




Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Communities**

Moving in

A guide for new public housing tenants

The Housing Authority operates within
the Department of Communities





The Department of Communities provides accommodation for thousands of Western Australians. We understand that our tenants have different needs and we will make every effort to ensure your requirements are met.

Please read this brochure carefully to ensure you are fully aware of your rights and responsibilities.

If you have any further questions, please contact your Housing Services Officer.



Property condition reports

When you move into your new home, your Housing Services Officer will provide you with two copies of a property condition report. This report describes the condition of each room in the house as well as the exterior and gardens.

It is important to complete and return the property condition report to ensure the condition of the property has been recorded by both parties. It is also an opportunity for you to record any maintenance you believe the property may require.

One copy of the signed property condition report needs to be received by us within 7 days. You should retain the other copy for your own records.

Insurance

The Department of Communities does not cover you against theft or damage to your furniture or personal items so it is advisable to consider insuring your household contents.





Pets

Yes, your pet is welcome – but there are a few simple rules. Dogs and cats can be kept provided the property has a separate, non-communal yard. It is your responsibility to ensure the yard is enclosed and kept clean, tidy and free of animal waste. You also need to make sure your pet does not damage the property or disturb the neighbours.

Dogs and cats are not allowed in flats or apartments without a non-communal yard, however you can keep other pets such as a caged bird or fish.

Check with the local council about any specific rules for your suburb. You are not allowed to keep any breed of dog listed in the Dog Regulations 2013. These include:

- Dogo Argentino
- Fila Brasileiro
- Japanese Tosa
- American Pit Bull Terrier
- Pit Bull Terrier
- Perro de Presa Canario
- A dog that is a mix of two or more breeds where one of the breeds is a restricted breed or any breed of dog that is illegal to import.

Maintenance

As the tenant, it is your responsibility to report all maintenance issues as quickly as possible. Urgent or emergency issues should be reported to Housing Direct on **1300 137 677**. Non-urgent issues can be reported through the online maintenance request form at communities.wa.gov.au. We will assess the information and tell you which category (emergency, priority or routine) your request falls into. A contractor or housing officer will then visit your property.

You will not be charged for maintenance required as a result of normal wear and tear. However, you will be charged for faults caused by neglect, misuse, wilful damage or the cost of removing rubbish.

After hours emergency

If you have an after hours emergency, it will be attended to swiftly. Call Housing Direct on **1300 137 677** and follow the prompts.

We will only pay for emergency repairs that are attended to after hours, for example, a gas leak, a faulty smoke alarm or a burst water pipe in the house. Using this service for situations that are not life or property threatening is very expensive and you will be charged the full cost. The minimum call out fee is around \$200 plus materials.



Improvements

You can make improvements or additions to your property but you must first obtain written approval from us and your local council, if applicable. Failing to get proper approvals can result in you being charged to remove or repair the work. We appreciate your efforts to make your home comfortable, however, when you leave, we will only reimburse you for improvements we plan to carry out as part of an upgrade. Check carefully before proceeding with any improvements or additions as these may need to be removed at your own expense when you move out.

Gardens

Gardens or yard areas must be maintained to an acceptable standard. This is your home so make sure you do your best to keep it looking good.

If we are forced to rectify any neglect or remove rubbish, you will be charged for this work.

Income changes

We ensure that no tenant pays more than 25 per cent of household income in rent, regardless of the market value of the property.

It is important that you tell us immediately if your household income increases by \$10 or more a week, otherwise you may have to pay back rent when your rent is next reviewed.

You should also notify us if your household income decreases as this may reduce your rent.



Paying your rent

There are several options available for paying your rent and other accounts:

- **Centrelink rent deduction** – If you receive a pension or benefit from Centrelink, your rent can be directly deducted from your benefit by Centrelink and forwarded to us.
- **Post Office** – You can use your Housing Authority card to make payments at any Australia Post office.
- **Direct debit** – You can arrange for your rent to be debited directly from your bank or financial institution account.
- **BPoint** – Make a payment online using your credit card. Visit [housing.wa.gov.au](https://www.housing.wa.gov.au), click on 'Online bill payment', and supply your account number.
- **BPAY** – Look for the BPAY logo and biller code on your bill. You can access BPAY through online, mobile or phone banking. When making your payment, please ensure that you use the reference number on your bill that relates to the account you are paying.

It is important to keep your rental account up to date.

If you fall behind in rent payments, contact your Housing Services Officer immediately so we can help organise an affordable repayment arrangement to clear any debt. This is very important as continuing problems with your rental payment could lead to eviction.





