

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

We have developed this list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) with the help of our Tenant Advisory Group (TAG). Our TAG represents our wider tenant community. They provide valuable input into decisions that affect our tenants.

While we have tried to cover a lot in this document, we understand that you may have other questions. If that is the case, please contact us by one of the means listed on this page.

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## THE SOCIAL HOUSING MANAGEMENT TRANSFER (MANAGEMENT TRANSFER)

### WHAT IS CHANGING?

The Department of Family and Community Services (FACS) is transferring the tenancy management of your home to Link Housing, a community housing provider.

### WHAT IS A COMMUNITY HOUSING PROVIDER?

Registered community housing providers (CHPs) are generally not-for-profit organisations managed by a Board of Directors.

They manage the properties that they own, as well as other properties that are owned by the government or that are rented from private landlords with government funding. These organisations also manage properties for various entities on a fee for service basis.

There are over 140 not-for-profit CHPs across NSW that provide housing assistance to eligible people on low incomes or who are unable to access appropriate housing in the private market. This includes social housing, affordable housing and supported housing.

CHPs work with a range of partners, including FACS, other non-government organisations, local councils, and private sector partners to develop, deliver and manage these housing products. They receive funds from FACS and lease properties owned by the NSW Land and Housing Corporation for these purposes.

### DO COMMUNITY HOUSING ORGANISATIONS PROVIDE GOOD SERVICE?

Tenant surveys show that tenants that live in community housing properties are very satisfied with the services that they receive and with the homes that they live in. FACS also monitors the performance of CHPs to ensure we continue to provide quality services to tenants.

### WHO CAN I CONTACT AND TALK TO ABOUT THE MANAGEMENT TRANSFER?

If you have any questions about the Management Transfer you can contact FACS by calling your FACS CSO or the hotline 1800 422 322. For questions about Link Housing kindly contact us:

- ▶ By phone on 9412 5111 or email at [enquiries@linkhousing.org.au](mailto:enquiries@linkhousing.org.au)
- ▶ Drop in to the West Ryde FACS office and ask to speak to a Link Housing team member directly
- ▶ Ask our tenants a question by emailing [TAG@linkhousing.org.au](mailto:TAG@linkhousing.org.au).

## YOUR TENANCY WITH LINK HOUSING

### **WILL I HAVE TO MOVE?**

No. You will stay in your home, and the length and conditions of your lease will stay the same.

### **WHO WILL OWN THE PROPERTY I LIVE IN?**

NSW Government will still own the property you live in. It will be leased to Link Housing so that we can manage your tenancy.

### **DO I HAVE TO SIGN A NEW LEASE AS PART OF THE MANAGEMENT TRANSFER?**

No, you will not need to sign a new tenancy agreement as part of the Management Transfer.

### **WILL I BE REQUIRED TO PAY A BOND WHEN THE MANAGEMENT TRANSFER OCCURS?**

No, Link Housing will not ask for a bond.

### **I HAVE A LIFETIME LEASE WITH FACS. WILL LINK HOUSING HONOUR THIS?**

Yes. The conditions of your tenancy will not change when you transfer to Link Housing.

### **WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF MY HOUSE IS UNDER-OCCUPIED?**

If you are under-occupying and subject to the Vacant Bedroom Charge by FACS at present, then this will continue until your lease ends.

### **WHAT IS LINK HOUSING'S SUCCESSION POLICY?**

Our Succession Policy says that if household members meet the eligibility criteria for a succession to the tenancy, Link Housing will assess and approve them to be a tenant. Household members could be partners or children. You can find our Succession Policy on our website at [www.linkhousing.org.au](http://www.linkhousing.org.au).

### **CAN I STILL HAVE MY PET IN MY PROPERTY?**

Yes, pets can live in your home with you under our Pet Policy. Note, where a pet causes problems for neighbours and the community, Link Housing will have a conversation with you and agree the best action to take.

