

Absence from Property

T2

Policy context: This policy relates to efficient management of property assets.

POLICY STATEMENT

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance on approving short term absences from SCH properties.

II. Definitions

- An absence from property is defined as any period that a tenant will be away from the property in excess of six weeks.

III. Coverage

This policy applies to all SCH managed and subleased properties.

IV. Principles

Community housing must be managed to ensure that those most in need to have access to secure, appropriate and affordable housing. Long periods of absence from a property can indicate that a tenant does not have a genuine need.

In general, the maximum period a tenant may be absent from their property is three months. However, tenants are encouraged to advise SCH of absences in excess of two weeks, in case we need to contact you for any reason.

Acceptable reasons for absences up to three months include:

- Caring for sick/frail family members,
- Hospitalisation, institutional care, nursing home care or rehabilitation,
- Escaping domestic violence, harassment or threats of violence,
- Assisting with immigration matters in the country of origin,
- Imprisonment,
- Holidays, or
- Employment, education or training.

In circumstances such as participating in rehabilitation or hospitalisation, absences of up to six months may be approved at the discretion of the Regional Manager.

SCH will approve an absence from the property if it is satisfied that:

- The tenant has made arrangements to pay their tenancy charges, such as rent (either at the current rebated rate or minimum rent if approved) and water usage, while they are away,
- The tenant has made arrangements for the property to be adequately cared for while they are away, and

- The tenant has an acceptable reason for going away.

A tenant may apply to the Regional Manager for a decision on minimum rent. This will only occur where a tenant or household member:

- Is not eligible for Centrelink benefits because they are in custody, or
- Enters a nursing home, rehabilitation centre or respite care and is required to pay for that accommodation.

If approved, the minimum rent a tenant or household member will pay is \$5 per week for a maximum period of 3 months. Tenants must substantiate all claims for the minimum \$5 rent.

Tenants may appeal a decision to reject their absence request by contacting their local Regional Office

V. Responsibilities

Regional Managers are responsible for assessing and approving requests for absence from property.

DOCUMENTATION

Documents related to this policy	
Related policies	T14 Ending a Tenancy T10 Tenancy Reinstatement
Other related documents	