



Community Disability Housing Program Policy

Interim 2012

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1 About This Policy

Use of the term Community Disability Housing Program (CDHP) in this Policy means:

- housing constructed or purchased under the CDHP from a range of funding sources¹ for specific target groups prior to 2011/12 or subsequently, via the Combined Capital Bid (CCB)²;
 - transitional housing provided in collaboration with the Transitional Housing and Support Program managed by the Drug and Alcohol Office (see Section 14); and,
 - housing for people with mental health support needs through the Independent Living Program (ILP), Independent Supported Accommodation (ISA) or the Mental Health Housing Strategy (see Section 15). The following abbreviations are used frequently:
- Community Housing Organisation (CHO)
 - Disability Services Commission (DSC)
 - Drug and Alcohol Office (DAO) • Mental Health Commission (MHC)

2 Definitions

Community Housing Organisation (see also Housing Provider)

Any not for profit organisation incorporated under the Law of the Commonwealth of Australia or the State of Western Australia, or a Local Government, whose primary objective is to provide social housing or affordable housing to eligible persons on the joint wait list and is registered with the Housing Authority for that purpose.

Disability

A disability may be intellectual, psychiatric, cognitive, neurological, sensory or physical impairment or combination of those impairments that:

- is permanent or likely to be permanent;
- may or may not be of a chronic or episodic nature; and result in
- a substantially reduced capacity of the person for communication, social interaction, learning or mobility; and
- a need for continuing support services.

Need for Supported Housing

Refers to a person who is unable to live in the community without support and who is assessed as eligible for CDHP housing. This includes:

- living in an unsuitable setting such as a nursing home, hospital or with ageing carers;
- homeless or at risk of homelessness; or
- unable to access support until suitable accommodation is secured.

Housing Authority

Refers to the Housing Authority as defined in the Housing Act 1980 (WA).

Housing Provider (see also CHO)

A not for profit organisation that manages a CDHP property leased from the Housing Authority. This may be a CHO, a local government authority or other not for profit agency.

Human Services Government Agency

Specialist Government Agencies (DSC, MHC and DAO) that fund or provide support services, to CDHP tenants.

Public Housing

Rental housing that is owned and operated by the Housing Authority in Western Australia.

Support Provider

A not for profit organisation that provides support services to clients with support packages funded by the DSC, MHC or DAO.

Transitional Housing

Supported housing for up to 12 months for people who are transitioning from an alcohol and other drug residential treatment service to live in the community.

3 Purpose

This policy provides an overview of the purpose of the CDHP, the program's eligibility requirements, application process and the roles and responsibilities of key agencies. CDHP operational procedures will be outlined in program guidelines (currently under development).

4 Strategic Intent

People with support needs due to disability and mental illness often face major barriers which prevent them obtaining rental housing. The CDHP assists people with ongoing support needs to live as independently as possible in the community by providing an alternative to unsuitable housing arrangements, such as institutional care or care by elderly parents.

5 The Aim Of The CDHP

The aim of the CDHP is to provide long term rental housing for people with disability⁴ or mental illness who require ongoing support to live in the community. Short term rental housing is also provided in collaboration with the Transitional Housing and Support Program (THASP) managed by DAO (see Section 14 for details).

6 The CDHP Principles

Three principles summarise the way in which the CDHP is implemented:

6.3 A FOCUS ON PERSON-CENTRED ARRANGEMENTS

The CDHP aims to provide the most appropriate housing option for individuals by matching their housing needs with their support needs and social and financial circumstances. Where possible, a range of options will be considered for CDHP applicants. These include CDHP rental housing, shared equity housing options, assistance through the Access Home Loan Scheme and private rental. A person-centred approach requires planning and coordination, sometimes over a long period, and for this reason, the CDHP does not provide crisis or respite accommodation.

6.2 WORKING RELATIONSHIPS ARE BASED ON PARTNERSHIP AND COORDINATION BETWEEN:

- government partners, primarily the Housing Authority, the DSC, MHC and the DAO, formalised through memoranda of understanding with the Authority;
- government partners and Housing Providers
- government partners and Support Providers
- Support Providers and Housing Providers

In recognition of how critical these relationships are to the effectiveness of the CDHP, the program is implemented in ways that respect each agency's policies, priorities and constraints. A strong relationship with not for profit partners from the disability, mental health and drug and alcohol sectors is fundamental because of the critical role the sectors' play in supporting CDHP clients.

