

BUNGREE ABORIGINAL ASSOCIATION - HOUSING SERVICES

Allocation of Social Housing (AHO and Bungree)

OVERVIEW OF HOUSING ALLOCATIONS

The full procedures to be used by Bungree when allocating Bungree housing are documented in THE BUNGREE HOUSING ALLOCATION PROCEDURE.

A) Supported housing partnerships

In formal supported housing partnerships, providers of support services can be offered nomination rights to designated Bungree properties. In such partnerships, the nomination of those clients will be approved by Bungree in accordance with:

- The principles outlined in Principles for Selection of Housing (below); and
- The terms of the written agreement between Bungree and the support provider

B) Housing Pathways and the NSW Housing Register

As a Manager of AHO houses, Bungree is a participating partner with Housing NSW under Housing Pathways and is bound to follow the prescribed social housing eligibility and allocation policies and processes of the AHO.

The Social Housing Eligibility and Allocations Policy Supplement for Housing Pathways provides further information to support this document.

C) Management Allocations

Some discretion is allowed for the management approval of housing offers that provide for best practice outcomes that:

- Recognises any extreme and extenuating circumstances of clients
- Make best use of existing Bungree resources, e.g. transfers of tenants at company convenience or in order to match household need when circumstances change
- Meet specific local allocation strategies, as documented by Bungree in regard to Association housing.

D) Specific Program and Planning Requirements

Some properties managed by Bungree are subject to specific external funding guidelines, which can impact on the tenant selection criteria and processes used. For example, Bungree as a provider of Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS) may allocate transitional housing to an Aboriginal person or family as required under SHS guidelines, or Bungree may construct or acquire housing for specific purposes such as to house older people or in partnership to address specific needs. This may mean

that as a result of funding or investment requirements Bungree may impose additional access and eligibility requirements. These will be clearly defined and available.

Properties built according to specific State Environmental Planning Policies can also require the provision of assistance to specific groups, e.g. households with defined income ranges, older people or people with disabilities.

HOUSING SELECTION PRINCIPLES

The principles of all tenant selection and housing allocation processes used by Bungree will be:

- All housing is provided to those who have been identified as being in housing need
- The allocation of housing does not discriminate against individuals or families based on the grounds of gender, religion, age, disability, marital status or sexual preference
- Bungree provides an open, consistent and transparent application and allocation system
- There is demonstrated integrity in all the agreed processes in relation to tenant selection and housing allocation through a series of controls and anti-fraud measures, including the rigorous checking of all housing allocations through Bungree internal auditing process
- All housing allocation decisions are clearly documented
- Wherever required, Bungree works closely with other Bungree services, support agencies and community organisations to provide a more holistic approach to housing, allowing tenants a greater opportunity to sustain and manage their tenancies
- There is equity of access to all Aboriginal persons seeking housing
- The resources of Bungree are used efficiently and effectively
- Any conflicts of interest by those involved in the allocation process are declared and effectively managed
- Bungree meets all its legal and external accountabilities

PROMOTING SUCCESSFUL TENANCIES

Bungree aims to promote a successful and sustainable tenancy when matching a client to a housing property. In general, this means matching a client to a property that:

- Is large enough for the client's household, and
- Meets any special needs of the client, so far as these are known, and
- Assists the client to access special support services that they need, and

- Makes the best use of available housing stock in a timeframe that balances the client's need for stable housing with the costs to the housing provider of providing assistance. This includes ensuring that properties with specific features that are in high demand and short supply are only offered to those clients who need them. These features include:
 - Properties suitable for older people, or
 - Properties that have been built or modified to meet the needs of people with a disability, or
 - In some areas, properties on the ground floor, properties with level access, or properties with yards

OCCUPANCY GUIDELINES

All allocations of housing to eligible applicants or tenants will be within the agreed occupancy standards of Bungree. This will maximise outcomes for clients whilst also ensuring that the resources of Bungree are used efficiently and effectively.

Extra Bedroom Entitlement (AHO)

Under the AHO Housing Services Policy Framework, where possible, applicants for AHO house are entitled to an extra bedroom in order to help Aboriginal families meet caring responsibilities and cultural obligations.

