Transferring to Another Social Housing Property

Reasons for Transfer

There are many reasons why a transfer to another property may be requested by a social housing tenant or by Loreto Community Housing, these include:

- Overcrowding: When a property is not large enough (e.g. number of bedrooms) for the number of household occupants.
- Under occupancy / downsizing: When a property has more bedrooms than are needed by the household occupant(s) and could be better utilised for a larger household.
- Health or mobility need: When a property does not meet the specific needs of household members (e.g. accessibility features).
- Special facility or modification: When a property has special features that are not needed by the current tenant but are required by another person (e.g. accessibility features needed by a person with a disability).
- Safety requirements: When a household member has safety concerns associated with residing at a property (e.g. family or community violence).
- Location: When a current property location does not suit specific household needs (e.g. access to work or study).

Transfer Eligibility

Generally, in order to meet the eligibility requirements for a transfer, tenants must:

- still be eligible for social housing;
- have lived in their current property for more than 12 months, except in cases involving safety concerns;
- have a positive tenancy history – e.g. condition of property, rental payments;
- not be subject to a Notice to Vacate or other tenancy related legal issues.

Transfer Process

Transfer requests (unless based on under occupancy/downsizing) must be made through Housing Connect. If a tenant wishes to move to a different property (whether within or outside areas where Loreto Community Housing manages housing), they must contact Housing Connect for assessment. Loreto Community Housing is unable to provide advice on assessment outcomes or waiting times for transfers.

Note: Tenants who transfer need to pay the costs associated with their move – e.g. removal costs, connection and disconnection of utilities, etc.

Internal Transfers (exceptional circumstances only)

The State Government's *Social Housing Policy* states:
"Social housing providers may transfer tenants within their own managed portfolio or to other social housing providers based on the circumstances of the tenant and members of their household including matters of safety, health and mobility and to ensure no unreasonable financial or social disadvantage to the tenant".

An internal transfer is a transfer to another property owned or managed by Loreto Community Housing. This could be within the same suburb or in another suburb where we have available housing. We only offer internal transfers in exceptional circumstances – mainly to tenants who wish to move to a smaller (fewer bedroom) property due to the under occupancy of their current dwelling. These requests do not need to be made through Housing Connect and can be applied for by completing our *Social Housing Internal Transfer Application* form (available on our website or at our office).

Loreto Community Housing may approve exceptional internal transfers based on management discretion – particularly in cases where a transfer is deemed the most appropriate outcome in relation to our Independent Living Modifications Policy (available on our website). However, in most cases and especially for urgent need, tenants need to contact Housing Connect in order to access a wider range of properties from all social housing providers.

Note: We will not internally transfer tenants who have safety concerns linked to their current location to another property within the same area.

Waiting times for internal transfers vary depending on the availability of suitable properties.

Under occupancy or Special Facility/Modification

Loreto Community Housing has a responsibility to manage our properties efficiently in order to offer homes to as many people as we can. Sometimes there are families waiting for larger houses or houses with special features.

If we have tenancies that do not require the number of bedrooms in the property (i.e. are under occupied), we may ask them to transfer to a smaller property. This allows us to offer the larger property to a family who needs it.

In cases where an under occupied social housing property has four or more bedrooms, or where it has unrequired special features or modifications, we can insist that tenants transfer to another property so we can offer their current one to someone who needs it. In these cases, we will discuss transfer options and costs with tenants in order to seek a mutually agreeable outcome. If necessary, the Residential Tenancy Act 1997 allows for a Notice to Vacate to be issued.

Appeals

Tenants have the right to appeal a transfer decision in line with our Complaints and Appeals Policy, available on the Loreto Community Housing website: lch.org.au.