

Identification and Documentation

Policy

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Acronyms	Full form
CEO	Chief Executive Officer

Contents

1. Purpose	4
2. Scope	4
3. Policy	4
3.1 Identification	4
3.2 Income and assets	4
3.3 Social and medical needs	5
3.4 Representatives	5
3.5 Lawyers (Legal advocate)	5
4. Decision-making (delegation and discretion)	5
5. Complaints and/or appeals	6
6. Review of the Policy	6
7. References	6
7.1 Legislation	6
7.2 Policies	6
7.3 Key related documents	7
Appendix 1 – Acceptable Forms of Identification	8

1. Purpose

The Chief Executive Officer (Housing) needs to verify personal information about clients to confirm their eligibility for social housing or private rental bond assistance, calculate rent and rental rebates and comply with requests under the *Information Act 2002*.

2. Scope

All social housing tenants and applicants must provide proof of their identity and income and assets.

This policy outlines the type of information required to confirm a person's identity, prove their income and assets, and any relevant medical or social needs.

Applicants who require special consideration or priority housing due to medical or social needs must also provide evidence of those needs.

Refer to the Priority Housing policy.

3. Policy

3.1 Identification

Every applicant for social housing or bond assistance, or person requesting access to information under the *Information Act 2002*, must provide evidence of their identity and, where relevant, the identity of their dependent children. In establishing identity, documents must be provided which verify the client's full name and date of birth. Acceptable forms of identity are listed at Appendix 1.

A dependent child means a person under 18 years of age who lives with their parent or guardian. The CEO (Housing) has the discretion not to accept documentation that it believes to be of insufficient quality and reliability to meet requirements.

3.2 Income and assets

The CEO (Housing) requires evidence of income and assets to determine eligibility for social housing, private rental bond assistance, and to calculate rent.

Household income and assets must be equal to or below the threshold. Refer to the Income and Assets policy.

To substantiate income and assets, documentation must:

- detail the recipient's full name;
- be the most recent version of the document or reasonably accurate at the time of submitting;
- be on official letterhead, remittance advice or be provided electronically directly from the paying authority (such as Centrelink or the employer); and
- contain full details of asset value or all income received. Refer to the Income and Assets policy.

The CEO (Housing) may request additional evidence to substantiate income and assets.

The CEO (Housing) can access evidence of income directly from Centrelink with consent of the tenant or applicant. Applicants or tenants must complete the Income Confirmation Scheme form if they wish the Department to access their Centrelink income details.

3.3 Social and medical needs

The CEO (Housing) promotes and supports social inclusion for all residents of the Northern Territory. Residents with particular social and medical needs must provide evidence of their requirements so that the CEO (Housing) may make alterations to premises or provide appropriate accessible accommodation.

The CEO (Housing) requires appropriate official documentation to demonstrate the client's needs and to establish eligibility for a service, dwelling type or location, or alteration to a premises.

3.4 Representatives

A tenant or applicant may be represented by another person, such as a family member, support worker, or legal advocate. Any person acting on behalf of a client must provide documentation that confirms the client has consented to that person acting on their behalf, including that they consent for the Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities (the Department) to release personal information to their representative. The documents must be signed by the client and are called 'Authority to Act' documents.

For information release only rather than representation, the clients and representatives may complete the Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities Authorisation to Disclose Personal Information form.

3.5 Lawyers (Legal advocate)

Any lawyer acting on behalf of a client must provide an 'Authority to Act' document when representing a client. The only exception to this is for urgent enquiries, in which case verbal authority may be accepted, for example:

- following up on urgent or emergency maintenance requests under S 63(2) of the *Residential Tenancies Act 1999*; or
- in relation to the death of a tenant.

Legal advocates who have an urgent enquiry on behalf of a client may contact the Housing Advocates phone line on 1800 685 743 from Monday to Friday between 8:30 am to 4:00 pm. Legal advocates must identify themselves as registered practising lawyers permitted to act on behalf of the client. Urgent verbal enquiries by lawyers acting on behalf of clients will only be accepted by the Housing Advocates phone line.

Legal advocates should direct all other enquiries on behalf of clients, other than Freedom of Information requests, to Housing.AdvocateEnquiries@nt.gov.au.