## YOUR TENANCY WITH LINK HOUSING (continued)

### WHOM DO I CONTACT IF I HAVE A COMPLAINT OR FEEL UNFAIRLY TREATED?

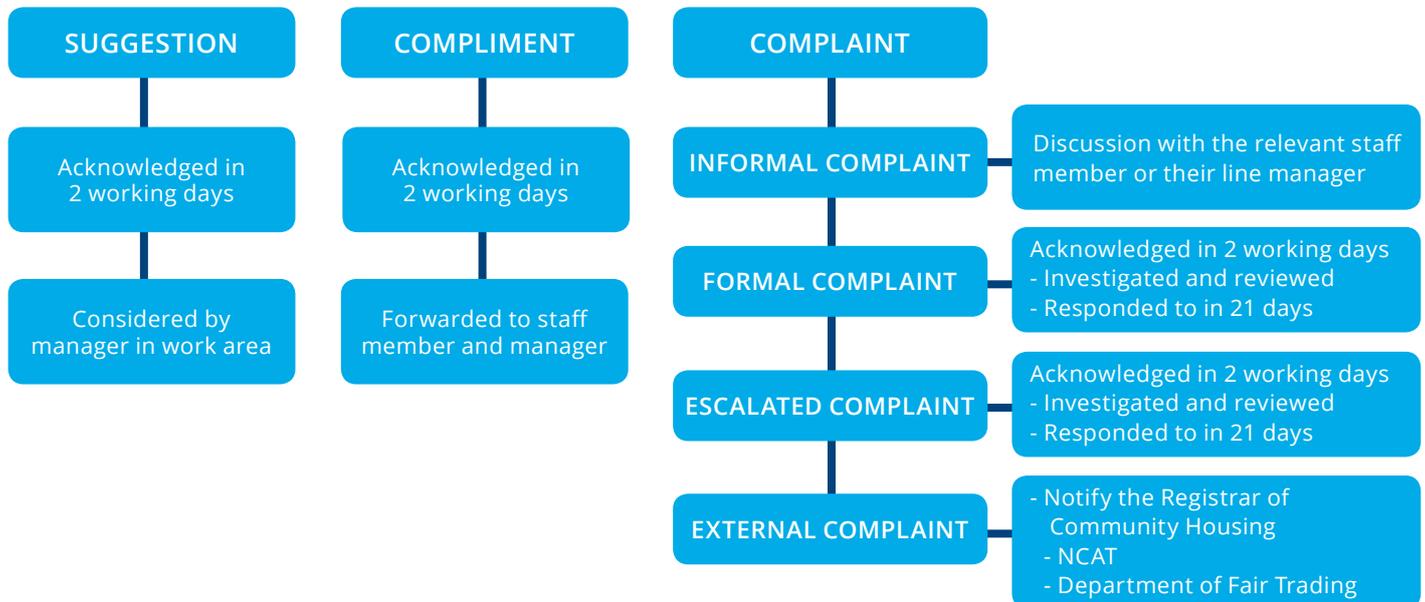
As advised by FACS, once you become a Link Housing tenant, we would encourage you to contact your new Housing Manager about any issues. This can be done in person, in writing or by telephone.

If you are not comfortable talking to your Housing Manager about an issue, you can use our online feedback form to raise your issue more formally.

### WHAT HAPPENS TO ISSUES I RAISE FORMALLY?

We welcome all feedback and are committed to handling it in a respectful, confidential and timely manner. Our principles and response to tenant feedback is summarised in our Client Feedback policy available on our website at [www.linkhousing.org.au](http://www.linkhousing.org.au). Link Housing maintains a record of all feedback received and manages feedback in a structured way (as shown below) to ensure consistency, fairness and transparency.

### MANAGING CLIENT FEEDBACK



### DOES LINK HOUSING NOW HAVE ALL MY INFORMATION?

Yes. To help make your transfer to Link Housing easier for you, the NSW Government has passed legislation to allow FACS to give us information about your housing, including personal and health information about you and your household.

## RENT PAYMENTS

### WILL MY RENT CHANGE?

The amount of money you have left after paying your rent will not change when you transfer to Link Housing. However, if you are eligible to receive Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) from Centrelink, your rent will change. We have provided more information below.

### WHAT IS COMMONWEALTH RENT ASSISTANCE?

Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) is a non-taxable payment from the Australian Government to people who receive a Centrelink payment and who are paying rent in the private market (including non-government organisations such as community housing providers such as Link Housing).

### WHY DON'T I RECEIVE CRA NOW?

You currently do not receive CRA payments because you are a public housing tenant. Public housing tenants are not eligible to receive CRA because they pay rent to a government housing authority.

### AM I ELIGIBLE FOR CRA?

The majority of tenants receiving a Centrelink or Department of Veterans' Affairs payment are likely to be eligible for CRA. Link Housing has a close relationship with Centrelink, and will work with them to assess each tenant's individual circumstances, (such as your household income and current rent) to determine your eligibility. Link Housing will provide further information on your eligibility in August.

### DO I NEED TO APPLY FOR CRA?

Yes. However, Link Housing has worked with Centrelink to make this a simple two-step process for tenants that are transferring to us. The two steps:

1. Complete the forms that we will send to you in the mail in August;
2. Submit them to us by mail or in person.

The deadline to return these forms to us is 21 September 2018. After this date, you will have to go to Centrelink to apply for CRA and follow their process.

### WILL I GET HELP TO APPLY FOR CRA?

Yes, we will send you a letter about this in August and follow up with a series of invites to drop in sessions and visits to your home to assist you with completing the forms that are required to apply for CRA.

