much private rental bond assistance can I apply for?

The Department will approve up to 6 weeks rent. This will cover your rental bond payment of 4 weeks, plus your first 2 weeks rent in advance. You can request to borrow less than this.

There is a limit to the amount of private rental bond assistance the Department will provide. The Department will only provide up to 53% of your weekly assessable income, before tax. This means the weekly rent payment of your future property must not be over this limit.

If you are sharing, the Department will only provide an amount for your share of the bond required.

For example, you want to sign a tenancy agreement with 3 other people and the weekly rent is \$400. The Department will only loan you a maximum of 6 weeks of your share of the rent. In this example, your share of the weekly rent is \$100, so the maximum amount you could be approved for is \$600.

The private rental bond assistance application process

To receive private rental bond assistance, you must be provisionally approved by the Department before you sign a Tenancy Agreement.

Apply

You must complete the Private Rental Bond Assistance application form for the Department to assess.

Your completed form must include supporting documents to prove your eligibility.

Supporting documents can include:

- proof of residency such as an address history from Centrelink
- proof of all sources of income such as your payslips or Income Statement from Centrelink, and
- proof of all assessable assets, such as official statements or summary from a reputable institution of an asset's value.

You can find more information on assessable incomes and assets in the Department's Income and Assets policy.

You may lodge your completed form and supporting documents in person to your local Housing office or send via email to the appropriate Housing office below:

Darwin: DarwinClientServices.TFHC@nt.gov.au

Tennant Creek: TFHC.BarklyHousing@nt.gov.au

Katherine: ClientServices.Katherine@nt.gov.au

Alice Springs: Clientservices.AliceSprings@nt.gov.au

Nhulunbuy - ArnhemRemoteTenancy.TFHC@nt.gov.au

You can collect a copy of the bond assistance form from a local Housing office or download one from the nt.gov.au website.

Assessment

The Department will assess your application and check your eligibility for private rental bond assistance, and you may be required to provide further information on request.

Once assessed, the Department will let you know the outcome of your application in a letter. If your application is provisionally approved, you will be sent a letter and Entitlement Notice stating the maximum weekly amount of rent you can pay in order to receive a private rental bond assistance loan.

Find a rental property

Once your application is provisionally approved, you have 4 weeks to find a rental property.

You can provide the Entitlement Notice to your new landlord or real-estate agent as evidence of your provisional approval, and the maximum amount you can pay to remain eligible for the interest free loan.

Finalise application

Once you have found a rental property, you need to bring a copy of the signed Tenancy Agreement to a local Housing office and complete an Agreement to Pay with the Department.

The Department will pay your share of the bond amount to your landlord or real-estate agents bank account.

Repaying the private rental bond assistance

You must repay the private rental bond assistance you get through an Agreement to Pay with the Department.

The minimum repayment will be an amount that will result in the loan being fully repaid with 18 months. For example, if the loan amount is \$2100 (4 weeks for security deposit and 2 weeks rent), the minimum repayment would be \$26.93 per week over 18 months.

At any time, you can choose to make larger repayments and pay off the loan quicker. Should you be unable to meet the weekly repayments, the repayments may be adjusted to \$10 per week for an agreed period of time.

If your Tenancy Agreement ends, you can use your rental bond to repay any money you owe on your bond assistance. Your landlord or real-estate agent can return this amount directly to the Department.

Where can I get more information?

To find out more, visit the website nt.gov.au or contact your local Housing office:

Greater Darwin	(08) 8999 8814	Nhulunbuy	(08) 8987 0533
Katherine	(08) 8973 8513	Alice Springs	(08) 8951 5344
Tennant Creek	(08) 8962 4497		