6.3 ASSISTANCE FOR PEOPLE IN HIGH NEED OF SUPPORTED HOUSING

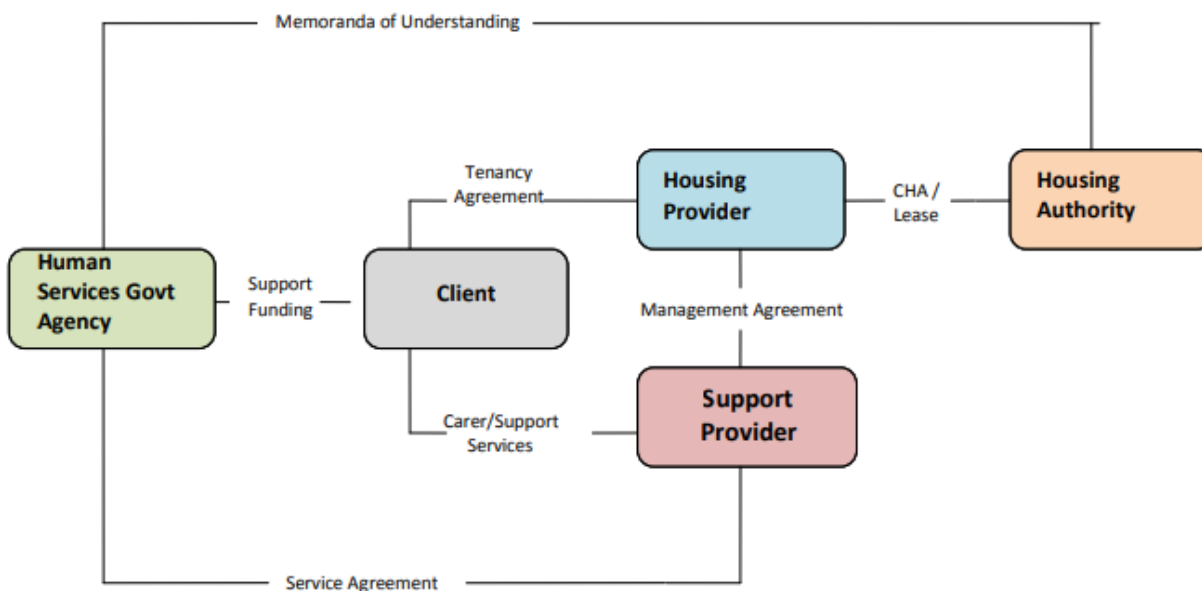
CDHP housing is a limited public resource provided to applicants with a high need for supported housing for the duration of their need.

Applicants must meet all of the eligibility criteria at the time their application is lodged by the DSC or MHC and remain eligible while occupying CDHP housing (see page 7 for details).

7 CDHP Roles and Responsibilities

Figure 1 summarises the relationships and the formal agreements between the parties involved.

Figure 1 An Overview of CDHP: Stakeholders and Agreements



8 The Role Of Government Agencies

Access to CDHP housing is managed by the Housing Authority, the DSC and the MHC. The DSC and MHC:

- collaborate to set the policy direction of the CDHP;
- assess and refer CDHP applications to the Housing Authority; and
- allocate support funding to CDHP applicants for identified support services to be provided by a Support Provider.

The Housing Authority:

- receives and manages applications for all new CDHP housing;
- assesses eligibility for CDHP and liaises with the DSC and MHC regarding the person's housing requirements;
- constructs or purchases housing for lease to Housing Providers through the CDHP;
- identifies a suitable Housing Provider in consultation with the referring agency; and
- leads the implementation and improvement of the CDHP.

9 The Role Of The Not For Profit Sector

Not for profit partners have the following roles within the CDHP:

- Housing Providers manage CDHP properties and tenancies; and
- Support Providers provide an agreed level of care and support to tenants to enable independent living in the community.

The Housing Authority prefers separate agencies to be responsible for the housing management and support provider roles with these arrangements formalised through a management agreement developed in consultation with DSC and MHC.

With the approval of the Housing Authority, Support Providers may also take on the Housing Provider role.

