



Government of South Australia  
SA Housing Trust



# TRANSITIONAL HOUSING PROGRAM GUIDELINE

***UNCONTROLLED if printed***

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## Transitional Housing Program guideline

This Transitional Housing Program guideline applies to community housing providers, the SA Housing Trust (the Trust), the SA Homelessness and the SA Domestic and Family Violence Alliances delivering the Transitional Housing Program. The program is consistent where relevant with the process in the [Homelessness Supportive Housing Program guideline](#), and is delivered in line with the:

- [Transitional Housing Program Policy](#)
- [Transitional Housing Program Guideline](#)
- [Transitional Housing Program Maintenance Guideline](#)
- [Specialised Housing Programs Policy](#)
- [Specialised Housing Program Procedure](#).
- SA Housing Trust Maintenance Accommodation Standards (contact [housingpartnerships@sa.gov.au](mailto:housingpartnerships@sa.gov.au) for a copy).

The Transitional Housing Program provides accommodation to customers who are experiencing homelessness and need support in establishing and maintaining a tenancy. All parties involved work together to maintain safe and supportive accommodation that addresses issues affecting customers' ability to secure and keep accommodation.

This program does not provide long term accommodation.

Housing providers record information in either:

- Connect, if it's the Trust, or
- Single Housing Register, if it's a community housing provider.

SA Homelessness and Domestic Family Violence record information in Homeless 2 Home (H2H).

Community housing providers manage and report maintenance in line with the [Transitional Housing Program Maintenance Guideline](#).

### SA Homelessness Alliances and Community Housing Provider responsibilities

Community housing providers, the SA Homelessness Alliance and the SA Domestic and Family Violence Alliance (the Alliances) support providers work collaboratively to support successful tenancies.

A higher-level agreement between community housing providers and the Alliances may be useful to clearly define the specific roles of the parties and the timeframes in which each will work to ensure optimal use of the property asset and support for tenants. Any agreement between the Alliances and community housing providers should address the requirements of each party without including any additional eligibility or selection criteria that contradicts SA Housing Trust policy or guidelines.

Community housing providers are responsible for:

- Managing all aspects of the tenancies.
- Complying with their specific lease requirements.

- Maintaining documents and evidence to support tenant eligibility and tenant rent charges.
- Adhering to the [Rent Policy: Addendum 3: Community Housing Rent Procedure for Affordable Tenancies](#) as specified on the schedule to the lease agreement.
- Making sure vacant properties meet the public housing Maintenance Accommodation Standards before they are allocated to a customer.
- Maintaining properties to the Maintenance Accommodation Standards.
- Checking the lease agreement schedules match the properties under their control.
- Following correct processes for using the [Single Housing Register \(Connect\)](#) including registering customers and Housing Needs Assessment forms provided by the Alliance at allocation and reactivating these at the end of the tenancy.
- Paying all expenses and accounts the Trust isn't responsible for in line with the lease agreement schedules.

Support providers are responsible for:

- Assessing customers for their support and housing needs.
- Supporting the customer to [Register their interest in housing](#).
- Completing a [Housing Needs Assessment form](#) and submitting it to the Trust or the customer's preferred housing provider (as per the [Community Housing Allocations Policy and Guideline](#)).
- Providing ongoing support and case management for the duration of the tenancy.
- Coordinating the appropriate supports and required household goods.
- Developing a suitable exit strategy for when a customer is leaving a tenancy, to ensure they won't become homeless. This includes helping them find, apply for and secure alternative long-term accommodation.

The relevant community housing provider and the SA Homelessness or the SA Domestic and Family Violence Alliance representative jointly selects the customers for the program.

## SA Housing Trust responsibilities

The Trust is responsible for:

- Paying all expenses and accounts for items listed as its responsibility in line with the lease agreement.
- Contract management of lease agreements.
- Reviewing compliance data before a lease agreement is renewed.
- Carrying out property visits, as determined using sample or risk-based approach.

## Eligibility

A customer may be considered for the Transitional Housing Program if they meet the eligibility criteria below:

- They're eligible for public housing in line with the [Eligibility for Housing Policy](#), if the Trust is the housing provider.
- They're eligible for community housing in line with the [Community Housing Eligibility Policy](#), if a community housing provider is the housing provider.
- They meet the criteria for Category 1 on the Single Housing Register
- They're being supported by an Alliance service provider.