Freedom of Information requests should be directed to TFHC.FOI@nt.gov.au.

4. Decision-making (delegation and discretion)

The CEO (Housing) may delegate a power or function under the *Housing Act 1982* or other Acts. Delegated officers make decisions in line with the CEO (Housing)'s Housing Delegations and Financial Management Delegations.

A discretionary decision may be made outside the general application of policy if it supports the policy intent, will prevent a client from being unfairly disadvantaged, and is in line with the CEO (Housing)'s delegations and legislative obligations.

Refer to the Discretionary Decision-Making policy.

5. Complaints and/or appeals

If a client is not satisfied with either a decision or action of the CEO (Housing), they can access the CEO (Housing) complaints and/or appeals processes. Refer to the Complaints and Appeals policies.

The CEO (Housing)'s Complaints and Appeals policies relate to CEO (Housing) actions and decisions.

Complaints relating to either a decision or action of other social housing providers, will be referred directly to the relevant social housing provider and managed in line with the specific providers policies. The Department is not responsible for registering or investigating a complaint regarding decisions and actions of other social housing providers.

6. Review of the Policy

If at any time the legislative, operational or funding environment is so altered that the policy is no longer appropriate in its current form, the policy shall be reviewed and amended accordingly.

7. References

7.1 Legislation

Housing Act 1982

Information Act 2002

Residential Tenancies Act 1999

7.2 Policies

Appeals policy

Private Rental Bond Assistance policy

Complaints policy

Discretionary Decision-Making policy

Eligibility for Social Housing policy

Income and Assets policy

Priority Housing policy

7.3 Key related documents

[Appendix 1 - Acceptable Forms of Identification](#)

Authorisation to Disclose Personal Information form

Income Confirmation Scheme form

Proof of Identification form

Appendix 1 – Acceptable Forms of Identification

The following standards regarding proof of identity apply in relation to applications for social housing, bond assistance, and access to information lodged under the *Information Act 2002*:

Primary sources

Any one of the following primary sources is an acceptable form of identification:

- Current Australian Passport
- Current Northern Territory Driver's Licence
- Current document of identity issued by the Australian Passport Office
- Current Australian Defence Force ID card
- Current Police Service ID card from an Australian jurisdiction
- Current Northern Territory evidence of age card from the Motor Vehicle Registry (MVR)
- Current Keypass ID card issued by Australia Post

Secondary sources

If the person does not have a primary source of identification, at least 2 of the following other forms of identification must be presented. One of the secondary sources must be photographic identification.

Acceptable secondary sources of identification are:

- Current overseas passport with current entry stamp
- Naturalisation/citizenship/immigration papers issued by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (Cth)
- Current driver's licence (with photograph) from another State or Territory
- A document listed as a primary source of identity which has expired within the last two years
- A Notice of Assessment from the Australian Taxation Office
- Centrelink Income Statement
- Current Medicare card
- Current concession or health care card issued by the Australian Government
- Current utility account with evidence of payment
- Current photographic identification from a recognised local Aboriginal Authority
- A birth, marriage or divorce certificate issued by an Australian state or territory
- A current Working With Children Clearance issued by an Australian state or territory

Children

Dependent children under the age of 18 may be identified by any primary or secondary source(s) – by birth certificate issued by an Australian state or territory, current Medicare Card, parenting orders, or appropriate Centrelink documentation confirming the identity of any dependent children.

People with insufficient formal identification

If a person does not have two secondary sources of identification, an authorised referee may complete the CEO (Housing) Proof of Identification form to verify the person's identity. The authorised referee must state that he or she has known the applicant for at least two years and can verify their identity.

Authorised referees include but are not limited to:

- a Territory Families, Housing and Communities Delegate, who has no personal relationship with the person(s)
- a Chairperson, Secretary or CEO of an incorporated Aboriginal organisation (such as land councils, regional councils, housing organisations, resource centres)
- a Community Development Programme provider
- Police officer
- school Principal
- school counsellor
- Minister of religion
- treating health professional or manager in Aboriginal Medical Services; or
- a Northern Territory, Australian Government or other State or Territory public servant with at least five years' service.