



ELIGIBILITY AND ALLOCATIONS POLICY

1. PURPOSE

City West Housing are committed to providing excellent services that ensure the widest possible access to affordable housing and prevent discrimination on the grounds of race, religion, gender or marital status, sexual orientation or disability. As an Affordable housing provider, we aim to strengthen the link between sustaining employment and affordable living.

City West Housing's Register is a local register of housing need. All applicants seeking housing must apply through City West Housing's Register.

The Eligibility and Allocations Policy sets out:

- The objectives of the Housing Allocations Scheme
- How the Housing Register operates
- Who is eligible to be rehoused
- How applicants' housing needs are assessed
- How properties are let

Applicants are advised that, due to the high demand for affordable housing in the City of Sydney Local Government Area, most of the people who are able to join the Housing Register are unlikely to be offered a home. The demand for housing exceeds supply and the Housing Register exists to enable the Eligibility and Allocations Policy to prioritise those households that are in greatest need for affordable housing and have the closest connection with the City of Sydney Local Government Area.

2. ELIGIBILITY

You can apply to be housed with CWH if you meet all of the following criteria:

Income

Your gross household income (i.e. before tax) must fall within one of the following bands:

As at July 2014	
Band 1	Below \$33,106
Band 2	\$33,107 to \$55,436
Band 3	\$55,437 to \$94,274
Note: These income bands are reviewed annually, effective 1 July each year. Applicants will be provided with up-to-date information at the time of application and as requested.	

Local connection

You must be currently living or working in the City of Sydney Local Government Area.

Housing need

You must currently be living in housing which is unsuitable or inadequate for your needs.

Long term housing

You must require long term housing in the City of Sydney Local Government area. City West Housing must also have available the size and type of housing most appropriate to your needs.

Financial circumstances

You must not own assets or property which you could reasonably be expected to use to solve your housing needs.

Residency

You must be a permanent resident of Australia

3. JOINING THE HOUSING REGISTER

To apply to join the Housing Register, applicants must complete housing Application, which is available on-line (through City West Housing website: www.citywesthousing.com.au) or by visiting City West Housing's office.

When applicants apply to join the Housing Register, they must sign a declaration to confirm that:

- The information they have provided in this application is true and correct.
- They understand that if they provide false or misleading information, they may no longer be eligible for housing with City West Housing.
- They will inform City West Housing of any changes in their circumstances.
- They understand that they may be required to complete additional documentation if accepted to confirm their on-going eligibility for Affordable Housing.

They must also sign a disclosure statement giving consent City West Housing to:

- Check with their previous or current landlord/agent as to their suitability as a tenant
- Confirm their employment details/income with their employer or accountant (if self-employed)

To keep the Housing Register up to date, applicants may be contacted to see if they still want help with housing. Applicants will be contacted once a year in order to confirm that they still want to be considered for housing and to provide details of all changes in their circumstances.

Failure to complete renewal within the time period specified (or to respond to a written request for information needed to assess their housing application) will result in the applicant being withdrawn from the Housing Register. Applicants will also have their application withdrawn if they become ineligible for housing.

Should an applicant whose application has been withdrawn wish to re-join the Housing Register they will receive a new application date. In exceptional circumstances City West Housing may agree to reinstate a cancelled application without revising the application date if the applicant notifies it within 3 months of the application being withdrawn from the Register.

Any application for housing from City West Housing board members, staff or relatives will be deemed ineligible.

City West Housing is committed to the principle of equal opportunities in the delivery of all of its services. City West Housing will seek to ensure that its Eligibility Allocations Policy is applied in a manner that is fair to all sections of the community regardless of nationality, ethnic origin, marital status, age, gender or disability.

City West Housing will make every effort to keep information provided by applicants safe and confidential and fully comply with the Privacy Act 1988.

A Housing Pathways T-Reference number may be required to be eligible for the small number of social housing properties that City West Housing manages. Applicants are asked to provide their Housing Pathways T-Reference number, if available, at point of application.

4. ASSESSMENT OF HOUSING NEED

Following assessment, all applicants will be placed in the appropriate Housing Priority Band based on an assessment of their needs. The application will be placed on the Housing Register (if the applicant is eligible for housing) and prioritised based on the information provided. This will ensure that properties are let to those in the highest assessed need and ensure that our obligations are met as set out in our Statement of Objectives, Principles and Accountabilities.

City West Housing, as an Affordable housing provider, will prioritise working households who need to sustain employment. In addition to this, we also consider a range of other factors to determine housing need. This includes; whether your current housing is unsuitable or inadequate for your needs, (e.g. overcrowding, medical reasons, living in sub-standard accommodation), welfare and safeguarding issues, or if you are at a high risk of becoming homeless.

Priority within Bands is determined by the date the application is received. When City West Housing has assessed their housing application, the applicant will receive a letter setting out the outcome.