## Assessing Eligibility

Support providers within the Alliances assess and triage customers for housing and supports within their geographic region. They:

- Check if customer is already registered on the Single Housing Register, identifying their Primary Contact Organisation and Category.
- Assess the customer's housing and support needs using their agency's triage, screening and assessment tools.
- Help the customer complete a [Registration of Interest in Housing Form](#), or register online using Housing Connect, if they don't have a current Registration of Interest.
- Help the customer update their registration details online through Housing Connect or by completing a Change of Circumstances form and sending it to their Primary Contact Organisation, if they have a current registration of interest.
- Complete a [Housing Needs Assessment form](#).
- Send the completed Housing Needs Assessment form, Registration of Interest in Housing Form and any supporting documents, including proof of income and identity, to the Trust or the customer's primary Contact Organisation. If a customer registers for both public and community housing, the Trust will automatically be the Primary Contact Organisation unless the customer chooses a community housing provider to be the Primary Contact Organisation.

The community housing provider:

- Registers the customer for housing.
- Uploads the Housing Needs Assessment form and approves a category in line with the Trust [Housing registration and allocation policy ie. Category 1 for the Transitional Housing Program](#).
- Advises the customer and customer's case manager of the outcome.

## Selecting customers for vacant properties

Alliances prioritise eligible customers within their region for upcoming vacancies based on customers' relative level of risk and vulnerability and urgency of need.

When a property becomes vacant the community housing provider contacts the relevant Alliance and provides:

- Relevant property manager contact information.
- Expected allocation date.
- Property address, size, and any other relevant information to inform appropriate matching.

Within 5 days of receiving the vacancy notification the Alliance:

- Collates their customer referrals for the vacancy.
- Provides the customer referrals to the housing conference representatives.
- Holds a housing conference to select two customers, based on their priority and suitability for the property, including that the match is in line with the occupancy standards, emails the first and second customer selections to the housing provider with proof of their income and identity in line with [Proof of Income, Identity and Rent](#).



The community housing provider may attend the housing conference or accept the selected customers without attending. Customer selections are based on a unanimous decision between the Alliance and the community housing provider.

If the selected customers have any known tenancy risks, housing conference representatives should ensure a mitigation strategy is put in place, so the customer is set up to succeed in their tenancy.

Where agreement can't be reached between the community housing provider and the Alliance, disputes can be escalated through to the respective leadership. If issues are systematic, they can be raised through the relevant Alliance Senior Manager and escalated to the Alliance Leadership to resolve. Further information is at [section Dispute Resolution process](#).

## Offering the property

The community housing provider makes a manual offer in line with the [Community Housing Allocations Guideline](#).

The customer has 48 hours to accept or refuse the offer. If they refuse the offer, the housing provider refuses the offer in the Single Housing Register with a reason. The community housing provider offers it to the next selected customer.

If they accept the offer, the community housing provider notifies the customer's support provider. The community housing provider organises with the customer and customer's support provider to attend to discuss how the program works with the customer.

They discuss:

- Coordinating appropriate supports and household goods, for example fridge, bed.
- Whether the customer is eligible for bond and rent in advance, if yes, arrange this in line with the [Private Rental Assistance Program Policy](#).
- Roles and responsibilities related to tenancy management and support provision.
- Any issues that may threaten the customer's ability to maintain their tenancy and putting strategies in place to manage them.

## Allocating the property

Community housing providers accept the offer in the Single Housing Register with the Tenancy Type as the housing program name 'Transitional Housing Program' and the tenure type as 'Short Term Lease'.

After accepting the offer in the system, the housing provider should manually defer the active registration and Category 1 with the reason of 'Short Term Lease'. The registration is deferred and the customer is a Category 3 until a housing provider reactivates it and makes them Category 1 and backdates to their original approval date - see instructions below under Ending a Tenancy.

## Case management plans

The case management plan is the responsibility of the Alliance support provider. It is confidential between the customer and their worker from their support provider and usually contains sensitive personal information. It identifies the:

- Customer's needs and issues.
- Potential risks and challenges for the tenancy.
- Resources available and actions to be taken.
- Customer's goals and outcomes.
- Strategies that will be used to help the customer maintain the tenancy, including paying rent, being a good neighbour and looking after the property, and to transition out of the program.

