

# Information Booklet

Housing Guide for Women in Victoria

# FINDING YOUR NEXT HOME – looking past a housing crisis

BOOKLET TWO

wire

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Helping women  
make the right  
connections

**Women's  
Information**

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A list of references and further reading is available online at [www.wire.org.au](http://www.wire.org.au)

Every effort has been made to ensure the information contained in this booklet is accurate and current at the time of printing—January 2013. However, no responsibility will be taken for the accuracy or reliability of the information, or for any loss that may arise from errors, omissions, or changes to government policy or the law.

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*“Social housing, public housing,  
crisis housing, emergency housing ...  
what housing, really?”*

This booklet *‘Finding your next home—looking past a housing crisis’* is the second booklet of WIRE’s two-booklet series **Housing Guide for Women in Victoria**. You probably have had to deal with a housing crisis and now have temporary housing for a few months/weeks/days.

But moving around is tiring and you always worry about where you will stay next, so you are now trying to find a home you can stay in for the long haul to avoid another housing crisis. This second booklet will help you understand the long-term housing options available in Victoria, and will also guide you in the processes involved in getting long-term housing for yourself and your family.

**If you are in a housing crisis right now**—you’re homeless because you are escaping family violence, or you are at risk of becoming homeless for other reasons—get a copy of WIRE’s *Housing Guide Booklet 1: ‘Dealing with a housing crisis—needing help right now!’* for practical information on how to get a safe roof over your head for the night, or how to keep your current home.

When applying for long-term housing, there are different long-term housing options such as renting in the private rental market or applying for social housing.

The diagram overleaf shows how different types of social housing are related to one another.

## Social housing options in Victoria

Applications ONLY through TRANSITIONAL HOUSING MANAGERS (THMs)				Applications ON YOUR OWN	
TYPES OF HOUSING					
Crisis/emergency housing	Transitional housing	Public housing	Community housing	Public housing	Community housing
		Segments 1,2 and 3		Segment 4	
Short term	Short to medium term	Long term	Long term	Long term	Long term
see WIRE's Housing Guide Booklet 1: <i>'Dealing with a housing crisis—needing help right now!'</i>		see WIRE's Housing Guide Booklet 2 (this booklet): <i>'Finding your next home—looking past a housing crisis'</i>			

For more information on crisis/emergency housing, and/or transitional housing, get a copy of WIRE's **Housing Guide Booklet 1: 'Dealing with a housing crisis—needing help right now!'** by calling **1300 134 130**, emailing [inforequests@wire.org.au](mailto:inforequests@wire.org.au) or visiting [www.wire.org.au](http://www.wire.org.au)

**Waiting lists for public housing are long.** In March 2012, there were **37 887** people on the Victorian public housing

- **10 544** people on the 'early' waiting list (Segments 1 to 3)
- **27 343** people on the 'general' waiting list (Segment 4).

## What is social housing?

The term **‘social housing’** can sometimes be confusing—it includes both public housing and community housing options as explained below.

**Public housing** is provided by Department of Human Services—Office of Housing at an affordable rent that is calculated as a percentage of household income. Waiting lists in Victoria are very long, which means that public housing is certainly not the way to solve your immediate housing crisis. There are different housing types offered by the Office of Housing. These can include high-rise apartments, medium-density apartments (often referred to as ‘walk ups’ as they don’t have a lift), town houses and houses. A general rule-of-thumb is that if you list your preference to live in the inner suburbs of Melbourne, expect to be offered a high-density or medium-density apartment. The further out you go, the more likely you are to be offered a house.

**Community housing** is provided through non-government and not-for-profit organisations in Victoria. These organisations include housing associations and housing providers. They offer long-term housing options to tenants at an affordable rent. They are separate from the Office of Housing and you need to contact the organisations directly to make an application. The important thing to remember when applying for community housing is not to rely on just one option—you should make contact with, and apply to, as many suitable organisations as possible to ensure you keep your options open.

## Homeless because you’re escaping family violence?

STEP 1: Contact your local Domestic Violence Crisis Service. For your local service’s contact number,

- Get a copy of WIRE’s *Housing Guide Booklet 1: ‘Dealing with a housing crisis needing help right now!’* and see page 23 APPENDIX 1 ‘Domestic Violence Outreach Centres in Victoria’.
- You can also visit the Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria website at [www.dvrcv.org.au/support-services/victorian-services/](http://www.dvrcv.org.au/support-services/victorian-services/)

## Are you at risk becoming homeless for other reasons?

STEP 1 To keeping your home: Register with your local transitional housing service. For your local THM contact number,

- Call WIRE 1300 134 130.
- See page 25 APPENDIX 2 ‘*Transitional Housing Managers (THMs) in Victoria*’ for a list of contact numbers.

# Applying for public housing

It's important to realise that waiting lists are very long and the application process can be complex, even if you do meet the eligibility criteria.



## PLEASE NOTE

Your local THM can help with applying for public housing. See page 8 'Transitional housing managers (THMs)' on how to navigate the process.

To apply for public housing, you need to prove to the Office of Housing that you:

- Are an Australian citizen, a permanent resident or you have a temporary protection visa
- Currently live in Victoria
- Do not own or part-own a house, unit or flat
- Have an independent income that does not exceed the limits—generally you are eligible if you are on a low income and receive Centrelink benefits (check at [www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/housing-and-accommodation/public-housing/applying-for-housing/income-and-asset-limits-public-housing](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/housing-and-accommodation/public-housing/applying-for-housing/income-and-asset-limits-public-housing))
- Are not subject to a Centrelink two-year waiting period for newly arrived migrants
- Have repaid or are repaying the Office of Housing any money you owe it (e.g. you have repaid the Office of Housing money loaned under the Bond Loan Scheme)
- Do not have any history of eviction for tenancy breaches, other than arrears (in the past 12 months) as a public housing tenant.

**For more information on eligibility criteria, the application process and expected waiting times**, visit the Department of Human Services website at [www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/housing-and-accommodation/public-housing/applying-for-housing](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/housing-and-accommodation/public-housing/applying-for-housing)

**You can access public housing application forms and guides in different languages** at [www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/forms-and-templates/public-housing-application-forms](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/forms-and-templates/public-housing-application-forms)

## *“Housing waiting lists are confusing”*

### **Demystifying waiting lists**

There are four different categories or ‘segments’ on the public housing waiting list, but they fall into two main categories:

- **Segments 1, 2 and 3**—(commonly known as Seg. 1, 2 and 3) are the ‘early’ housing waiting list segments. If you have been assessed as Seg. 1, 2 or 3 it means your housing needs are urgent. Urgency is explained below in sections on Segments 1, 2 and 3. You will have priority over people on the ‘general’ waiting list (Seg 4), even though they may have applied earlier.
- **Segment 4**—is the general, or ‘wait turn’ waiting list.

To be on a waiting list, you must be linked and actively engaged with support services such as Centrelink. Income and asset limits apply and are based on Centrelink Healthcare Card limits for low-income earners. Income and asset limits for all four housing segments are given at [www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/housing-and-accommodation/public-housing/applying-for-housing/income-and-asset-limits-public-housing/public-housing](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/housing-and-accommodation/public-housing/applying-for-housing/income-and-asset-limits-public-housing/public-housing)

### **Segment 1—Homeless with support**

You are eligible to apply for this category if you or your family are:

- Living in crisis accommodation arranged by a family violence service
- Residing in transitional housing that has been arranged for you as crisis housing (including accommodation that is unsuitable because transitional or crisis accommodation was unavailable when you needed it)
- Living temporarily with other families because you have not been able to get or keep accommodation of your own
- Living on the streets, sleeping in parks, squatting in derelict buildings or using cars for temporary shelter.