5. ENTITLEMENTS

City West Housing will always aim to make best use of their housing stock. When determining the number and ages of the people who may occupy a property, City West Housing will have regard to the bedroom entitlement. Although the assessment of applicants' bedroom entitlement is complex and based on a range of factors, the following tables provide guidance on how many bedrooms an applicant should have.

Table 1: Standard bedroom entitlements for City West Housing

Household type	Standard bedroom entitlement
Single people	Studio or one bedroom
Couples	One bedroom

Table 2: Criteria for accommodating children

Situation	City West Housing Response
Child is over 18 years of age	The person is considered to be an adult. A separate bedroom will be allocated.
Shared bedrooms	Same sex children up to 18 years of age are expected to share a bedroom. Male and female children are expected to share a bedroom until one of the children reaches 10 years of age.
Children can't share a bedroom	City West Housing will allocate an additional bedroom where the applicant has demonstrated a need for same sex children, or children under 10 years of age, to have separate bedrooms. Examples of situations where an extra bedroom could be appropriate include where there is a large age gap between the children or behavioural factors.
Shared custody	The child/children are considered to be part of the household if the client has shared custody of children for 3 days per week or more. Normal bedroom entitlements apply.
Access visits from children	The children are not considered to be part of the household if they visit for less than 3 days per week.
Future needs of children who may need separate bedrooms in 2 or 3 years' time	City West Housing will take this into account when matching the client to a property if it can. Decision on a case by case basis.

It should be noted that, if a member of the applicant's household is pregnant, this does not entitle them to an extra bedroom. Instead, their application will be amended on receipt of the birth certificate.

Applicants can apply for an extra bedroom due to medical needs only when a 'live in' carer is needed. Their circumstances will be considered and evidence supporting the need for an extra room will be required.

Properties with specific features will primarily be allocated to applicants who are able to demonstrate a need for that particular feature. Examples of properties with specific features include; properties which have been modified to cater for people with a disability, and ground floor properties or properties with level access.

6. OFFERS OF HOUSING

The Eligibility and Allocations Policy is used to determine who is prioritised for housing from the applications available. The applicant with the highest priority and longest application date will be made the offer of accommodation.

When making an offer of accommodation, City West Housing will need to verify what the applicant has said in their housing application. All applicants who are eligible for housing will be expected to produce their eligibility documents and to verify their housing need at the point of offer. If they are unable to produce the relevant documents, the offer will be withdrawn.

When a property comes available, City West Housing will arrange for the applicant to see the property as soon as possible. The applicant will have up to 24 hours to decide whether or not to accept the offer. In exceptional circumstances, this period of time may be increased. When an applicant says that they are no longer interested in a property after the

viewing, the applicant who is next highest priority will normally be considered for the tenancy.

Applicants will receive one reasonable offer of housing. A 'reasonable offer of housing' is one that takes into account all the applicant's housing requirements considered during the application assessment process. Applicants are permitted to express a preference to opt in or opt out of the Green Square area, and offers will be made to reflect the preference stated in their application form. A refusal of a reasonable offer of housing will result in the housing application being withdrawn. Applicants who have their application withdrawn for refusal of a reasonable offer are not permitted to rejoin the housing register at any future date.

If an applicant fails to respond to a written offer of accommodation within the timescales specified, without good reason, they will be considered to have refused that offer of accommodation. In these circumstances, City West Housing will withdraw their application.

Following a viewing, an offer letter will be issued to the applicant which describes the action the applicant must take to accept the offer of accommodation. The tenancy will commence on an agreed date after the property is ready for occupation and with reasonable notice given to the tenant.

7. DISCRETIONARY POWERS

The Eligibility and Allocations Policy cannot cover every eventuality. In special cases with exceptional needs, the CEO has discretionary power to award additional priority and approve offers of housing.

8. TRANSFERS FOR EXISTING CITY WEST HOUSING TENANTS

City West Housing will assist existing tenants to transfer to more suitable accommodation when their existing property no longer accommodates their needs. Tenants wishing to transfer are required to complete a transfer application, detailing the reasons why their current accommodation is no longer suitable. Transfer applications are prioritised on a needs basis, with particular emphasis on best use of stock. If City West Housing is unable to accept a tenant's request for a transfer, a written response will be issued detailing the reasons why.

9. APPEALING DECISIONS

Applicants have the right to ask for a review of certain decisions that City West Housing has made about their application for housing or an offer of accommodation. This includes a review of:

- Decisions about refusing an application to join the Housing Register
- Withdrawing an application from the Housing Register
- Offers of housing

Applicants who disagree with a decision that City West Housing has made must request a review, in writing, within 21 days of the date of the letter that informed them of that decision. The review request must outline the reasons why the applicant thinks the decision is wrong. Appeals will be dealt with in accordance with City West Housing's Appeals and Complaints Policy.

Version	Date approved	Approved by	Review Due
1.0	12 June 2014	CEO	June 2015