The support provider will continually review case management plans in collaboration with all parties involved, including by holding joint case conferences. Include any tenancy or property concerns raised by the community housing provider. Be flexible, and change strategies based on experience.

If a customer is reluctant or difficult to engage, the support provider will actively pursue their engagement by using assertive case management. Aim to:

- Build and stabilise their trust, rapport and confidence in the support worker.
- Give them the best chance of engaging and successfully completing the program.

If the customer stops engaging or refuses to engage, the support provider will develop a suitable exit strategy with the customer and their community housing provider, if the customer wants to leave the accommodation. Identify alternative, safe and appropriate accommodation options. Note section below stating that refusing to engage in a case management plan isn't grounds to end the tenancy.

## Managing the tenancy

The community housing provider manages the tenancy in line with their policies and in collaboration with the customer and their support provider. This includes:

- Handing over keys to the customer
- Setting, charging and reviewing rent as per [Rent Policy Addendum 3 – Community Housing Rent Procedure for Affordable Tenancies](#) on the schedule to the lease agreement
- Managing tenancy or property issues, including antisocial behaviour.

The support provider collaborates with the community housing provider and the customer to address any tenancy issues that arise. They aim to help the customer successfully maintain their tenancy and engage appropriate strategies to minimise tenancy and property issues.

### Tenancy at risk

Customers shouldn't become homeless when they leave the program.

As soon as there are any concerns such as property damage, neighbourhood issues, the housing provider addresses the issue with the customer and support provider to allow support to be provided to the customer before things escalate further. Once the matter is resolved no further action is needed.



If the tenancy is still at risk, consult the customer's support provider to:

- Share relevant information.
- Assess the risks to the tenancy and determine what strategies could be used.
- Discuss if anyone else, for example another support worker, should be involved.

Potential strategies could include:

- Carrying out a property inspection.
- Increasing the frequency of home visits by the community housing provider and the support provider.
- Listening to the customer's views and exploring alternative accommodation and support options.
- Identifying and engaging other key partners for example family member, other supports.
- Holding a joint case conference.

Record any actions taken and send the customer a letter outlining the actions to be taken or consequences if issues can't be resolved.

## Ending the tenancy

Refusing to engage in a case management plan isn't grounds to end the tenancy.

Ending a tenancy is a last resort and can only be done if the tenant is breaking the conditions of their lease agreement.

The community housing provider can take action to end a tenancy in line with their agency's policies provided all the below conditions are met:

- The customer has told the support provider of their intention to end the tenancy.
- The support provider agrees the customer has been given all reasonable opportunities to address and resolve the issues.
- All attempts have been made to preserve the tenancy using assertive case management.
- All other strategies for example joint case conferences, have failed.

If the customer's tenancy is going to end, the support provider helps them find alternative housing, so they don't exit into homelessness.

## Leaving the program

Well before the customer leaves a program property, their support provider develops a suitable exit strategy to make sure they don't become homeless. This includes helping them find, apply for and secure safe, appropriate, viable and affordable long-term accommodation.

The community housing provider also reactivates and updates the customer's Registration of Interest and Category 1 status:

- Access customer's SHR application.
- Select Row Action Icon for the deferred entry and select Update Application List Entry.
- Change List Status to ACT – Active and Save.
- The application status will now display as Active.



Full instructions can be found in Ole under Register for Housing – Cancel or Defer Registration of Interest – 2. Make a deferred or cancelled application active.

To reinstate the Category 1 status and benefit date, a Category Review is completed, and Category 1 is approved by a manager. The housing provider then goes back into the Application and Update Assessment Date to reinstate the date that the customer was initially approved as Category 1 (ie. from before they entered THP accommodation, not the date they are reactivated from the deferral).

The community housing provider can provide advice about the housing options available to the customer, which may include:

- Help paying bond or rent into private rental accommodation in line with the [Private Rental Assistance Program Policy](#)
- Help and advocacy finding and securing a private rental property through the [Private Rental Liaison Program](#)
- Renting public, Aboriginal or community housing (can include an internal transfer into the same community housing provider or transfer to another community housing provider)
- Buying a home, for example through HomeSeeker SA.

