

Sustainable Tenancies Policy

Purpose

This policy outlines Salvation Army Housing Victoria's proactive approach to sustaining tenancies.

Scope

This policy applies to all tenants, household members, applicants, employees, and stakeholders of SAHV.

Policy Statement

1. Salvation Army Housing Victoria is committed to:
 - Developing policies, procedures and work practices that strive to sustain tenancies
 - Understanding and working with the individual needs of tenants and their households
 - Creating links with services and programs that benefit tenants and the community
 - Providing proactive and responsive support for at risk tenancies.
2. SAHV recognises that applicants and tenants have a range of housing and support needs. This policy details how Salvation Army Housing Victoria supports tenants to sustain their tenancies, either directly as a registered housing provider, or indirectly through referrals to other support agencies.
3. SAHV aims to proactively identify vulnerable groups most at risk of tenancy failure to sustain tenancies. We do this by:
 - Conducting interviews with applicants prior to allocation and matching to suitable property,
 - Offering home visits as required and at least annually throughout the tenancy to check in on wellbeing and identify any property or tenancy related concerns,
 - Establishing contact with identified 'at risk' households,
 - Using every interaction with a tenant as a chance to understand their needs and sustain their tenancy,
 - Making information available in a variety of formats and languages, where required,
 - Establishing links with specialist support agencies,
 - Exploring and developing initiatives aimed at increasing the level of tenancy sustainment, based on an understanding of the reasons for tenancy failure, in collaboration with other services,
 - Ongoing training and development opportunities for our employees,
 - Reviewing and monitoring our service delivery responses based on tenant feedback.
4. SAHV recognises the personal, health, social and financial cost of a tenancy failure. When a tenancy is at risk, Salvation Army Housing Victoria will first aim to assist the tenant to address and resolve the underlying factors that are placing the tenancy at risk. Our response includes:
 - Assessing individual need and developing a management plan in collaboration with the tenant,
 - Referring to a relevant support agency or program,
 - Clearly explaining rights, responsibilities, and options,

- Undertaking a Human Rights Impact Assessment (HRIA) to ensure that we are considering human rights.
5. SAHV treats eviction as a mechanism of last resort.
 6. SAHV recognises that our tenants may require additional support to sustain their tenancy and live independently. Households may present with different support needs throughout their tenancy.
 7. SAHV is not a support provider. We work within a network of specialist services and provide referrals to appropriate agencies when required, which includes within the broader Salvation Army network.
 8. Every SAHV employee is responsible for employing our sustainable tenancies approach:
 - Our Housing Workers manage the allocation of tenancies into housing programs and provide regular and ongoing contact with our tenants to proactively address any personal or tenancy issues,
 - Our maintenance and Asset Management team ensures that our properties are maintained at a standard to maximise a healthy built environment.

Document Control

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