TABLE 1: MINIMUM BEDROOM ENTITLEMENTS

Household type	Standard bedroom entitlement
Couples	One or two bedrooms *
Single people or couples with one other household member	Two or three bedrooms
Single people or couples with two other household members	Two or three bedrooms
Single people or couples with three other household members	Three or four bedrooms
Single people or couples with four other household members	Three or four bedrooms
Single people or couples with five or more other household members	Four bedroom or, if available, five or more bedrooms. Clients who have a five bedroom household complement will generally be offered a four bedroom property unless a five bedroom property is vacant when the client's turn is reached.

* Bungree does not generally allocate single detached houses to single people or couples without children

TABLE 2: CRITERIA FOR ACCOMMODATING CHILDREN

Situation	Bungree Response
Child is over 18 years of age	The person is considered to be an adult when calculating the minimum bedroom entitlement
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	Bungree will allocate an additional bedroom where the client 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.
Future needs of children who may need separate bedrooms in 2 or 3 years time	Bungree will take this into account when matching the client to a property if it can. Bungree will make this decision on a case by case basis according to the size and type of housing that is available in the area.

LOCAL ALLOCATION PLANS AND STRATEGIES

From time to time, Bungree will develop local allocation plans and strategies in order to produce optimum outcomes for the communities it serves. This includes the development and implementation of additional guidelines, plans or rules for the allocation of dwellings located in medium density complexes or housing precincts or for single dwellings.

This, at times, may include Bungree approving a management (internal) transfer or making “out-of-guidelines” decisions concerning housing allocations.

As an example, when Bungree manages housing on behalf of other Aboriginal organisations there may be specific access and eligibility criteria and requirements that apply to the management of this housing.

All Local Allocations Plans will be documented and approved by the Bungree Board.

HOUSING OFFERS

Housing Pathways and the NSW Housing Register

Generally, a client will receive up to two reasonable offers of housing from their preferred provider. This means that, where a client selects public housing and AHO or community housing as their preferred provider, they may receive offers from Housing NSW, any of the participating community housing providers, or a combination of both.

In some cases where a tenant is relocating for management purposes, or when a client has been approved for emergency temporary accommodation, they may receive only one reasonable offer.

Bungree Housing

When a client is offered Bungree housing there will be one offer.

Reasonable Offers, Rejection and Withdrawal of Offers

Refer to Housing Pathways “Accepting, Rejecting and Withdrawing Offers and Suspending Applications” for AHO housing.

Offer Acceptance

If the client accepts an offer, Bungree will expect them to sign the tenancy agreement within a reasonable timeframe of accepting the offer. The generally accepted timeframe is two weeks, however Bungree can extend the timeframe for a short time if the client requests it and has good reasons for making the request.

Bungree will remove the client from the NSW Housing Register when they have signed a tenancy agreement.

Reporting and Auditing of Housing Offers

A summary report of all housing allocations made will be prepared for the Chief Executive Officer on an annual basis.

The housing allocation procedures will be monitored through a series of controls and will be part of Bungree internal auditing processes.

RIGHT TO APPEAL

An applicant can appeal a decision made by Bungree regarding:

- The classification of an offer as ‘reasonable’ when they consider it to be unreasonable
- The type of property offered if the applicant’s needs and circumstances have changed.

INFORMATION FOR CLIENTS

Bungree will ensure that applicants for housing are provided with information about the housing application, assessment and allocation processes. In addition, where appropriate advice about other housing options will be provided.

Bungree will have the following information available for all applicants:

- Bungree Brochure with information about Bungree’s purpose and services, including housing and information concerning appeals systems
- Application forms for all services available from Bungree.

Bungree will ensure that all information provided is appropriate for its applicants.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Any Bungree employee involved in the application assessment or housing allocations processes must register any personal or other relationship with a tenant or applicant being considered for housing assessment or allocation.

The employee must withdraw from any involvement in the allocation of housing to that tenant or applicant and must not participate in any way or influence in any way, either implicitly or explicitly, the decision-making process when such a conflict has been declared.

A Declaration of Interest Form must be completed and signed by the employee.

INFORMATION	
Title	Allocation of Social Housing (Bungree and AHO)
Section	Housing Services
National Regulatory Code Evidence Guideline	Performance Outcome 1: Tenant and Housing Services
National Community Housing Standard	Standard 1.2 Establishing and maintaining tenancies
Last review	5/10/2019
Next review	5/10/2021
Permission: Bungree acknowledge the support of The North Coast Community Housing Company Ltd to develop this policy and it is has been adapted by permission.	