

### 1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline Southern Cross Housing's (SCH) criteria for the assessment of household rent payable for Community Housing Tenants.

### 2 Scope

This policy applies to the method of calculation of rent for all approved applicants who meet SCH's eligibility requirements for Community Housing. This policy provides guidance to SCH Property Managers on the calculation of rentals for all eligible, approved applicants, and should be read in conjunction with the SCH Policy on Eligibility and Allocation.

For the purposes of this document, SCCWA encompasses services provided by Southern Cross Care (WA), Southern Plus, and Southern Cross Housing Ltd.

### 3 Policy Statement

Rents will be set in accordance with income and asset holdings of applicants who meet the eligibility criteria set by the Department of Communities for Community Housing.

There are two Bands for income eligibility, Band A and Band B. Refer to the Eligibility and Allocation Community Housing Policy and Community Housing Income and Asset Limits Policy (CHIAL) for a full account of income and asset limits and eligibility requirements for SCH.

All prospective applicants must provide the following information when completing a SCH application form for assessment of eligibility.

1. Recent bank statements for a consecutive three months.
2. Centrelink Statement of Benefit.
3. Or consent to check their Centrelink account (EVOR Consent form)

If working, additional documentation will be required as follows.

- three months' pay slips or, if self-employed, a previous year tax assessment lodged with the Australian Taxation Office.

SCH uses a 'Rent Setting Calculator' to calculate total rent and CRA, and is supplied by Shelter WA, the calculator is updated regularly to reflect the latest information regarding benchmarking and CRA.

Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) is a Commonwealth payment made to recipients for income support payments to assist in the payment of rent. CRA is calculated via the Rent Setting Calculator as the maximum amount for which each applicant of a household is entitled based on their individual income. If actual CRA received varies from what we estimate using the calculator, rent will be adjusted in line with the amount reflected on the tenants Centrelink Statement of Benefit.

Rents are capped to a maximum of 75% of market rent value for Band A and Band B applicants as per Australia Tax Office Benchmark Market Values which are updated every financial year.

Rent is reviewed annually for each tenancy using the most up to date rent calculator and income statements for each tenancy to ensure that all tenants are paying the correct amount of rent for the property they are occupying. If rent requires reducing it will take effect immediately from the date of calculation, and tenants will be notified of the variation. If an increase is required, tenants will be notified of the increase providing a minimum of 60 days written notice, with most new rates taking effect in line with their tenancy agreement anniversary date.

## 4 Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsible for:
Executive Management Committee	Endorse and ensures compliance with this policy Be familiar with legislative requirements of this policy
General Manager/Executive managers/Head of Department	Oversee compliance with this policy Support staff competence and compliance with this policy and ensures staff receive appropriate training and supervision to comply with this policy Report on collated information regarding policy scope and key performance indicators, to ensure operational decision making is informed by outcomes and this policy Support the review of this policy
Manager, Co-ordinators/Team Leaders	Manage and monitor compliance with this policy and facilitate access for staff to receive appropriate training, and supervision to comply with this policy Collate and escalate reported information as required Ensure operational decision making is informed by this policy
Property Managers:	Management of properties within portfolio, both owned and managed. Includes but not limited to allocation, income and asset assessment, suitability of property (fit), location etc.
Staff	Comply with this policy Maintain knowledge of the current practices in relation to the subject of this policy, as applicable to their role Report any incidents as per organisational policy Participate in regular practice supervision

## 5 Legislation and Supporting Documents

### 5.1 Legislation and Standards

- Residential Tenancies Act (WA) 1987
- Residential Tenancies Regulations 1989
- Residential Tenancy Agreement (Form 1AA)
- National Community Housing Standards Manual, 2010
- Community Housing Income and Asset Limits (CHIAL) Policy
- Community Housing Rent Setting Policy 2020

### 5.2 Related SCCWA Policy and Procedures

- Community Housing Rent Setting Manual, Community Housing Coalition
- Community Housing Agreement (2010)
- Rent Setting Procedure
- Eligibility and Allocation - Community Housing Policy

### 5.3 Related SCCWA Forms and Tools

- Rent Setting Calculator (Shelter WA)

### 5.4 Other related documents and links

- Renting Out Your Property, A Lessor's Guide

## 6 Definitions

Term	Meaning for the purposes of this policy document
Gross income	The <b>pre</b> -income tax (before tax) income of a household or individual.
Net income	income refer s to the <b>post</b> -income tax (after tax) income of a household or individual

## 7 Document Control

Rev	Owner	Sections Modified	Date Reviewed	Next Review Date
1.0	Head of Retirement Villages and Community Housing	First release	01/04/2018	01/07/2021
2.0	Head of Retirement Villages and Community Housing	Full document review	20/01/2023	20/01/2026