**A social or housing worker needs to apply on your behalf** using the ‘Homeless with Support Application Form’ available at [www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/forms-and-templates/homeless-with-support-application-form](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/forms-and-templates/homeless-with-support-application-form)

Guidelines for workers are available at [www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/allocations-manual/homeless-with-support](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/allocations-manual/homeless-with-support)

## **Segment 2—Supported housing**

To be eligible for this category you must have a physical or mental disability or long-term health problem and currently be living in unsuitable housing.

If you are eligible you will be put on the waiting list to receive the high personal support you need, and to have your current housing modified where necessary to ensure that you can live independently.

**Your support program worker must complete and submit on your behalf** the ‘Supported Housing Assessment Form’, available at [www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/forms-and-templates/supported-housing-assessment](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/forms-and-templates/supported-housing-assessment)

## **Segment 3—Special housing needs**

To be eligible for this category your current housing must be unsuitable or insecure for any personal, health or family reason such as family violence. In addition, you must be unable to obtain more appropriate housing in the private rental market.

The special housing needs category applies to:

- New applicants whose current housing is highly unsuitable and alternative housing in the private rental market is unobtainable
- Current DHS tenants, including tenants of movable units, who need to transfer to more appropriate housing.

Eligibility is assessed against the following categories:

- **Insecure housing (for new applicants only)**—this category applies if you are living in temporary accommodation where you do not have continued residency and must leave urgently. Written documentation of your current housing status in transitional housing, a refuge, emergency housing or crisis housing is required.
- **Inappropriate housing**—this category applies if you need to be urgently relocated because of severe overcrowding, unsuitable housing or to be reunited with your children. To apply you should seek assistance from a Social Housing Advocacy and Support Program (SHASP) worker or equivalent service. Worker guidelines are available at [www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/allocations-manual/matching-clients-with-housing](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/allocations-manual/matching-clients-with-housing)

For each of these possible reasons for moving, there are guidelines. Documentation is also required to prove your reasons for moving. Possible reasons for moving are:

- **Severe overcrowding**—if you and your family need two or more extra bedrooms to match your household size than you have in your current housing. Written documentation is required to show all household members have lived together for at least six months and intend to live together permanently.
- **Unsuitable housing**—if your current housing has a long-term detrimental effect on one or more members of the household, who have all lived together for more than six months. Scenarios might include:
  - > Inappropriate sharing of bedrooms by parents or other adults with children
  - > Inappropriate sharing of bedrooms by children of different genders where at least one child is six years old or more
  - > Families with dependants who do not have their own separate cooking and bathroom facilities, such as in a rooming house, hotel room or caravan.

You need documentation such as a report from a housing support officer (HSO) that confirms the number of bedrooms in the property, everyone who makes up the household and whether the entire household is appropriately housed.

Alternatively, you can supply a report from a relevant community agency or healthcare professional that states your living conditions or housing environment have a detrimental effect on the people living there.

- **Family reunification**—if your current housing does not allow you as a parent to live with your children. You will need documentation from your caseworker, a protective services worker or a worker from a recognised family support agency to confirm that they expect the children to be reunited within six months after you have obtained your new housing.
- **Unsafe housing**—if you are experiencing real or serious threat of violence, don't have other housing options, and urgently need relocation. You may be living:
  - > In a refuge or emergency housing
  - > In a THM property
  - > In housing where the violence occurred
  - > With family or friends temporarily.

## Segment 4—General housing waiting list

This waiting list is known as the ‘general’ housing waiting list or ‘wait turn’ segment for people who need help, but not urgently. If you earn a low income and meet the eligibility criteria, you can apply for public housing yourself, and attach the necessary documents, using forms available at [www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/forms-and-templates/public-housing-application-forms](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/forms-and-templates/public-housing-application-forms)

To make a general public housing application, you will need to prove to the Office of Housing the list of criteria shown at the beginning of this section ‘*Applying for public housing*’ on page 4. In addition, you will need to show that you do not own assets worth more than A\$30 000. You can find out more from the Department of Housing at [Housing@dhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:Housing@dhs.vic.gov.au) or at [www.dhs.vic.gov.au/housing](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/housing)

To find your local Housing Office, see page 27 APPENDIX 3 ‘*Local Housing Offices in Victoria*’ or visit [www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/housing-and-accommodation/public-housing/local-housing-offices](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/housing-and-accommodation/public-housing/local-housing-offices)

## Transitional housing managers (THMs)

For long-term housing (such as public housing or private rental), you need to actively work with your local transitional housing manager (THM). Besides helping you solve your immediate housing problems, your THM gives you critical support when you are working out your long-term housing arrangements, whether you are applying for private rental or public housing.

Specifically in terms of longer term housing options, a THM can help you to:

- Stay in your current private rental accommodation or find another rental property
- Apply for public housing
- Apply for financial assistance from the Housing Establishment Fund or the Bond Loan Scheme (see page 12 ‘*Financial help for a rental home*’)

### *The reality with THMs*

**REALITY: High demand and long waiting lists mean that many people who are eligible still don’t get accommodation.**

## How does a THM service work?

Transitional housing is managed by the community sector and accessed through a transitional housing manager (THM). There are 15 THM programs run by non profit and government-funded organisations, providing specialist homelessness support services across Victoria.

Each region has a THM that usually only works with people who currently live in, or whose last permanent address was in, that region. That means that your local THM can allocate transitional housing and refer you to a housing outreach worker only in your local area.

## It's best to call first before visiting a THM

### How do I get help from a THM?

You can ask for help from your local THM if you have a Healthcare Card, you are homeless, or you have been in the private rental market and are facing eviction.

While some THMs work from drop-in centres, it is best to phone your local THM and explain your situation clearly. If you are facing imminent homelessness, ask for an emergency appointment. (See WIRE's *Housing Guide Booklet 1: 'Dealing with a housing crisis—needing help right now!'* for more information and tips about dealing with an immediate or imminent housing crisis.)



### CONTACTING A LOCAL THM

THMs only work with people who are either currently living in their designated area or whose last permanent address was in that area. Here is where you can get help to contact your local THM:

- Call **WIRE 1300 134 130** (9 am to 5 pm, Monday–Friday) to locate a THM
- Visit [www.chfv.org.au/transitional-housing/](http://www.chfv.org.au/transitional-housing/) or see page 25 APPENDIX 2 '*Transitional Housing Managers (THMs) in Victoria*' for a list of all THMs in Victoria
- Call the **crisis and emergency accommodation info line on 1800 825 955** (24 hours) or **(03) 9689 2777** (if calling from a mobile) to speak to a THM near you
- Visit [www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/crisis-and-emergency/crisis-accommodation](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/crisis-and-emergency/crisis-accommodation) for a list of after-hours services, specialist services and support for people experiencing homelessness and family violence

## PRACTICAL TIPS CHECKLIST

Like almost everything to do with housing services, getting information and help can be incredibly time-consuming, frustrating and confusing. Here are some simple things you can do to make the experience less stressful, and perhaps in the end, more rewarding.

