

Factsheet for stakeholders – updated 25 March 2014



Social housing changes

The Government is reforming social housing services. From 14 April 2014, the Ministry of Social Development will handle applications and assessment for social housing. Currently this is done by Housing New Zealand. From 1 July 2014, the Ministry of Social Development will do reviewable tenancies.

What are the changes?

The main changes are to:

- extend the availability of the income-related rent subsidy to registered non-government and community housing providers (to date the income-related rent* subsidy has only been available to Housing New Zealand)
- transfer the responsibility for assessing people's social housing need from Housing New Zealand to the Ministry of Social Development (including Work and Income, Senior Services and StudyLink)
- introduce tenancy reviews from 1 July 2014 to help prioritise social housing for people with the greatest need, for as long as they need it.

What roles will the Ministry of Social Development, Housing New Zealand and community housing providers have?

From 14 April 2014, the Ministry of Social Development, Housing New Zealand and registered community housing providers will be responsible for the following functions:

Ministry of Social Development	Housing New Zealand and community housing providers
<p>Managing all social housing applications, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • screening eligibility • assessing a person's need for a house • managing the housing waitlist • supporting people with a serious housing need who can't be referred immediately to a housing provider • helping people find the right housing option for their situation • calculating and reviewing income-related rent • referring people to approved social housing providers • paying income-related rent subsidies to housing providers • fraud investigations and legal actions • income-related rent debt recovery • reviewing decisions on eligibility, needs assessments and income-related rent • reviewable tenancies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenancy management including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - matching prospective tenants to houses - starting and ending tenancies - preparing and managing tenant agreements - tenant liaison and landlord duties - charging rent (based on income-related rent or market rent as appropriate) - tenant transfer - collecting rents, debt for overdue rents and damage charges. • Buying, selling and developing properties. • Management and maintenance of houses to an agreed standard.

* Income-related rent is a subsidised rent payable by a tenant. It's based on a percentage of a tenant's income and is less than the market rent of the property. The income-related rent subsidy paid to the housing provider by government is the difference between the income-related rent and the market rent.

In the meantime, should you have any housing assessment transfer enquiries, please email social_housing@msd.govt.nz. Housing New Zealand enquiries may be made to enquiries1@hnzc.co.nz and any enquiries about becoming a registered community housing provider to info@socialhousingunit.govt.nz.

Some useful links to information are provided below. We have also attached a factsheet on the transfer of needs assessments.

You will be aware that reviewable tenancies are also planned for social housing tenants. No final decisions have yet been made about how they will be done or when they will start. There will be more information provided on reviewable tenancies in 2014.

Yours sincerely



Debbie Power
Deputy Chief Executive
Work and Income
Ministry of Social Development



Kay Read
General Manager
Tenancy Services
Housing New Zealand



Michael Peard
Director Social Housing Unit
Ministry of Business,
Innovation and Employment

Useful links:

- [New era for social housing after bill passes](#), Housing Minister Nick Smith, 20 November 2013
- [Work and Income take on housing role](#), Social Development Minister Paula Bennett, 20 November 2013
- Information about social housing reform on the [Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's website](#), including FAQs for community housing providers
- [MSD's social housing webpage](#)
- Further information for community housing providers is available on the [Social Housing Unit's website](#)
- Information for tenants is available on [Housing New Zealand's website](#).