

# Remote Rent Safety Net

## Policy

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# 1. Purpose

The Remote Rent Framework (the Framework) applies to public housing tenancies in remote communities, Tennant Creek Community living areas.

A Remote Rent Safety Net (the Safety Net) will be applied to a tenancy under the framework where rent will be more than 25 per cent of the total assessable household income. This is to ensure that the tenancy does not enter rental stress. This is subject to an assessment of the tenancy. This policy describes the Safety Net and when it can be applied.

# 2. Scope

This policy applies to new and existing public housing tenancies in remote communities, and Tennant Creek community living areas. Alice Springs Town Camps are not included in the Remote Rent Framework.

# 3. Policy detail

Rent payable under the Remote Rent Framework is calculated on a fixed rate of \$70 per bedroom, per week, with a maximum of \$280 for houses with four bedrooms or more. Please see Rent policy for further details.

Dependant on individual circumstances, tenants may be unable to pay the required rent under the Remote Rent Framework.

Reasons tenants may be unable to pay the required rent may include, but are not limited to:

- Tenants waiting to transfer to a smaller premises that better suits their needs;
- Tenants who are settling a Centrelink payment arrangement/s;
- Tenants who are a single parent, with children under 18 living in the premises;
- Tenants who require an extra bedroom for in-home care; or
- Tenants who need to remain at the premises due to cultural reasons.

Tenants are at risk of rental stress when the rent is more than 25 per cent of their total assessable household income. Total assessable household income is any income which is regular, ongoing and for general living expenses and includes income received by all recognised occupiers aged 18 years and over who live at the premises. See Income and Assets policy for more information on what is included and excluded from household income.

Tenants who are experiencing rental stress may apply for the Safety Net where the total rent payable will be 25 per cent of the total assessable household income.

Where a household is accessing the Safety Net and the total assessable household income changes, any changes in rent payable will be applied from the date of notification of the change of income.

## 3.1. Time frames

At the commencement of the Framework, the Safety Net will be applied automatically to tenants whose rent will be more than 25 per cent of the total assessable household income for an initial six month period.

Housing staff will engage with tenants automatically placed on the Safety Net to confirm their individual circumstances and determine ongoing eligibility for the Safety Net.

The Safety Net is intended to apply for a six month period. There may be some circumstances where a household will need to be on the Safety Net for an extended period.

Households that are approved to be on an extended Safety Net will be reviewed on a 12 month basis to ensure that they remain eligible.

All tenants are able to apply for the Safety Net at any time and can access the application form online or through their housing officers. The Safety Net can be back dated if tenants should have been on the Safety Net from 6 February 2023 or a date prior to their application.

The Director Housing Operations (the delegate) may apply discretion for the Safety Net to remain in place for longer periods.

## 4. Discretionary decision making

Discretion can be applied to this policy using the Discretionary Decision Making policy.

## 5. Complaints and/or appeals

If a tenant is not satisfied with either a decision or action of the CEO (Housing), they can access the Department's complaints and/or appeals processes. For further information, please refer to the Complaints and/or Appeals policies.

## 6. Review of the policy

If at any time the legislative, operating or funding environment is so altered that the policy is no longer appropriate in its current form, the policy shall be reviewed and amended accordingly.

## 7. References

Appeals policy

Complaints policy

Discretionary Decision Making policy

Identification and Documentation policy

Income and Assets policy

Rent policy

Rental Rebate policy