-  **Try to contact the service as soon as possible.** It's important to contact your local THM as soon as you find yourself in, or approaching, a housing crisis. Your THM will then have a better chance of helping you avoid the worst of it.
-  **Be prepared to wait to speak to a THM.** A good idea is to find a comfortable place where you won't be disturbed when making your call (or calls). Get everything you need—paper, pen and perhaps a coffee and a magazine or book to read while you are waiting. Pull up a chair and try to relax.
-  **Think carefully about what you want to say and any questions you need to ask.** Write them down before you make your call. It is crucial that you don't make your situation sound better than it really is because you feel embarrassed or ashamed. THMs need to know exactly what is going on so they can give you the help you need. If they don't understand that your situation is urgent you won't get this support. It is also very important to show the THM that, with help, you will be able to get yourself back on track.
-  **When you do speak to someone, ask for his or her name and write it down.** If the THM refers you to other housing services, ask what these services will do for you.
-  **Ask for an appointment to explain your housing problem in person.** When you go to this appointment be ready to talk about your situation clearly and realistically. It may be helpful to practice what you are going to say with someone you trust before you meet the THM.
-  **Don't wait for the THM to call you back.** Whatever happens, it is important to keep in contact with your THM until your situation is sorted out.

High priority is given to people experiencing long-term or recurring homelessness. The demand for crisis housing is greater than what is available in Victoria. There is no guarantee of immediate access to crisis housing even if you meet eligibility criteria.

## Claiming your Centrelink payments when you are homeless

It's important to maintain your Centrelink payments. If you are homeless or at risk of homelessness, ask to speak to a Centrelink Community Engagement Officer (CCEO). These officers provide services to people of all ages who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. They can help you to understand, claim and maintain your income support payments.

Visit [www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/centrelink/community-engagement-officers](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/centrelink/community-engagement-officers) to find how to contact a CCEO.

## DOCUMENTS AND APPOINTMENTS

A THM will need to see some important documents at your first appointment. Remember to take your Healthcare Card, at least two other forms of identification and copies of any other documents that support your situation. These may include:

- Driver's licence
- Passport
- Birth certificate
- Residency papers
- Bank books, bank statements and ATM cards
- Rental property leases
- Letters relating to your situation from people such as real estate agents, landlords and doctors.



## Getting private rental

Many of us do not own our homes and have to rent privately to put a roof over our heads. This means having to get into the ‘private rental market’ and compete with other renters to get a lease that’s affordable. The private rental market means properties where you may deal directly with the owner, but most of the time you apply for a rental home through a real estate agent.

### Applying for a rental home

Demand for affordable private rental in Victoria far exceeds supply. Competition for private rental properties is very great. As there are usually many applications for each property, you may have to put in several applications before you succeed in getting a new rental home. Therefore it’s important to complete all sections of the rental application form and provide any supporting documents to ensure the property manager can consider your application seriously. Make sure you provide the required references in your rental application. **An incomplete application form can mean your application is not even considered.**

The Tenants Union of Victoria offers an online factsheet at [www.tuv.org.au/articles/files/resources/AL\\_applying\\_for\\_private\\_rental.pdf](http://www.tuv.org.au/articles/files/resources/AL_applying_for_private_rental.pdf)

### Financial help for a rental home

There are options that may give you financial assistance to secure a home to rent in the private rental market. Again, eligibility criteria apply for these programs.

You may be able to get help through:

- Bond Loan Scheme from your local Housing Office—a loan so you can put up a rental bond
- Housing Establishment Fund—assistance with paying rent in advance so that you can secure a rental property, and help with paying the rent if you are behind
- Commonwealth Rental Assistance through Centrelink Rent Assistance scheme.

You can also get free, confidential and independent financial counselling advice from MoneyHelp—a not-for-profit service for Victorians who are experiencing financial difficulty.

Call 1800 007 007 or visit [www.moneyhelp.org.au](http://www.moneyhelp.org.au)

## Bond Loan Scheme

The Bond Loan Scheme is there to help you access private rental properties and community housing. If you cannot afford to pay the bond (the refundable security deposit) for a private rental property, you can apply to the Office of Housing for an interest-free bond loan. This bond would then be paid directly to the residential Tenancy Bond Authority on your behalf.

To be eligible, you must:

- Have a rental amount that is less than 55% of your total household income
- Be a permanent resident of Australia
- Not own any property
- Not owe any money for any past or current public tenancies
- Have repaid any previous bond loans
- Meet the bond loan income and asset eligibility limits.



### CONTACT FOR HELP

Check the Department of Human Services (DHS) website at [www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/housing-and-accommodation/private-renter-assistance/bond-loan-scheme](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/housing-and-accommodation/private-renter-assistance/bond-loan-scheme) for your eligibility, then contact your local Housing Office for more information on exemptions.

To find your local Housing Office, visit the DHS website at [www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/housing-and-accommodation/public-housing/local-housing-offices](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/housing-and-accommodation/public-housing/local-housing-offices) or see page 27 in APPENDIX 3 'Local Housing Offices in Victoria'.

To apply for the scheme, first fill in a Bond Loan Application Form, which is available at [www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/housing-and-accommodation/private-renter-assistance/bond-loan-scheme](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/housing-and-accommodation/private-renter-assistance/bond-loan-scheme)

## DOCUMENTS YOU WILL NEED

You need to attach all the following documents to your Bond Loan Application Form:

- Proof of identification for you and all other household members
- A letter from the landlord or real estate agent saying that, once the bond is paid, you will have the property
- Statement of income and assets from Centrelink, the Department of Veterans' Affairs, or your employer for you and all other household members.



## “Can’t afford the rent”

### Housing Establishment Fund

The Housing Establishment Fund (HEF) can help you to secure a new rental property. But it is also there to help if you can’t afford the rent in your current property. The HEF provides housing and support agencies such as THMs with a limited amount of funding so they can provide financial help to eligible people in their local area to:

- Secure a new private rental property—assistance with paying advance rent when securing a rental property, and possibly help with relocation costs
- Access emergency short-term accommodation (most of the funding)
- Maintain private rental housing—assistance with rental arrears.

**With the high demand and long waiting lists for emergency short-term accommodation, THMs often have little HEF left for private rental assistance. Situations may vary for different THMs.**



### CONTACT FOR HELP

To find your local THM, call **WIRE on 1300 134 130** (9 am to 5 pm, Monday–Friday) see page 25 APPENDIX 2 ‘*Transitional Housing Managers in Victoria*’ or visit [www.chfv.org.au/transitional-housing/](http://www.chfv.org.au/transitional-housing/) or [www.melbourne.homeless.org.au/transitional.html](http://www.melbourne.homeless.org.au/transitional.html)

## Centrelink Rent Assistance

You may be eligible for Commonwealth Rent Assistance through Centrelink if you satisfy all of the following:

- Pay rent for your private rental property, lodging or board-and-lodging
- Receive Centrelink benefits such as a pension, allowance or benefit
- Meet eligibility criteria including residency requirements of your pension, allowance or benefit.

Visit the Centrelink website at

[www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/centrelink/rent-assistance](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/centrelink/rent-assistance) to find out about Rent Assistance.

## Tenants' rights and responsibilities

As a tenant you can call or visit the Tenants Union of Victoria for advice and information on your rights and responsibilities when renting private housing.

The Tenants Union of Victoria website offers free factsheets about situations that may arise when renting. Visit [www.tuv.org.au/publications/fact+sheets](http://www.tuv.org.au/publications/fact+sheets). Some useful factsheets include:

- Applying for a rental property
- Avoiding eviction for rent
- Bonds
- Eviction
- Family violence and your tenancy rights
- Privacy
- Rent increases
- Shared households
- Utility charges



### CONTACT FOR HELP

Call **Tenants Union of Victoria (03) 9416 2577** or drop in at 55 Johnston Street Fitzroy (9am to 4.30pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, and 1pm to 8pm Wednesday).

