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Locating Housing

Occasionally we are able to offer people the chance to locate their own private rental housing.

Do I have to find a property myself?

No, absolutely not. It is our responsibility to locate housing for you and you are offered this chance only because some of our tenants prefer to find their own housing.

What do I do when I find a property I want?

Contact our office immediately. We will want to discuss this checklist with you and we will also need:

- the property address
- name and a contact number for the landlord or real estate agent NEVER make a written application for the property or pay a deposit or fee.

I can't seem to find anything for the rent you have told me you will pay

What can I do?

We know that it can sometimes be difficult to find the property you want at a rent we are willing to pay. However, these rents are used by the government to set the level of subsidy that can be paid and therefore we are unable to pay more rent than these levels.

What happens once you have decided that the property meets ACHL standards?

If the property appears to meet our standards, then we will contact the agent to organise a time for one of our staff to view the property. We will then decide whether or not to make an application for the property.

When I talk to the landlord or agent,

should I let them know that ACHL, and not myself, will become the tenant? We recommend that you tell the landlord that ACHL will rent the property. Some agents will give us priority when they receive our applications.

ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS checklist.

Does this mean that you will not make an application for the property?

The essential items are matters which concern your safety (which we have some responsibility for); legal issues; our ability to get work completed in the future; or our ability to afford the rent at the property.

All of the items on the list are NOT NEGOTIABLE and we will not accept any property where you cannot tick "yes" to every item. The rent is slightly higher than the limit you have set but I am willing to pay the additional amount myself. Can I do this?

No. This is against community housing association policy and we would never agree to this type of arrangement.

I have answered NO to one or more of the issues in the OTHER REQUIREMENTS list but I still want to live at this property. Does this mean you will not agree to make an application for the property?

We hope that you can also answer "yes" to all of the matters on this list because they are all extremely important. But we will listen and discuss any concerns with you.

Locating Housing

Before you begin the search, there are some pitfalls which you should consider.

The time and traveling involved in searching for a property could be tiring and expensive for you. Any property you locate has to meet our standards. This fact sheet has been designed to explain many of these, however you may be disappointed to find the property you want only for us to refuse to lodge an application.

Essential requirements

1. Is the weekly rent for the property within the guidelines you have been given?

2. Is the property in the area you have been asked to locate it in?

We are often required by the government to have a certain number of our properties leased in particular local government areas (LGA). Therefore if we have asked you to seek a property in a particular LGA, we may not be able to consider any properties outside of this area.

3. Is the property the correct size for your household?

We may only allocate housing that you are eligible for. For example, if you are only eligible for three bedroom accommodation, we cannot allocate a property with more bedrooms than this (or less) - regardless of the rent being asked for the property. If you are unsure of what you are eligible for, you should discuss this with the Housing Manager.

4. Is the property safe and secure?

The property should have, at least, working deadlocks and solid external doors that are in good condition. We would also prefer that there are window locks. Smoke detectors must be installed. You should also look for any risks at the property such as uneven pathways, glass doors, safe steps, swimming pool and landings/ balconies. You should also consider the general hygiene of the property, particularly in the kitchen and bathroom.

5. Is the property situated in a safe area?

The property should not be on an extremely busy road but it should not be too isolated from other residences.

6. Is the property in a good condition and in a good state of repair?

7. Does the property look as though it has been cared for by the landlord?

Look at the paintwork of the walls and doors that the wall tiles are in good condition, check whether the services (hot water, electricity, gas) are working, etc. The current standard can be a guide to the maintenance you can expect to be carried out in the future.

8. Will the landlord accept a family of your size to live at the property?

Most landlords will limit the number of people who can live at the house and this needs to be clarified with the landlord or agent.

9. Does the property have a working smoke detector?

10. Are the yards and gardens manageable?

Tenants are responsible for the maintenance of the yards and gardens. Are you willing to and can you afford to do all the work that is required at this property?.

11. Is the landlord offering a minimum 12 month lease?

We prefer a minimum "fixed term agreement" of 12 months. Landlords will often advertise for a 6 month lease but most seem willing to negotiate about this.

12. Will the landlord allow you to keep a pet?

If you have a pet, many landlords may not want it at the property. If you have a pet, it is important that the landlord knows and agrees to have it at the property.

13. Is the property situated close to services (shopping, doctors, etc.)

14. Is the property situated close to public transport?