

TENANT EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT SCHEME POLICY



Purpose

Affordable Community Housing Limited (ACHL) supports a Tenant Employment Support Scheme (TESS) designed to financially assist tenants who are starting work for the first time or re-entering the workforce after a break. Under the scheme, a tenant or their partner who commences employment is entitled to a period up to twelve weeks of non-adjustment of their subsidy to the new income level, within a financial year and within approved guidelines. This document outlines ACHL's policy for determining eligibility and approving applications to the TESS scheme.

Eligibility guidelines for TESS

A tenant or their partner who starts a paying job is entitled to a grace period of up to twelve weeks in a financial year before ACHL adjusts their rent subsidy to take into account their new income, provided the following eligibility criteria are met:

- The tenant or their partner applies to ACHL for TESS by completing a Rent Subsidy application form and providing evidence of their income (even if their income details were provided through the Income Confirmation Scheme).
- This documentation is submitted within 28 days of the person starting paid employment for casual, part-time, full-time or seasonal work, or self employment.
- The tenant receives a rent subsidy and the person applying for TESS did not have wages as a source of income before they started the job, i.e. they are not already in paid employment.
- The increase in household income is not due to the tenant or partner moving from one type of employment to another, including, for example, moving from part-time to full-time work.
- The tenant or partner is not receiving a New Enterprise Scheme Allowance.
- The tenant or partner is not receiving income from Work for the Dole or Community Development Employment Project (CDEP) wages that is equivalent to the Newstart allowance (or statutory benefit) appropriate for their age and household composition.

- The tenant or partner is not a low wage earner who receives an income below the Newstart Allowance (or other statutory benefit) appropriate for their age and household composition.

If approved, the tenant or their partner will remain on their subsidised rent for a period of up to twelve weeks. Approval will be granted once only within a twelve-month period, which will commence from the start date of their employment.

If the period of employment is less than twelve weeks, the balance may carry over to a separate period of employment in the future.

- ACHL will advise the tenant or their partner in writing of the decision on their TESS application.
- At the conclusion of the TESS period, the tenant will be charged rent based upon the amount of their new income.
- ACHL will advise the tenant or their partner in writing of their new rent, which will be based upon their new income.
- The Housing Services Co-ordinator is responsible for approving TESS applications.