You can also contact **Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV) 1300 558 181** to discuss any issues you may have renting a home. The CAV website at [www.consumer.vic.gov.au/housing-and-accommodation/renting](http://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/housing-and-accommodation/renting) also offers useful information about the rental process.

## Private rental support for newly arrived refugees or migrants

If you have recently arrived in Australia as a refugee or migrant, contact your local Migrant Resource Centre (MRC) for housing advice. Your local MRC might also be able to help you find where to get financial assistance for private rental and/or set-up costs. A list of local MRCs is given below.

You can also ask about the Emergency Housing Fund (EHF) by contacting **Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre** at [www.spectrumvic.org.au](http://www.spectrumvic.org.au). The EHF assists newly arrived refugees and migrants seeking private rental housing.

### Migrant Resource Centres

Local MRCs are located at:

- **Housing Services Migrant Information Centre (MIC)**  
Eastern Melbourne **(03) 9285 4888**, email [mic@miceastmelb.com.au](mailto:mic@miceastmelb.com.au) or visit [www.miceastmelb.com.au](http://www.miceastmelb.com.au) The MIC operates the Private Rental Housing Assistance Program.
- **MRC North West Region (03) 9367 6044**,  
email [mrcnw@mrcnorthwest.org.au](mailto:mrcnw@mrcnorthwest.org.au) or visit [www.mrcnorthwest.org.au](http://www.mrcnorthwest.org.au)
- **Phoenix Westgate Migrant Centre (03) 9391 3355**,  
email [info@wmrc.gov.au](mailto:info@wmrc.gov.au) or visit [www.wmrc.org.au](http://www.wmrc.org.au)
- **South Migrant & Refugee Centre (03) 9706 8933** (Dandenong) /  
**(03) 9705 6966** (Narre Warren) / **(03) 8574 4600** (Oakleigh)  
or visit [www.smrc.org.au](http://www.smrc.org.au)
- **Spectrum Immigration Services (03) 9470 2311**  
or email [sis@spectrumvic.org.au](mailto:sis@spectrumvic.org.au)
- **Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre (03) 9301 0400** (Dallas office) /  
**(03) 9496 0200** (Preston) / **(03)9300 8600** (Sunshine) /  
**(03) 9301 7400** (Broadmeadows) or visit [www.spectrumvic.org.au](http://www.spectrumvic.org.au)

### Other migrant service

**Hotham Mission Asylum Seeker Project (03) 9326 8343**,  
email [asp@hothammission.org.au](mailto:asp@hothammission.org.au) or visit [www.hothammission.org.au](http://www.hothammission.org.au)  
The project works with the most vulnerable asylum seekers who are living in the community and offers help in several ways, including housing.

# Exploring other options

If you are homeless or facing a housing crisis right now, get a copy of WIRE's *Housing Guide Booklet 1: 'Dealing with a housing crisis—needing help right now!'*. It helps you consider options such as staying with family or friends, crisis accommodation if you have experienced family violence, transitional housing and rooming/boarding houses.

When your immediate housing crisis is over and you can think of the longer term, it is important to consider other possible options such as:

- Shared rental housing
- Moving to a new area
- Moveable units for people over 55 years of age, and/or
- Community housing.

Exploring all your possible options is important as applying for public housing in Victoria can be a complicated process and public housing waiting lists are very long.

## Shared private rental housing

If you feel sharing a house might suit you, you can check:

- Notices on local shops, cafes, libraries and post offices
- Local papers under the 'Share' or 'To Let' heading in the Property or Classifieds section of the Melbourne and local newspapers.

Websites for shared housing in Victoria, such as:

- [www.housesharevic.com.au/](http://www.housesharevic.com.au/)
- [www.domain.com.au/Public/ChooseRegions.aspx?mode=share&state=VIC](http://www.domain.com.au/Public/ChooseRegions.aspx?mode=share&state=VIC)
- [www.homehound.com.au/share+accommodation/victoria/](http://www.homehound.com.au/share+accommodation/victoria/)
- [www.gumtree.com.au/s-shared-accommodation/melbourne/](http://www.gumtree.com.au/s-shared-accommodation/melbourne/)
- [www.mysharing.com.au/](http://www.mysharing.com.au/)
- [www.flatmatefinders.com.au/](http://www.flatmatefinders.com.au/)
- [www.rs.realestate.com.au/share](http://www.rs.realestate.com.au/share)
- [cracker.com.au/unit-house-share/classifieds.htm](http://cracker.com.au/unit-house-share/classifieds.htm)
- [melbourneexchange.com.au/](http://melbourneexchange.com.au/)
- Your local Council website.

Websites for shared housing for single parents and their children:

- [www.space4.com.au](http://www.space4.com.au)
- [singlemotherforum.com](http://singlemotherforum.com)
- [singlemum.com.au](http://singlemum.com.au)
- [www.csmc.org.au](http://www.csmc.org.au)

## What about a ‘tree change’?

Given that about 80–90% of the population live near the coast, going inland to rural and regional Victoria might give you more choices. And a fresh start. There are often more houses available for private rental and at a more affordable rent. However, be mindful that moving to a rural or regional location may mean reducing your employment opportunities. If you are receiving Centrelink payments, please check that you will be able to meet your Centrelink employment requirements in the new place, otherwise you may lose your Centrelink payments after you move.

If you live in regional or rural Victoria, the Rural Housing Network provides housing support for people living in social, transitional and crisis housing. The network also provides community housing—this is affordable rental for people on low to moderate incomes. **Visit the Rural Housing Network website at [www.ruralhousing.com.au/](http://www.ruralhousing.com.au/)**

## Movable units for people over 55

If you are a permanent Australian resident and meet the eligibility criteria, you may be able to rent a self-contained unit that you can set up in the backyard of a friend’s or relative’s home.

To be eligible you must:

- Be aged 55 years or over
- Have a weekly income that is less than the current income limit for public housing in Victoria, or receive at least \$1.00 of an Australian Disability Support Pension and have a weekly income that is less than the current income limit for public housing in Victoria
- Have assets less than \$30 000
- Agree to repay any money that you still owe from a previous public housing tenancy or bond loan.



### CONTACT FOR HELP

For application forms and a guide on how to apply, call the **Office of Housing on 1800 460 505**. For details, visit [www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/housing-and-accommodation/home-owner-support/movable-units](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/housing-and-accommodation/home-owner-support/movable-units)

## Community housing

Community housing is not a short-term or quick solution. Instead, it can give you long-term secure housing. Community housing is often run by not-for-profit housing associations or providers that act like landlords. They provide affordable, long-term rental housing for people on low incomes. Rent is usually charged at 75% of the market rental, which may still be unaffordable for people on low incomes, but don't be discouraged. With some community housing programs, the rent charged is 30% of your income, and you may also be eligible for Commonwealth Rent Assistance. To find a community housing organisation in the area you would like to live, visit the **Community Housing Federation of Victoria website at [www.chfv.org.au/find-housing/](http://www.chfv.org.au/find-housing/)**

Some not-for-profit housing agencies cater specifically for women.