## REPAIRS, MAINTENANCE AND REDEVELOPMENT

### HOW WILL I RECEIVE MAINTENANCE BEFORE AND AFTER THE MANAGEMENT TRANSFER?

Maintenance and repairs for your property will continue to be managed and delivered in the same way. You will continue to be able to request maintenance and log issues by calling the maintenance hotline on 1800 422 322, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

After transfer, you will continue to call this number for maintenance services and our Housing Managers (the equivalent of FACS CSOs) will help you if you have any concerns.

### WHAT ROLE WILL LINK HOUSING PLAY?

Link Housing will be working closely with your existing maintenance providers to make sure that all properties transferring to us are safe and maintained.

In the lead up to the Management Transfer, you can meet members of our Assets team at our events (please refer to the enclosed Events Calendar).

We pride ourselves on the excellent management of our properties. Two quotes summarise our approach to asset management:

**“Good client service is good asset management.”**

Head of Asset Management, Gino Espinosa

**“Link Housing just gets things done.”**

Marie C, Link Housing TAG member

FACS also monitors the quality of community housing providers' maintenance services.

### WILL THERE BE REDEVELOPMENT IN MY AREA?

Redevelopment of sites is not part of the Management Transfer from the NSW Government to community housing providers, such as Link Housing.

The NSW Government's Future Directions for Social Housing strategy and Communities Plus redevelopment plans outline proposed changes.

You can access these plans by visiting the Communities Plus website.

**[www.communitiesplus.com.au](http://www.communitiesplus.com.au)**

## NEXT STEPS

### WHAT SHOULD I DO NOW? WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Continue browsing the information we have provided you in this pack. Write down any questions you have and either call us with your queries, or come along to one of our upcoming events to meet the Link Housing team and have a chat in person.

The enclosed calendar of events provides the dates, times and locations where you can meet us over the next 6 months. All events are free. Bring your neighbours, friends and family along for a complimentary coffee, BBQ and welcome pack from Link Housing.



In the meantime, we invite to call us on 9412 5111 with any questions you may have.

### INTERPRETING AND TRANSLATION SERVICES

We provide a range of language services to ensure that all tenants have equal access to our services and information.

If you have difficulties understanding English, please contact the All Graduates Interpreting and Translating Service on (02) 9199 4821. If you have difficulty speaking or hearing, please contact the TTY Service on 133 677 for voice calls or 1300 555 727 for speak and listen calls. These free services will help you to communicate with the Link Housing team in the lead up to the official transfer of your tenancy.

如果你有英語理解方面的困難，請聯繫All Graduates口譯和筆譯服務，電話：(02) 9199 4821。如果你有言語或聽覺障礙，請聯繫TTY服務，語音通話請撥133 677，旁聽助講(speak and listen)通話請撥1300 555 727。這些免費服務將幫助你在你的租約正式轉移之前與Link Housing團隊溝通。

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Եթե դուք անգլերեն լեզուն հասկանալու դժվարություն ունեք, խնդրում ենք կապվել Օլ Գրադուեթս (All Graduates) կազմակերպության թարգմանչական ծառայության հետ (02) 9199 4821 հեռախոսահամարով:

Եթե դուք լսողության կամ խոսքի դժվարություն ունեք, խնդրում ենք կապվել TTY ծառայության հետ 133 677 հեռախոսահամարով՝ ձայնային զանգերի համար, կամ 1300 555 727 հեռախոսահամարով՝ խոսելու և լսելու զանգերի համար: Այս անվճար ծառայությունները ձեզ կօգնեն հաղորդակցվելու Լինք Հաուզինգի (Link Housing) աշխատակազմի հետ՝ ձեր վարձակալության պաշտոնական փոխանցումը նախապատրաստելու համար:

اگر شما مشکلاتی در درک انگلیسی دارید، لطفاً با خدمات ترجمه کتبی و شفاهی الگروجوییت با شماره (02) 9199 4821 تماس بگیرید. اگر مشکل گفتاری یا شنوایی دارید، لطفاً با خدمات تله تایپ با شماره 133 677 برای تماس های صوتی یا با شماره 1300 555 727 برای صحبت کردن و گوش دادن به تلفن ها تماس بگیرید. این خدمات رایگان به شما برای برقراری ارتباط با تیم پیوند مسکن (لینک هاوسینگ) قبل از انتقال رسمی اجاره نشینی شما کمک خواهد کرد.

영어를 이해하는데 어려움이 있을 경우, All Graduates 통번역 서비스에 (02) 9199 4821로 연락하십시오. 말하거나 듣는데 어려움이 있을 경우, 보이스 콜을 위해서는 TTY Service에 133 677로 연락하시고 speak and listen 콜을 위해서는 1300 555 727로 연락하십시오. 이 무료 서비스는 귀하가 Link Housing 팀과 의사소통을 하여 귀하의 공식적 임차 양도로 진행하실 수 있도록 지원할 수 있습니다.