

Ending tenancies

Abandoned properties and goods

Policy section: 1.0

Section name: Ending tenancies

Policy: 1.4.5

Document name	Abandoned properties and goods
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1 Purpose

- 1.1 To outline the legal responsibilities of staff who manage abandoned properties on behalf of Mission Australia Housing (MAH).
- 1.2 To outline requirements relating to the storage and disposal of tenant goods which have been left at a property.

2 Related policies

- 2.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with the:
 - 2.1.1 [Work, Health and Safety Policy](#), which outlines measures staff should take to protect their health and safety and that of tenants.
 - 2.1.2 [Ending Tenancies Policy](#), which outlines end of tenancy procedures.

3 Scope

This policy applies to staff responsible for managing tenants and properties of MAH.

4 Guiding principles

- 4.1 MAH fully adheres to state based requirements and processes.

- 4.2** MAH is consistent in its approach to managing abandoned properties and abandoned tenant goods.
- 4.3** MAH supports tenants to claim their goods wherever possible.
- 4.4** MAH keeps accurate records in support of its decisions and actions.

5 Policy

5.1 Abandoned properties

- 5.1.1** MAH requires tenants to inform MAH and provide notice of their intention to end their tenancy before they leave their property.
- 5.1.2** MAH may consider a property to be abandoned where a tenant leaves their property without notifying MAH of their intention to leave.
- 5.1.3** Staff will seek to end a tenancy where a tenant has been identified to have abandoned their property.
- 5.1.4** Where costs have been incurred as a result of a tenant abandoning their property and/or goods within their property, tenants will be required to pay a debt to MAH as per the [Debt Management Policy](#). Tenants who abandon their property with a rent or non-rent debt owing to MAH will still be required to pay their debt.

5.2 Abandoned goods

- 5.2.1** Any goods left behind by tenants who abandon or vacate their property will be catalogued, photographed and returned to them where possible or disposed of in line with state based residential tenancy and rooming accommodation legislation.
- 5.2.2** MAH is not required to store every item left behind by tenants and there are different storage periods and storage requirements, depending on the type of goods left behind.

5.3 Complaints and appeals

Staff will inform tenants of their right to complain about the services of MAH and to appeal organisational decisions as per the [Appeals Policy](#) and [Complaints Policy](#).

5.4 Record keeping

- 5.4.1** Staff will develop accurate records on abandoned properties and abandoned tenant goods.
- 5.4.2** Staff will detail the number, type and condition of any abandoned goods and document the goods disposal process. All records will be kept in the tenancy management system.

6 Definitions

Abandoned property: describes properties which tenants have left without providing MAH with appropriate state based notice of their intention to leave.

Abandoned goods: describes personal belongings that are intentionally or unintentionally left behind by tenants who have vacated or abandoned their property.