



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT**
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

HOUSING ASSESSMENT

AROMATAWAI WHARE NOHO



Introduction to social housing changes

Government reforms are aimed at growing and diversifying the social housing sector.

The following agencies are involved:

- Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE)
- Housing New Zealand/Community Housing Providers (HNZ/CHPs)
- Ministry of Social Development (MSD), through Work and Income, Senior Services and StudyLink.

Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE)

Role of the regulator:

- approves and registers community housing providers (the first step towards receiving the IRRS)
- will monitor registered housing providers' performance against standards
- will intervene if necessary.

Housing New Zealand and CHPs

Housing providers' role:

- matching prospective tenants to houses
- starting and ending tenancies
- preparing and managing tenant agreements
- liaising with tenants and carrying out duties of the landlord
- charging and collecting rent
- transferring tenants
- recovering overdue rent and any charges for damages
- maintaining properties to an appropriate standard
- buying, selling and developing properties.

Ministry of Social Development (MSD)

Clients now come to MSD...

- to determine their eligibility for social housing
- to have their housing need formally assessed
- to manage their details while on the housing waitlist
- to have their income-related rent (IRR) calculated
- to be referred to approved social housing providers
- for reviews of decisions (eligibility, assessment and IRR)
- for information on housing options.

Ministry of Social Development (MSD)

To support the transfer of social housing functions to MSD we have Case Managers Housing in the regions and a Centralised Unit Housing in Auckland that delivers nationwide services.

MSD also:

- pays the income-related rent subsidy (IRRS) to registered CHPs
- manages debt and fraud associated with income-related rent
- undertakes reviews
- supports people with other housing products.

IRR and IRRS

Income-related rent (IRR) is subsidised rent based on financial and family circumstances.

Income-related rent subsidy (IRRS) is the payment to a housing provider to cover the difference between the income-related rent paid by a tenant and what rental the market would pay.

The IRRS has been extended to registered community housing providers (previously only received by Housing New Zealand).

Note – local authorities are excluded from receiving IRRS

What hasn't changed?

- Housing providers (Housing New Zealand and community housing providers) are the landlords.
- The Social Allocation System (SAS) criteria to assess housing eligibility and need.
- Accommodation Supplement and bond and rent advances.

Social Allocation System (SAS) criteria

The Social Allocation System (SAS) criteria looks at a client's need to move and tests a client's ability to access, afford and sustain non-government subsidised housing:

- **Affordability** – of housing in private market.
- **Adequacy** – of current accommodation.
- **Suitability** – of current housing to meet the household's needs.
- **Accessibility** – to affordable private housing and financial support.
- **Sustainability** – ability to sustain non-social housing.

Information and advice

Through MSD's website, seminars and contact with staff, we help people find the information they need about:

- tenancies
- the private rental market
- first home ownership
- accessing social housing.

MSD - Applying for housing

- Our role is to **understand a client's needs** in relation to income, employment and housing; there may be products and services other than social housing that can help.
- **Screening** – to determine potential eligibility (mainly over the phone, and some of this information may be already held by MSD).
- **Assessment** – requires an appointment. Tests eligibility and assesses the housing need based on the current SAS criteria.
- **Waitlist** – if eligible, a client is given a priority rating based on the SAS criteria and put on the waitlist for a house.

MSD - While on the waitlist

- Location and priority determine how long someone is on the waitlist.
- MSD is in regular contact, helping clients understand the housing options available to them.
- Changes in circumstances may change eligibility for social housing and priority on the waitlist.

Referring a client to a housing provider:

- MSD refers clients to a provider to be matched to a property, where a vacancy exists, and also processes client's applications for:
 - income-related rent (and advise the client and housing provider)
 - bond and rent in advance
 - redirection of benefit.

HNZ/CHPs - Being matched to a property

- **Housing providers** contact clients directly to:
 - show properties
 - make an offer of a property
 - finalise a tenancy agreement.
- Housing providers inform MSD of tenancy acceptances.

Once housed

- **Housing providers:**
 - manage tenancies
 - manage housing maintenance
 - end tenancies
- **Clients:**
 - update MSD of any change in circumstances
 - pay the landlord their income-related rent (IRR)
 - contact housing provider regarding landlord duties
- **MSD:**
 - pays the IRRS to housing providers
 - reviews IRR
 - reviews IRR tenants' eligibility for social housing.

Tenancy reviews

- From 1 July, tenants' continued eligibility for social housing will be reviewed.
- In the first year, up to 800 tenants paying market rent or near market rent, living where other housing is available, will be reviewed.
- If a tenant can move to private rental or home ownership, they will be helped to do this.
- Reviews will be done with care and will consider each household's particular circumstances.

Making contact

People can enquire about social housing:

- by visiting MSD's housing website
www.housing.msd.govt.nz
- by emailing questions and feedback to
social_housing@msd.govt.nz
- or by phoning 0800 559 009 (Work and Income)
or 0800 552 002 (Senior Services)