



Arrears Management Policy

Purpose

1. To ensure that tenants are able to sustain a long-term tenancy through assisting tenants to maintain their rent balance.
2. Encourage tenants to take responsibility for their rental commitments.
3. To deal with tenants with compassion and sensitivity during periods of arrears.
4. To manage tenancies in accordance with the relevant legislation for the jurisdiction.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff within SAH, and to all types of properties managed and/or owned by SAH.

Policy Statement

SAH will work with tenants to avoid the occurrence of arrears, and where arrears do arise, will work to retrieve those arrears.

Avoiding Arrears

1. SAH will seek to enable tenants to avoid arrears by adopting the following strategies.
 - Aligning tenant's next pay (or Centrelink payment) with the commencement of the tenancy, where this is not possible, rent calculations will be made for the start of the tenancy to ensure that the tenants are in advance.
 - Encouraging tenants who receive Centrelink to make payments utilising the Centrepay deductions service.
 - Informing the tenants of the importance of maintaining a positive rent balance and encouraging the tenants to speak regularly to their housing worker and / or case worker about their rent management.

Managing Arrears

1. Where a payment has been missed (or where Centrelink deduction has been cancelled), the housing worker will seek to contact the tenant (and case manager if relevant). If suitable arrangements can be made to address the arrears, then no further action will be taken.
2. Where a tenant falls into arrears, an initial reminder letter will be sent, and the tenant will be contacted by phone. Tenants will have the option of either paying off the amount in full or entering into a payment plan.
3. Where the tenant fails to address the arrears, or if they fail to maintain the agreed payment plan, the tenant will receive a 2nd reminder letter. This will be accompanied with the relevant State breach of tenancy notice. Our goal will be to obtain orders from the tribunal/court for the enforcement of the payment plan.
4. In the event that a tenant fails to maintain a tribunal/court endorsed payment plan, then action may be taken to end the tenancy.
5. Where the tenant is in a supported housing arrangement, the case worker will also be notified of the arrears and each stage of the above process.

Discretion

State Managers have discretion to approve or revoke approval at any time outside of this policy framework, not including legislative requirements. The reasons for discretion must be documented on the tenant's record.

Tenants Right to Review Decisions

Tenants have the right to appeal process if they are unhappy with a decision made by SAH. If a client is not satisfied with a decision, they should be encouraged to lodge a written request of appeal to the relevant SAH office. For further information refer to the Appeals Policy.

Related Documents

Policy	Appeals Policy Complaints and Feedback Policy Hardship Policy Rent Setting Policy
Legislation	National Regulatory Code National Community Housing Standards State Residential Tenancies Act and Regulation
Other Documents	Appeals Brochure

Document Control

Authorisation	SLT
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