### CONTACTS FOR HELP

- **Women's Property Initiatives (03) 9664 7800** or visit [wpi.org.au](http://wpi.org.au)
- **Women's Housing Limited (03) 9412 6868** (free call) or visit [www.womenshousing.com.au](http://www.womenshousing.com.au)
- **McAuley Community Services for Women**, which is operated by the Sisters of Mercy Melbourne Congregation. Visit [www.mcauleycsw.org.au](http://www.mcauleycsw.org.au)

**Housing cooperatives** are another type of community housing. Tenants are actively involved in the decision-making and daily running of the property, so you need to be committed to being actively involved as a community member. You can apply directly to a community housing organisation in the area you would like to live and you need to meet the eligibility criteria. To find out about housing cooperatives, visit [www.chfv.org.au/cooperatives/](http://www.chfv.org.au/cooperatives/)

To apply for community housing, you need to contact each organisation that provides community housing in your area. Many organisations may already have long waiting lists, and some may no longer take in new applications, so check for availability first. Even so, it is a good idea to put your name down on open waiting lists with a reliable contact address or number. When your contact details change, remember to call and update your contact details so that you don't miss out should a place become available!

For a contact list of these registered housing associations, visit [www.chfv.org.au/housing-associations-registered-housing-providers/](http://www.chfv.org.au/housing-associations-registered-housing-providers/) or [www.housingregistrar.vic.gov.au/Registered-Housing-Sector](http://www.housingregistrar.vic.gov.au/Registered-Housing-Sector)

## Knowing my rights about using services

**You have rights when using homelessness assistance or social housing services. You can make a complaint about a government-funded homelessness support and accommodation service such as crisis accommodation or a transitional housing manager service. You can also make a complaint about a rooming house.**

### Your rights and responsibilities

Under the Victorian Government's Consumer Charter for Homelessness Assistance, you have rights and responsibilities when you are looking for, or getting help from, a community homelessness assistance or social housing service.

If you are seeking or receiving homelessness assistance or housing services, you have the right to:

- Get help during a crisis or help to prevent a crisis
- Be considered fairly for accommodation and housing
- Get help finding and staying in suitable housing on a long-term basis
- Feel safe
- Be free from discrimination and be respected for your culture
- Receive respect, dignity and privacy
- Make choices that will affect your future and be part of the decision making process of organisations providing services to you
- Get help applying for income support, employment and health services, educational opportunities and other support services
- Make a complaint or appeal a decision you do not agree with and receive an answer that makes sense to you.

You also have a responsibility to:

- Give correct and necessary information about yourself and your situation to organisations providing services to you
- Respect the rights of others to feel safe
- Respect the cultural backgrounds and privacy of others
- Treat others with respect and dignity
- Meet your responsibilities as a tenant.

The Department of Human Services provides the Consumer Charter for Homelessness Assistance as part of the Victorian Homelessness Strategy. To find out more, visit [www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/consumer-charter-for-homelessness-assistance](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/consumer-charter-for-homelessness-assistance)

## Making a complaint

To make complaint, get a copy of the complete charter booklet from the organisation you are seeking services from. After you have read it, discuss your concerns directly with the organisation you have issues with. If this doesn't work you can get help from the following organisations:



### CONTACT FOR HELP

**Council to Homeless Persons Homeless Advocacy Services (HAS)**  
1800 066 256 (free call), (03) 8415 6200 or visit [www.chp.org.au](http://www.chp.org.au)

**Your Local Housing Office**—To find the DHS housing office nearest to you, call 1300 650 172, visit [www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/housing-and-accommodation/public-housing/local-housing-offices](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/housing-and-accommodation/public-housing/local-housing-offices) or email [housing@dhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:housing@dhs.vic.gov.au)

**Department of Human Services 1800 155 743** (general complaints)

**Housing Registrar** [www.housingregistrar.vic.gov.au](http://www.housingregistrar.vic.gov.au)  
(03) 9651 1402, or TTY users call 13 36 77 and ask for 1300 650 172

**Public Interest Legal Clearinghouse (PILCH)** (03) 8636 4400 (general enquiries) or 03 8636 4444 (legal inquiries, 9:30 am—4:30 pm), email [admin@pilch.org.au](mailto:admin@pilch.org.au) (please note that PILCH cannot respond to legal enquiries by email) or visit [www.pilch.org.au](http://www.pilch.org.au)

**Social Housing Advocacy and Support Program (SHASP)** for social housing tenants (people already in public and community housing). To find your local SHASP service, visit [www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/plans,-programs-and-projects/programs/housing-and-community-building/social-housing-advocacy-and-support-program](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/plans,-programs-and-projects/programs/housing-and-community-building/social-housing-advocacy-and-support-program)

**Tenants Union of Victoria** (03) 9416 2577 (9 am to 4 pm Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays and 1 pm to 8 pm Wednesdays), or visit [www.tuv.org.au](http://www.tuv.org.au)

**Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT)** (03) 9628 9800 or 1800 133 055 (free call country callers only) (residential tenancies) or visit [www.vcat.vic.gov.au](http://www.vcat.vic.gov.au)

## Concerns about a rooming house

Rooming or boarding houses are buildings where four or more people, who are unrelated to the landlord, live under a separate rental arrangements.

All rooming and boarding houses should be registered with the local Council and must be safe and clean. Check to see if your rooming house is registered or meets health and safety standards at [www.consumer.vic.gov.au/housing-and-accommodation/renting/standards-repairs-and-entry-rights/minimum-standards-in-rooming-houses](http://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/housing-and-accommodation/renting/standards-repairs-and-entry-rights/minimum-standards-in-rooming-houses).



### **CONTACT FOR HELP**

If necessary, you can report the provider without giving your name by calling the **Consumer Affairs Victoria hotline on 1300 365 814**. You can also contact your local Council for help.

# APPENDIX 1

## Community housing organisations in Victoria

**Abbeyfield Australia (03) 9419 8222** (office only) • PO Box 1293 **Collingwood** 3066  
email [admin@abbeyfield.org.au](mailto:admin@abbeyfield.org.au) • [www.abbeyfield.org.au](http://www.abbeyfield.org.au)

**Aboriginal Housing Victoria Ltd (03) 9482 4585** • 125–127 Scotchmer Street  
**North Fitzroy** 3068 [ahvic.org.au](http://ahvic.org.au)

**Active Property Services Mgt Ltd (03) 9314 8555** or **1800 630 946** (free call)  
14 High Street **Yarraville** 3013 • [activeproperty.com.au](http://activeproperty.com.au)

**Common Equity Housing Ltd (03) 9208 0800** • 112 Balmain Street **Richmond** 3121  
[cehl.com.au](http://cehl.com.au)

**Community Housing Ltd (03) 5120 4800** • 12 Church Street **Morwell** 3840  
[chl.org.au](http://chl.org.au)

**Community Housing Ltd (03) 5153 2933** • Shop 4, Riveria Plaza **Bairnsdale** 3875  
[chl.org.au](http://chl.org.au)

**Community Housing Ltd (03) 5434 2800** • 134a Mollison Street **Bendigo** 3550  
[chl.org.au](http://chl.org.au)

**Community Housing Ltd (03) 8405 9700** • 748 High Street **Epping** 3076 • [chl.org.au](http://chl.org.au)

**Community Housing Ltd (03) 9856 0000** • 26–28 Prospect Street **Box Hill** 3128  
[chl.org.au](http://chl.org.au)

**Crossroads Family Housing and Support Services (03) 9353 1011** Freecall: **1800 825 955**  
2/828 Sydney Road **North Coburg**

**EACH Housing Limited (03) 9871 1800** • 46 Warrandyte Road **Ringwood** 3134  
[www.each.com.au](http://www.each.com.au)