10 CDHP Housing – Eligibility Criteria And Application Process

10.1 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA;

Applicants seeking long term CDHP housing must meet ALL of the following eligibility criteria at the time of applying for housing and while occupying a property:

- be referred by the DSC or MHC;
- be an Australian citizen or permanent resident;
- live in Western Australia (WA) and receive their income in WA;
- not own or part own property or land (see below);
- be able to prove their identity;
- be aged 16 years or older⁶ ;
- not exceed the community housing income and asset limits for a person with a disability at both the time of application and while occupying a CDHP property (see Attachment 1); and
- sign a tenancy agreement, agreeing to tenancy obligations including property standards, paying rent and being a good neighbour. A legal guardian or service provider may sign the tenancy agreement (not applicable to group homes).

Information concerning transitional housing and vacancies in ILP/ISA housing can be found in Section 15.

10.2 OWNERSHIP OF SIGNIFICANT ASSETS

Ownership of significant assets such as property or land may not disqualify a person for CDHP housing, including transitional housing.

If an asset can't be sold due to family or other circumstances the Housing Authority will take this into consideration on a case by case basis.

In the first instance all enquiries about eligibility should be made to the referring agency. Further information about eligibility can be found at:

<https://www.wa.gov.au/organisation/department-of-communities/housing-options>

11 HOUSING PROVIDERS WISHING TO LEASE CDHP PROPERTIES

The Housing Authority leases almost all CDHP housing to not for profit organisations. The lease period is for up to 10 years with possibility of renewal.

The Department's preference is that the Housing Provider is either:

- a CHO registered with the Housing Authority or
- a local government authority.

If a registered CHO is not available, or not suitable, the Housing Authority will:

- nominate another CHO to take on this role; or
- consider a not for profit organisation (or a Support Provider to individuals eligible for CDHP) with a history of managing properties or,
- provide property management itself, at the discretion of the relevant Housing Authority's Regional Manager and contract managers.

12 THE CDHP APPLICATION PROCESS

To apply for CDHP housing, DSC or the MHC:

- must complete a 'Request for Housing Combined Capital Bid Community Disability Housing Program';
- forward applications that meet the CDHP eligibility criteria to the Housing Authority; and
- identify the Support Provider and provide details of the ongoing support provided to the individual.

13 OTHER ISSUES

13.1 RENT SETTING IN CDHP PROPERTIES

Housing Providers must charge CDHP tenants a rent consistent with the Housing Authority's Community Housing Rent Setting Policy.

A carer is expected to pay rent if the CDHP property is the carer's principal place of residence. If a person cares for a CDHP tenant on a rostered basis but lives elsewhere,

the carer's income is not included in the rent assessment and the carer cannot be charged rent.

13.2 VACANCIES IN CDHP PROPERTIES

CDHP applicants are given first consideration for access to vacancies in CDHP properties.

If a property is a new CDHP property an applicant, Housing Provider and Support Provider will be matched with the property.

If a vacancy arises in an existing CDHP property the Housing Provider should notify the Housing Authority as soon as possible by emailing to

community_housing@housing.wa.gov.au

14 DAO TRANSITIONAL HOUSING

The CDHP provides short term transitional housing in collaboration with the Transitional Housing and Support Program (THASP) managed by DAO.

Through THASP, clients receive support during alcohol and other drug treatment and this continues during the transitional accommodation period. The aim is to assist clients to manage long term tenancies and achieve other personal goals which enable them to live as independently as possible in the community.

14.1 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for CDHP transitional housing, THASP clients must:

- successfully complete a specified alcohol and other drug treatment program;
- be leaving treatment and requiring suitable housing;
 - be nominated by an alcohol and other drug support provider as suitable for transitional housing;
 - agree to the terms and conditions of the tenancy agreement; and,
- be aged 16 years or older.

14.2 THE ROLE OF DAO

DAO's role in the CDHP differs from the DSC and MHC in several ways:

- support funding provided through DAO is time limited and not ongoing;
- the support funding is provided through THASP directly to not for profit support providers rather than to individual clients; and,
- DAO does not refer CDHP applications to the Housing Authority.

15 CDHP MENTAL HEALTH HOUSING

15.1 INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM, INDEPENDENT SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION AND MENTAL HEALTH HOUSING STRATEGY THROUGH THE CDHP

All newly constructed or purchased CDHP housing is funded via the 2011/12 budget allocation and this includes housing for people with mental health support needs.

However, in view of previous funding sources, vacancies in CDHP in properties constructed or purchased prior to 2011/12 for people with mental health support needs are managed through local mental health referral panels.

