

Establishing and maintaining tenancies

Visitors policy

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Policy: 1.2.13

Section name: Establishing and maintaining tenancies

Document name	Visitors
Applicability	Mission Australia Housing
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1 Purpose

- 1.1 To outline Mission Australia Housing (MAH) requirements wherever tenants have a **visitor** at their property.
- 1.2 To outline possible consequences for tenants who fail to manage the conduct of a visitor.
- 1.3 To outline possible actions that be taken where tenants fail to inform MAH of long stay visitors and any changes to their household composition.

2 Related policies

- 2.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with the:
 - 2.1.1 Additional and Unauthorised Occupants Policy, which outlines responsibilities of tenants who wish to have additional occupants at their property, and guidelines for staff when unauthorised occupants are found to be living at a property.

3 Scope

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

4 Guiding principles

- 4.1 MAH has clear and consistent requirements for managing visitors.
- 4.2 Tenants are accountable for the actions and inactions of visitors to their property.
- 4.3 Tenants are given opportunities to appeal organisational decisions in order to ensure fair and transparent outcomes.
- 4.4 MAH upholds accountability and transparency through its record keeping practices.

5 Policy

5.1 Visitor rights and restrictions

- 5.1.1 MAH understands that tenants may occasionally want to have a friend or relative stay at their property. As long as it does not result in **overcrowding**, tenants will be permitted to have guests and visitors at their property for:
 - A period up to 28 days, where a visitor stays at a property on a fulltime basis
 - No more than three nights per week where a visitor stays at a property on a casual or part time basis.
- 5.1.2 Tenants will not be required to inform MAH where they have a visitor who meets requirements as per [5.1.1](#).
- 5.1.3 Tenants will be required to inform MAH and seek approval for an additional occupant as per the [Additional and Unauthorised Occupants Policy](#) if they want a visitor to stay for more than 28 days, or if they want a visitor to stay for more than three nights per week on a regular basis.
- 5.1.4 Tenants who do not inform MAH in accordance with [5.1.3](#) will be in breach of their lease or rooming accommodation agreement as per the [Breach of Tenancy Policy](#). The visitor may be considered an unauthorised occupant and any rental rebate allocated may be cancelled, resulting in a rent increase.

5.2 Tenant responsibility for visitors

- 5.2.1 Tenants are responsible for their visitors and for ensuring that their visitors follow tenancy requirements. Where a visitor breaches a lease or rooming accommodation agreement, the tenant will be responsible.
- 5.2.2 Tenants will be responsible for the costs of any property damage, cleaning, repairs or maintenance work required as a result of a visitor as per the [Debt Management Policy](#).

5.3 General requirements

- 5.3.1 Staff will inform tenants of their right to appeal organisational decisions and to complain about the services of MAH as per the [Appeals and Complaints Policy](#).
- 5.3.2 Staff will store any information relating to visitors and/or information relating to issues/incidents involving visitors in the tenancy management system.

6 Definitions

Visitor: any person (friends, children, family, associates, partner) who visits a tenant as a guest either on a fulltime basis for no more than 28 days, or on a part time basis for no more than three nights per week over a longer term. Visitors will not be required to pay rent and they are not included on Household Declaration Forms. As such, tenants will be responsible for the conduct and behaviour of their visitors, including any property damage caused by their visitor.

Overcrowding: where, following the minimum number of bedrooms allocated to applicants under the Housing Allocations Policy, a household would require one or more additional bedrooms to accommodate the household members, the household is considered to be overcrowded.