**Eastcoast Housing Association (03) 5127 7160** • 2/57 Lloyd Street **Moe** 3825  
email [housing@eha.org.au](mailto:housing@eha.org.au)

**Hanover Cheltenham Housing and Support Services (03) 9556 5777** • 1/11 Chesterville  
Road **Cheltenham** 3192 • email [cheltenham@hanover.org.au](mailto:cheltenham@hanover.org.au) • [hanover.org.au](http://hanover.org.au)

**Haven Bendigo (03) 5444 9000** • 10-16 Forest Street **Bendigo** 3550 • [www.haven.org.au](http://www.haven.org.au)

**Haven Geelong (03) 5246 8900** • 6 Pakington Street **Geelong West** 3218 • [www.haven.org.au](http://www.haven.org.au)

**Haven Mildura (03) 5018 4200** • 143A Lime Avenue **Mildura** 3500 • [www.haven.org.au](http://www.haven.org.au)

**Haven Robinvale 1300 716 776** • 52 Herbert Street **Robinvale** 3549 • [www.haven.org.au](http://www.haven.org.au)

**HomeGround Services (03) 9288 9666** • 68 Oxford Street **Collingwood** 3066  
[homeground.org.au](http://homeground.org.au)

**HomeGround Services (03) 9537 7711** • 122 Chapel Street **St Kilda East** 3182  
[homeground.org.au](http://homeground.org.au)

**Housing Choices Australia 1300 312 447** • Level 4, 333 Queen Street **Melbourne** 3000  
[hcau.org.au](http://hcau.org.au)

**Macedon Ranges Shire Council Housing (03) 5422 0227** • Unit 129 Mollison Street **Kyneton**  
3444 • [mle@macedon-ranges.vic.gov.au](mailto:mle@macedon-ranges.vic.gov.au) • [www.mrsc.vic.gov.au](http://www.mrsc.vic.gov.au)

**MetroWest Housing Services (03) 9689 2777** • 112–122 Victoria Street **Seddon**

**North East Housing Service Ltd (03) 9479 0700** • 52-56 Mary Street **Preston** 3072  
nehs.org.au

**Port Phillip Housing Association Ltd (03) 9534 5837** • Suite 6, 22-28 Fitzroy Street **St Kilda**  
3182 • ppha.org.au

**Rural Housing Network Ltd (02) 6055 9000** • 82 High Street **Wodonga** 3689  
ruralhousing.com.au

**Rural Housing Network Ltd (03) 5833 1000** • 43b Wyndham Street **Shepparton** 3630  
ruralhousing.com.au

**Salvation Army EastCare (03) 9851 7800** Freecall **1800 825 955** • 16 Church Street **Hawthorn**  
3122 • salvationarmy.org.au

**Salvation Army Social Housing Services (SASHS) (03) 9312 6535** • 6/147 Harvester Road  
**Sunshine** 3020 | salvationarmy.org.au

**SouthEast Housing Co-operative Ltd (03) 9792 2994 / 5898** | The Hub Plaza Business  
Centre, 26-36 McCrae Street **Dandenong** 3175 • www.sehc.org.au

**St Vincent de Paul Victoria (03) 9300 2977** • 163-165 Wheatsheaf Road **Glenroy** 3046

**United Housing Co-operative Ltd (03) 9689 8157** • 1a Ballarat Street **Yarraville** 3013

**UnitingCare Ballarat (03) 5332 1286** • 105 Dana Street **Ballarat** 3350  
unitingcareballarat.com.au

**UnitingCare Harrison (03) 9871 8700** • 1012 Little Burwood Hwy **Wantirna South** 3152  
harrison.org.au

**WAYSS Ltd (03) 9791 6111** • 294-300 Thomas Street **Dandenong** 3175 • wayssltd.org.au

**Wimmera Uniting Care (03) 5362 4000** • 185 Baille Street **Horsham** 3402  
wimmera.unitingcare.org.au

**Wintringham Housing Ltd (03) 9376 1122** • PO Box 193 **Flemington** 3031  
wintringham.org.au

**Women's Housing Ltd (03) 9412 6868** • Suite 1 21 Cremorne Street **Richmond** 3121  
womenshousing.com.au

**Yarra Community Housing Ltd (03) 9288 9200** • 297 Napier Street **Fitzroy** 3065 • ych.org.au

**Yarra Community Housing Ltd (03) 9688 8300** • 229 Barkly Street **Footscray** 3011  
ych.org.au

# APPENDIX 2

## Transitional Housing Managers (THMs) in Victoria

Transitional housing managers are located across Victoria. They are listed here by organisation and by region.

### ORGANISATION

Centacare Ballarat [www.centacareballarat.org.au](http://www.centacareballarat.org.au)  
 Community Housing Ltd [www.chl.org.au](http://www.chl.org.au)  
 Hanover Welfare Services [www.hanover.org.au](http://www.hanover.org.au)  
 Haven [www.lmhs.com.au](http://www.lmhs.com.au)  
 HomeGround Services [www.homeground.org.au](http://www.homeground.org.au)  
 North East Housing Services [www.nehs.org.au](http://www.nehs.org.au)  
 Red Shield Housing Victoria [www.salvationarmy.org.au](http://www.salvationarmy.org.au)  
 SASHS Barwon South West [www.salvationarmy.org.au](http://www.salvationarmy.org.au)  
 SASHS Western [www.salvationarmy.org.au](http://www.salvationarmy.org.au)  
 St Vincent de Paul [www.vinnies.org.au/housing-services-vic](http://www.vinnies.org.au/housing-services-vic)  
 Uniting Care [www.ucare.org.au](http://www.ucare.org.au)  
 WAYSS Ltd [www.wayssltd.org.au](http://www.wayssltd.org.au)  
 Women's Housing Ltd [www.womenshousing.com.au](http://www.womenshousing.com.au)  
 Yarra Community Housing [www.ych.org.au](http://www.ych.org.au)

### BY REGION

#### EASTERN METRO

Anchor Inc. (03) 9760 6400 79 John St Lilydale 3140  
 Community Housing (Victoria) Ltd (03) 9856 0000 26–28 Prospect Street Box Hill 3128  
 Salvation Army Eastcare (03) 9851 7800 16 Church Street Hawthorn 3122  
 United Care (03) 9871 8700 1012 Little Burwood Hwy Wantirna South 3152  
 Wesley Homelessness Services (03) 8870 4000 291a Maroondah Hwy Ringwood 3134

#### NORTHERN METRO

HomeGround Collingwood (03) 9288 9611 or 1800 048 325 (free call)  
 68 Oxford Street Collingwood 3066 [northernhousing@homeground.org.au](mailto:northernhousing@homeground.org.au)  
 North East Housing Services Ltd (03) 9479 0700 52–56 Mary Street Preston 3072  
 Vincent Care Housing Services (03) 9304 0100 80 Wheatsheaf Rd Glenroy 3046

#### SOUTHERN METRO

HomeGround St Kilda (03) 9537 7711 122 Chapel Street St Kilda 3183  
[southernhousing@homeground.org.au](mailto:southernhousing@homeground.org.au)  
 Hanover Southern Housing and Support Service (03) 9556 5700  
 1st Floor, 11 Chesterville Road Cheltenham 3192  
 WAYSS Ltd (03) 9791 6111 294–300 Thomas Street, Dandenong 3175  
[www.wayssltd.org.au/contact\\_us.html](http://www.wayssltd.org.au/contact_us.html)  
 WAYSS Ltd (03) 9770 2867 24 Fairway St, Frankston 3199