16 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

LEGISLATION

Housing Act 1980

Disability Services Act 1993

Mental Health Act 1996

Residential Tenancies Act 1987

POLICIES

The Affordable Housing Strategy: 2010-2020 Opening Doors to Affordable Housing

Department of Housing: Eligibility Policy

Department of Housing: Rental Policy

Department of Housing: Building Program Policy

AWARDS AND AGREEMENTS

Memorandum of Understanding: Department of Housing and Disability Services Commission

Memorandum of Understanding: Department of Housing and Mental Health Commission

Memorandum of Understanding: Department of Housing and Drug and Alcohol Office

Community Housing Agreement

17 AUTHORISATION

Version	Authorised by	Approval Date	Effective Date	Sections modified (if applicable)
1.0	General Manager Strategy and Policy	September 2012	September 2012	

18 SUMMARY INFORMATION

Responsible Officer	Manager Housing Policy Access and Demand
Contact Officer	Tel: 08 9222 4980 Email: frances.casella@housing.wa.gov.au
Superseded Documents	-
Review	August 2013
File Number	2011/21311 and 2011/32004
Associated Documents	

19 ATTACHMENT ONE

ASSESSING FINANCIAL CAPACITY FOR HOUSEHOLDS WITH A PERSON WITH A DISABILITY (CURRENT AT SEPTEMBER 2012)

PUBLIC HOUSING – BASED ON THE GROSS ASSESSABLE APPLICANT, CO-APPLICANT AND PARTNER INCOME

	Metro /Country		North West / Remote	
	Single weekly income	Dual weekly income (household)	Single weekly income	Dual weekly income (household)
1 person	\$540	-	\$760	-
2 people	\$725	\$830	\$1,025	\$1,180
3 people	\$870	\$1,000	\$1,225	\$1,400
4 people	\$1,020	\$1,160	\$1,440	\$1,650
For public housing households with more than four people, add \$145 weekly EACH for the fifth, sixth, and subsequent householders				

COMMUNITY HOUSING – BASED ON GROSS HOUSEHOLD INCOME

	Metro /Country		North West / Remote	
	Weekly income	Annual Income	Weekly income	Annual income
1 Adult	\$540	-	\$760	-
2 adults	\$725	\$830	\$1,025	\$1,180
Each additional adult	\$870	\$1,000	\$1,225	\$1,400
Each additional child	\$1,020	\$1,160	\$1,440	\$1,650
For a single parent in community housing, add a once-off amount of \$2,357 plus the amount for a child indicated.				

(This sheet is provided for information purposes only. Determination of financial eligibility will be undertaken by the Housing Authority)

ASSET LIMITS FOR PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY

Household type	Asset limit for Community Disability Housing Program clients									
	Public Housing	Community Housing								
	Up to \$100,000	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>For homeowners</th> <th>For non-homeowners</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>\$192,500</td> <td>Up to \$332,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$273,000</td> <td rowspan="3">Up to \$412,500</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$273,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$273,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	For homeowners	For non-homeowners	\$192,500	Up to \$332,000	\$273,000	Up to \$412,500	\$273,000	\$273,000
For homeowners		For non-homeowners								
\$192,500		Up to \$332,000								
\$273,000		Up to \$412,500								
\$273,000										
\$273,000										
Singles										
Partnered (combined)										
Couple but separated due to illness (combined)										
One partner eligible										

The asset limit is defined as:

- a lump sum cash or investment that is easily accessible to a person to be used for any purpose. The cash may be received in a number of ways including inheritance, a compensation payment or a gift or savings.
- cash or an investment placed in a trust account for the sole purpose of purchasing care services for care needs and or generating income will be deducted from the cash asset limit to determine the assessable cash asset limit.

Examples of documentation accepted by the Housing Authority as evidence of income and assets relevant to Community Disability Housing Program (CDHP) clients:

Evidence of income

For CDHP clients primarily 1 or 2:

1. Income Statement from Centrelink
2. Income Statement from Public Trustees
3. Previous years tax assessment from the Taxation Office

For people other than CDHP clients, additional information may be required.

Evidence of assets

1. Most recent bank statements
2. Investment or shares statements
3. Details of property or land owned.

(This sheet is provided for information purposes only. Determination of financial eligibility will be undertaken by the Housing Authority)

20 ATTACHMENT TWO CDHP APPLICATION PROCESS