## Transferring properties in or out of the program

Community housing providers are responsible for maintaining property numbers in the program, in consultation with the Trust and with reference to their Alliance contracts.

## Returning properties to the SA Housing Trust

The Trust recognises that the nature of transitional housing can place stress on neighbourhoods. When the community housing provider and support provider agree a property is no longer suitable, the community housing provider looks for property to swap with from within its own portfolio.

If no suitable property is available, the community housing provider can ask to return to the property to the Trust and ask for it to be replaced in line with the [Specialised Housing Program Procedures](#).

The Trust will endeavour to find a suitable replacement in the same area, however vacant properties are in short supply due to ongoing redevelopment programs. It is possible that no replacement can be provided. In this case, the community housing provider may choose to either:

- Keep the property, except if it's required for the Trust's Future Planning Intent.
- Return the property to the Trust anyway.

If a property in this program is designated for domestic violence/abuse purposes needs to be returned for the Trust's purposes, the Trust will try to provide a suitable replacement.

When a replacement property is provided, the community housing provider works with the relevant Trust Housing Officer and Regional Manager to address appropriate property alterations for domestic violence situations. These will be provided at the Trust's expense when property is returned at the Trust's request.

## Dispute resolution process

Disputes can include but are not limited to:

- Customer selection for program vacancies.
- Delays in customer selections or allocations.
- Withholding, or sharing partial information impeding decision making.
- Differences in service philosophy, principles, or conflicting internal policies.

Decisions should be made unanimously between the relevant community housing provider and the Alliance on a best for client outcomes basis.

If a dispute about a specific case arises, the relevant community housing provider and Alliance Senior Manager attempt to resolve the dispute between themselves in the first instance. Where a decision can't be reached, they escalate through their respective leadership structures to negotiate an outcome.

Disputes about selections or allocations should be resolved promptly to ensure customers are allocated within 14 days to meet the vacancy turnaround timeframes. Community housing providers or Alliance support providers can raise systemic issues with the Alliance Senior Manager to escalate through to the appropriate Alliance governance structure for a resolution.

If the issue is specific to a particular Alliance and community housing providers within their region, the Alliance Management Team and the relevant community housing providers work together to develop potential solutions.

For strategic or cross-Alliance issues, community housing providers and Alliance Senior Managers escalate through to the Alliance Leadership Teams and the Alliance System Steering Group.

## Roles and Responsibilities

| Position                    | Responsibility  |
|-----------------------------|---|
| SA Homelessness Alliances   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess and triage customers for housing and supports within their geographic region.</li> <li>• Prioritise eligible customers in their region for upcoming vacancies based on customers' relative level of risk and vulnerability and urgency of need.</li> <li>• Develop a suitable exit strategy before a customer leaves a property to make sure they don't become homeless.</li> <li>• Assist customers to secure alternative long-term accommodation.</li> <li>• Maintain property numbers in the program.</li> <li>• Resolve disputes promptly.</li> </ul>   |
| Community housing providers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select tenants in consultation with the Alliances.</li> <li>• Register the customer for housing.</li> <li>• Approve categories as per the Housing registration and allocation policy.</li> <li>• Offer the property to the customer on the Single Housing Register and allocate the tenancy if the customer accepts the property.</li> <li>• Manage the tenancy in line with their policies and in collaboration with the customer and their support provider.</li> <li>• At the end of the tenancy update registration and reapprove the customer's Category One status on the SHR, and backdate to their original approval date from when they were allocated to THP.</li> </ul> |



- Consider transferring customer to an internal community housing provider property or another provider's property if suitable.
- Ensure the customer is assisted into other suitable housing options.
- Maintain property numbers in the program, including where developments occur.
- Resolve disputes promptly.

## Related documents

- [Specialised Housing Program Policy](#)
- [Specialised Housing Program Procedure](#)
- [Transitional Housing Program Policy](#)
- [Transitional Housing Program Maintenance Guideline](#)
- [Community Housing Eligibility Policy](#)
- [Community Housing Eligibility Guideline](#)
- [Community Housing Allocations Policy](#)
- [Community Housing Allocations Guideline](#)
- [Community Housing Managing the Housing Register Guideline](#)
- SA Housing Trust Maintenance Accommodation Standards  
(contact [housingpartnerships@sa.gov.au](mailto:housingpartnerships@sa.gov.au) for a copy).