## **WESTERN METRO**

Yarra Community Housing Metro West (03) 9689 2777 112–122 Victoria St Footscray 3011  
Salvation Army Social Housing Service (Western) (03) 9312 5424  
6/147 Harvester Road Sunshine 3020

## **BARWON REGION**

Barwon Youth/ BAYSA Youth Services (03) 5221 4466 12–14 Halstead Place  
Geelong West 3218  
Brophy Family and Youth Services (03) 5561 8888 for people under 25 years  
210 Timor St Warrnambool 3280  
Haven Geelong (03) 5246 8900 6 Pakington Street Geelong West 3218  
SalvoConnect Barwon housing and homeless support service 1800 825 955  
SalvoConnect Colac (03) 5231 4200 100 Broomfield St Colac  
SalvoConnect Geelong (03) 5223 2793 28 Bellarine St Geelong  
SalvoConnect Portland (03) 5521 8134  
SalvoConnect Warrnambool (03) 5561 6844 71 Kepler Street Warrnambool 3280

## **GIPPSLAND REGION**

Community Housing (Victoria) Ltd (03) 5120 4800 12 Church Street Morwell 3840  
Community Housing (Victoria) Ltd (03) 5143 2379 111 Raymond Street Sale  
GippsCare Social Housing Services (03) 5662 4502 51a McCartin Street Leongatha 3953  
Salvation Army Social Housing Service Gippsland (03) 5622 7008  
36 Williams Street Warragul 3820  
Uniting Care Gippsland (03) 5144 7777 126 Raymond Street Sale

## **GRAMPIANS REGION**

Uniting Care Ballarat (03) 5332 1286 105 Dana Street Ballarat 3350  
Stawell Health and Community Centre (03) 5382 6789 185 Baillie Street Horsham 3402  
SalvoConnect Hamilton (03) 5572 5822 42 Brown Street Hamilton

## **HUME NORTH EAST REGION**

Rural Housing Network Ltd (03) 5833 1000 43b Wyndham Street Shepparton 3630  
Rural Housing Network Ltd (03) 5735 2000 12a Tallarook Street Seymour 3660  
Rural Housing Network Ltd (03) 5722 8000 40–42 Rowan Street Wangaratta 3676  
Rural Housing Network Ltd (02) 6055 9000 82 High Street Wodonga 3689

## **LODDON MALLEE REGION**

Haven Bendigo (03) 5444 9000 10–16 Forest Street Bendigo 3550  
Haven Mildura (03) 5018 4200 143A Lime Avenue Mildura 3500  
Haven Robinvale 1300 716 776 52 Herbert Street Robinvale 3549

# APPENDIX 3

## Local Housing Offices in Victoria

### EASTERN METRO

Box Hill (03) 9843 6577 • 883 Whitehorse Road Box Hill 3128

Ringwood (03) 9871 5199 • 25 Ringwood Street Ringwood 3134

**Tenancy Line** If you are a public housing tenant located in the Eastern Metro region and would like to discuss your tenancy, you can call the Tenancy Line on (03) 9871 5100.

**Housing Advice and Assistance Line** If you are in the Eastern Metro region and require housing assistance, you can contact the Housing Advice and Assistance Line on (03) 9871 5155.

### NORTH AND WEST METRO

Ascot Vale (03) 9371 620012 • Churchill Avenue Ascot Vale 3032

Broadmeadows (03) 9309 1255 • 56–58 Coleraine Street Broadmeadows 3047

Carlton (03) 9341 8200 • 480 Lygon Street Carlton 3053

Collingwood (03) 9417 5144 • 229 Hoddle Street Collingwood 3066

Fitzroy (03) 9093 5000 • 90 Brunswick Street Fitzroy 3065

Footscray (03) 9275 7516 • 71 Moreland Street Footscray 3011

Kensington Urban Communities Limited (03) 9371 2000 • 42 Derby Street Kensington 3031

North Melbourne (03) 9326 6377 • 33 Alfred Street North Melbourne 3051

Preston (03) 9479 0122 or 1300 664 977 • 679–685 High Street Preston 3072

Richmond (03) 9429 5174 • 112 Elizabeth Street Richmond 3121

Sunshine (03) 9312 5022 • 16–18 Hertford Road Sunshine 3020

### SOUTHERN METRO

Cheltenham (03) 8585 6200 • Level 2, 4–10 Jamieson Street Cheltenham 3192

Dandenong 8765 5444 • 165–169 Thomas Street Dandenong 3175

Frankston (03) 9784 3200 • Level 1, 431 Nepean Highway Frankston 3199

Prahran (03) 9096 9996 • Level 1, 255 High Street Prahran 3141

South Melbourne (03) 9096 1800 • Level 2, 120 Clarendon Street, South Melbourne 3205

## BARWON REGION

Colac (03) 5231 2574 • 54b Bromfield Street Colac 3250

Geelong (03) 5226 4540 • Level 2, State Government Offices,  
Corner Fenwick and Little Malop Streets Geelong 3220

Hamilton (03) 5571 9114 • 50 Thompson Street Hamilton 3300

Portland (03) 5523 9999 • 16 Julia Street Portland 3305

Warrnambool (03) 5561 9444 • Shop 2, 109 Lava Street Warrnambool 3280

## GIPPSLAND REGION

Bairnsdale (03) 5150 4500 or 1800 674 624 (free call)  
7 Service Street Bairnsdale 3875 (by appointment)

Morwell (03) 5136 2400 or 1800 650 813 (free call)  
7–11 Hazelwood Road Morwell 3840

Sale (03) 5144 9100 or 1800 674 624 (free call) • 150 York Street Sale 3850

Wangaratta (03) 5722 0555 • 43–47 Rowan Street Wangaratta 3676

Wodonga (02) 6055 7777 or 1800 644 873 (free call) • 55 Hovell Street Wodonga 3690

## GRAMPIANS REGION

Ballarat (03) 5333 6660 • Corner Mair and Doveton Streets Ballarat 3350

Horsham (03) 5381 9777 • 21 McLachlan Street Horsham 3400

## HUME REGION

Benalla (03) 5761 1222 • 26 Church Street Benalla 3672

Seymour (03) 5793 6400 • 16 Station Street Seymour 3660

Shepparton (03) 5832 1500 • 163 Welsford Street Shepparton 3630

## LODDON MALLEE REGION

Bendigo (03) 5434 5555 or 1800 645 329 (free call) • 74–78 Queen Street Bendigo 3550

Mildura (03) 5022 3111 • 253 Eleventh Street Mildura 3500

Swan Hill (03) 5032 0100 • 210 Beveridge Street Swan Hill 3585

This glossary gives brief overviews of terms referred to in the booklet. A more detailed glossary is available online at [www.wire.org.au](http://www.wire.org.au) A list of abbreviations used in this booklet is given below the glossary.

**Asset limit to be eligible for public housing**—varies depending on the segment a person is applying under.

**Assets**—a person's assets could include money in the bank, shares, mobile homes, property and businesses. Assets do not include personal belongings, cars or furniture.

**Chronic or recurring homelessness**—episodes of 6 months or longer, or multiple episodes over a 12 month period or more.

**Common Equity Rental Cooperatives**—residences where members live in properties leased from the registered housing association Common Equity Housing Ltd.

**Family violence intervention order**—issued by a magistrate to protect family members from violence. The order may say that the respondent is excluded from their home. If the respondent breaks the conditions of a family violence intervention order or safety notice, they can be arrested by police and may be fined or imprisoned. For more information, view the family violence intervention orders page on the Legal Aid Victoria website (*Source as for 'family violence', below*).