Housing appeals mechanism

The Housing Authority understands the decisions it makes can affect customers. The appeal process allows you to have a decision you believe is wrong reviewed in a fair and open manner. You have 12 months to lodge an appeal from the date the decision was made. Appeal forms are available from any housing office. There are two levels of appeal:

- **tier 1:** an internal review by a Senior Review Officer who was not previously involved in the original decision making process
- **tier 2:** an appeal hearing by the Regional Appeals Committee.

Not all Housing Authority decisions are appealable. You can refer to the Appeals process brochure which is available at your local office or on communities.wa.gov.au.

Vacating the property

You need to give 21 days' notice in writing to advise when you intend to vacate your property.

It is very important that you arrange for a property inspection by a Housing Services Officer before you vacate so you are not billed for any work that may occur after you leave. The officer can inspect the property with you once the furniture is removed and will let you know if anything needs to be fixed.

This ensures you have the chance to arrange for the work to be done, rather than being billed for a contractor to carry it out. Allow at least five working days to arrange the inspection.

The property must be left clean and tidy. If gardening, rubbish removal or repairs are required, you will be charged for them.

Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) – Telephone: 13 14 50

If you are deaf, or have a hearing or speech impairment, contact us through the National Relay Service.
For more information visit Communications.gov.au/accesshub/nrs

This publication is available in other formats that can be requested at any time.

Department of Communities offices*

Head office

5 Newman Court
Fremantle 6160
Tel: 1800 176 888

Metropolitan offices

Armadale

151 Jull Street
Armadale 6112
Tel: (08) 6215 1212

Cannington

17 Manning Road
Cannington 6107
Tel: (08) 6414 3111

Fremantle

42 Queen Street
Fremantle 6160
Tel: (08) 6414 3222

Joondalup

Unit 4, 7 Wise Street
Joondalup 6027
Tel: (08) 6215 1414

Kwinana

2 Stidworthy Way
Kwinana 6167
Tel: (08) 6277 3877

Mandurah

Unit 1, 17 Sholl Street
Mandurah 6210
Tel: (08) 6277 3883

Midland

21 Old Great Northern Highway
Midland 6056
Tel: (08) 6277 4343

Mirrabooka

5 Milldale Way
Mirrabooka 6061
Tel: (08) 6414 3000

Perth City

605 Wellington Street
Perth 6000
Tel: (08) 6215 1500

Victoria Park

269 Albany Highway
Victoria Park 6100
Tel: (08) 6414 2115

Great Southern

Albany

131 Aberdeen Street
Albany 6330
Tel: (08) 6277 4177

Katanning

6 Daping Street
Katanning 6317
Tel: (08) 6277 4188

South West

Bunbury

22 Forrest Avenue
Bunbury 6230
Tel: (08) 6414 3204

Busselton

88 Kent Street
Busselton 6280
Tel: (08) 6277 3666

Manjimup

Unit 10,
30-32 Rose Street
Manjimup 6258
Tel: (08) 6277 5008

Goldfields

Esperance

86B Windich Street
Esperance 6450
Tel: (08) 6277 3844

Kalgoorlie

Unit 1-2,
84-96 Brookman Street
Kalgoorlie 6430
Tel: (08) 6277 5233

Mid West

Carnarvon

6 Robinson Street
Carnarvon 6701
Tel: (08) 6414 3312

Geraldton

201 Marine Terrace
Geraldton 6530
Tel: (08) 6414 3320

Meekatharra

31 Main Street
Meekatharra 6642
Tel: (08) 6277 3988

Pilbara

Karratha

The Quarter HQ
Level 2, 20 Sharpe Avenue
Karratha 6714
Tel: (08) 6414 3333

South Hedland

Cnr Brand and Tonkin Streets
South Hedland 6722
Tel: (08) 6277 5044

West Kimberley

Broome

30 Frederick Street
Broome 6725
Tel: (08) 6277 3833

Derby

West Kimberley House
16-22 Loch Street
Derby 6728
Tel: (08) 6277 3880

East Kimberley

Halls Creek

14A Terone Street
Halls Creek 6770
Tel: (08) 6277 3811

Kununurra

16 Coolibah Drive
Kununurra 6743
Tel: (08) 6215 1501

Wheatbelt

Merredin

27 Mitchell Street
Merredin 6415
Tel: (08) 6414 2981

Narrogin

11-13 Park Street
Narrogin 6312
Tel: (08) 6414 2979

Northam

5 Elizabeth Place
Northam 6401
Tel: (08) 6414 3230

* For housing related matters