

Establishing and maintaining tenancies

Rent reviews policy

Policy section: 1.0

Policy: 1.2.4

Section name: Establishing and maintaining tenancies

Document name	Rent reviews
Applicability	Mission Australia Housing
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1 Purpose

- 1.1 To outline processes used by Mission Australia Housing (MAH) to ensure tenants pay a fair and affordable amount of rent for their property.
- 1.2 To outline the responsibilities of staff involved in reviewing tenant rents.
- 1.3 To outline the obligations of tenants and their household where their rent and income is reviewed.

2 Related policies

- 2.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with the:
 - 2.1.1 Rent and Rebate Policy, which outlines how MAH sets rent.

3 Scope

- 3.1 This policy applies to staff responsible for managing tenants and properties of MAH, in particular Rent Review Officers.

4 Guiding principles

- 4.1 MAH provides tenants with transparent and clear information about the **rent review** process.

- 4.2 The rent review process is managed consistently across all operating states.
- 4.3 Rent is charged fairly and in line with property value and state based guidelines.
- 4.4 Tenants are given opportunities to appeal organisational decisions in order to ensure fair and transparent outcomes.
- 4.5 MAH upholds accountability and transparency through its record keeping practices.

5 Policy

- 5.1 MAH will review the **market rent** value of its property portfolio annually in order to determine the market rent for each property.
- 5.2 All tenants of MAH will be required to participate in regular reviews of the rent they are charged for their property. Rent reviews will occur up to twice per year for social housing tenants, or yearly for tenants of affordable housing programs. Rent reviews will also occur on tenant request and where staff are made aware of a change in household circumstances.
- 5.3 Tenants will be required to provide up to date income details for each member of their household, including Commonwealth Rental Assistance where applicable, wherever a rent review has been scheduled.
- 5.4 Tenants will otherwise be responsible for informing MAH of any changes to their circumstances that may impact upon the amount of rent they are charged within 28 days of a change, including:
 - Household composition changes
 - Income changes for any household member.
- 5.5 Social housing tenants who fail to provide up to date income and household details to MAH may have their **rental rebate** removed and they will be charged the market rent for their property. Affordable housing tenants may be deemed ineligible and issued a notice to end their tenancy. Refer to the [Rental Fraud Policy](#) for details on how MAH responds to the provision of false or incomplete information relating to tenants' income or household complement.
- 5.6 Any rental increases will take effect a minimum of 60 days after written notice of an increase is issued to a tenant.
- 5.7 Any rental decreases will take effect from the date that income details were received.
- 5.8 Staff will inform tenants of their right to appeal organisational decisions and to complain about the services of MAH as per the [Appeals Policy](#).
- 5.9 Staff will store information gathered through rent reviews in the tenancy management system.

6 Definitions

Market rent: the maximum rental amount that may be charged if a property is leased on the private market. Market rent is driven by a range of factors, including housing demand and area characteristics.

Rental rebate: an offset to the market rent value of a property that is given to eligible tenants. A rental rebate reduces the amount of rent that eligible tenants are requested to pay for their property.

Rent review: reassessment of household income, assets and household composition during a tenancy in order to detect rental fraud and ensure rent charges are fair.