**Family violence safety notice**—has conditions similar to a family violence intervention order, and can be issued by police if the court is closed. A safety notice is also an application by police for a magistrate to issue an intervention order. It stays in effect until the magistrate decides whether to issue an order. For more information, view the family violence safety notices page on the Legal Aid Victoria website. (*Source as for 'Family violence', below*).

**Family violence**—includes physical, sexual, economic, emotional and psychological abuse. Family violence may also include threatening or controlling behaviour, or that which causes children to witness violence (or the effects of it) committed by one family member against another. (*Source [www.consumer.vic.gov.au/housing-and-accommodation/renting/leases-and-notices/changing-the-lease-in-violent-situations#definitions](http://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/housing-and-accommodation/renting/leases-and-notices/changing-the-lease-in-violent-situations#definitions)*)

**Homelessness Support Program**—formerly known as the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP). It funds organisations that assist homeless people and women and children escaping family violence.

**Housing associations**—manage and expand new housing and manage rental housing. Housing associations own and manage stand-alone properties, rooming houses, accommodation with onsite support, medium-density housing and flats.

**Housing cooperatives**—there are two types of housing cooperatives—Common Equity Rental Cooperatives and Rental Housing Cooperatives. Both housing cooperatives are made up of members.

**Housing Establishment Fund (HEF)**—funded by the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments under the National Affordable Housing Agreement (NAHA) to fund agencies to help eligible clients access and/or maintain private rental housing, or to access emergency short-term accommodation. The HEF also assists with costs of relocation and establishing housing.

**Housing providers**—primarily manage long-term and short-term rental housing. Services include short-term housing crisis support, housing information and referral services for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, long-term support to people with complex needs and long histories of homelessness, and advocacy on behalf of people living in public and social housing to help them successfully establish and sustain their tenancies.

**Income limits to be eligible for public housing**—weekly income limits that vary according to the segment a person is applying under, whether they are a single person or a couple, and/or number of dependent children and their ages.

**Insecurity of tenure**—where tenants are forced to move repeatedly as housing becomes more unaffordable or no longer available.

**Office of Housing**—state government department responsible for allocating public housing and assessing public housing applications.

**Precarious housing**—inadequate housing or a lack of housing conditions required for good health. Housing can lack services such as heating and ventilation, and the tenant may have restricted control of the space. Housing may be located in a dangerous area, or it may be unaffordable. Tenure may not be secure so the tenant can be forced to move. An individual's housing is classified as precarious if they have experienced more than one of these factors concurrently.

**Private rental**—renting a property through a real estate agent or a landlord who requires a lease to be signed and bond registered with the Residential Tenancies Bond Authority. It does not include leases entered into through a Transitional Housing Manager or Office of Housing.

**Rental Housing Cooperatives**—registered Housing Providers with tenant-managed, long-term housing for members on low incomes. These properties are owned by the Director of Housing and leased to tenant groups under the Housing Provider Framework Lease and Property Management Agreement.

**Special housing needs**—for various health, personal or family reasons, a person's current housing is unsuitable.

**Supported housing**—for people who are living in unsuitable housing and who have high support needs, or the accommodation requires major modifications for disability.

**Unaffordable housing**—where a low-income household's rent or mortgage repayments and rates are more than 30% of gross income.

**Unsuitable housing**—classified as being in poor condition, poorly located or overcrowded.

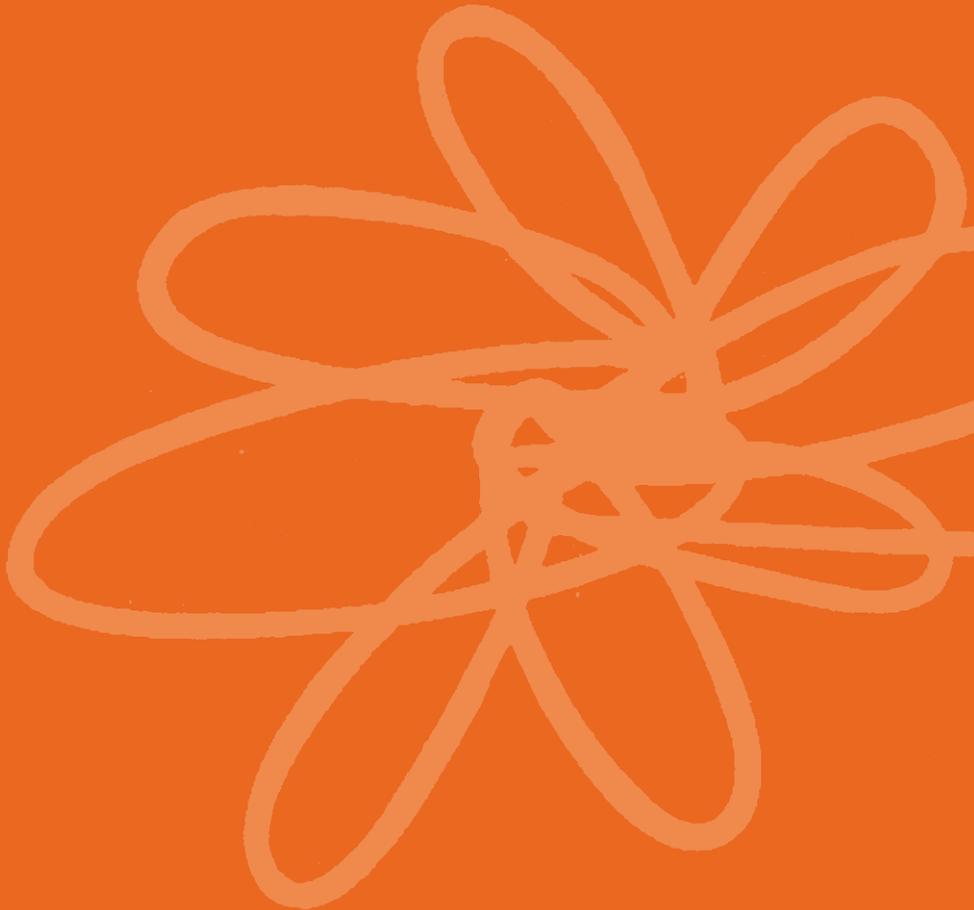
## ABBREVIATIONS

**CCEO** Centrelink Community Engagement Officer  
**DHS** Department of Human Services  
**FIO** Final Intervention Order  
**HAS** Homeless Advocacy Services  
**HEF** Housing Establishment Fund  
**HIR** Housing Information and Referral  
**MIC** Migrant Information Centre

**MRC** Migrant Resource Centre  
**MYSS** Melbourne Youth Support Service  
**NAHA** National Affordable Housing Agreement  
**SAAP** Supported Accommodation Assistance Program  
**SHASP** Social Housing Advocacy and Support Program  
**THM** Transitional housing manager  
**VCAT** Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

A list of references and further reading is available online at [www.wire.org.au](http://www.wire.org.au)



Helping women  
make the right  
connections

**Women's  
Information**

Women's Information  
and Referral Exchange Inc.  
Reg. No. A122  
ABN 98 957 157 895

**Call WIRE 1300 134 130**

for the cost of a local call (Telephone Interpreter  
Service available)

**Drop by Women's Information Centre,  
372 Spencer Street, West Melbourne**

**Email [inforequests@wire.org.au](mailto:inforequests@wire.org.au)**

**Visit or chat online at [www.wire.org.au](http://www.wire.org.au)**

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