



Connect Victoria Park

Housing

Sustainable Tenancies

CVP Policies	Sustainable Tenancies	Effective date:	23/02/2022
Approved By	Board	Review date:	Feb 2024
Warning	This process is uncontrolled after printing		

Purpose

This policy provides guidance for CVP Inc staff to establish and maintain successful/sustainable tenancies, supporting tenants to age well in their homes, to access support if they need, and to live independently for as long as they can.

Scope

This policy applies to all CVP Inc staff.

Definitions

Sustainable tenancies can be maintained successfully for as long as possible. The property needs to be appropriate for the tenant's requirements, and the tenant needs to possess the skills required to meet their responsibilities and live independently.

Complex needs, for older people, may include mental health, hoarding, discrimination based on ethnicity, gender identity, sexuality, trauma due to history of domestic and family violence, homelessness and poverty, as well as long-term frailty, multimorbidity and complex neurological conditions such as dementia.

Principles

CVP Inc aims to provide homes where people want to live and where they feel safe, secure and connected.

CVP Inc understands the importance of housing as a foundation for people to be able to flourish through social connection and healthy ageing.

CVP Inc is committed to help its tenants enjoy a better quality of life, connect with others in the community, keep learning, contributing, and living independently for as long as possible.

CVP Inc acknowledges the special needs of older tenants and their households and the need to deliver services that are culturally appropriate.

Property Allocations

CVP Inc staff will endeavour to understand tenants' individual requirements and, whenever possible, allocate properties according to those requirements.

This will include contacting the applicant's support provider (where appropriate consent has been provided by the applicant), if relevant, in relation to any proposed offer to the applicant.

CVP Inc's will consider risk in regards to a sustainable tenancy by a potential tenant with complex needs. This will help to determine appropriate referrals that could be made prior to signing the lease to assist the new tenant in preparing to move to their new accommodation.

Applicants who have a history of debt and/or rental arrears will be encouraged to link in with financial counselling and/or financial management to assist with developing a budget and increase budgeting skills. Establishing this prior to the tenancy commencing will assist the tenant to sustain their tenancy.

Lease sign up

CVP Inc provides information in a format that is easy to read to ensure new tenants understand their rights and responsibilities. This includes expectations under both the *Residential Tenancies Act 1987* and CVP Inc's policies. If needed, the new tenant will be encouraged to bring a support person to the lease sign up to help them understand what they can do to sustain their tenancy.

Tenancy management

CVP Inc provides homes for people older than 60 years of age and encourages long-term tenancies. We understand the opportunities and challenges of independent living, as well as that the most likely reason for our tenants to move out is transition to age care.

CVP Inc acknowledges that older tenants may require increased support. We encourage tenants to check on their neighbours' welfare as a way for people to maintain independence. Our staff will work with next of kin, family members and/or support workers to assist in maintaining a tenancy where possible.

CVP Inc will conduct routine inspections of all its tenantable properties in accordance with its Property Inspections Policy. In addition to assessing the condition of the property, routine inspections allow CVP Inc to determine whether there are any tenancy issues, discuss any concerns the tenant might have, and refer tenants to relevant services to help sustain a tenancy.

CVP Inc will respond to the changing housing needs of tenants fairly and flexibly, within its capacity and in a manner consistent with legislation, eligibility criteria and CVP Inc's Allocation Policy. We will endeavour to provide support to tenants whose circumstances change through illness or injury, so they can remain in their home. This may include assistance to access home modification services or facilitating access to in-home care services.

In cases where maintaining a tenancy is not an option, we will refer the tenant to support to find alternative and appropriate accommodation.

Rent arrears

CVP Inc is committed to supporting tenants to manage their finances and meet their debt commitments. Tenants identified with complex needs and those with a previous history of rent arrears will be encouraged to use Centrepay to avoid rent arrears.

If arrears arise, CVP Inc will work on a realistic repayment arrangement with the tenant. We encourage tenants to give early notice of financial difficulties and we may refer tenants (with their permission) to services that assist with budgeting or financial counselling.

CVP Inc seeks to understand the experiences of tenants who struggle to sustain their tenancies. It will collect information and keep up-to-date records, which will be reviewed to strengthen service delivery practices.

Village Hub

All CVP Inc tenants are automatically members of Connect Village Hub, the first initiative of its kind in Western Australia.

A membership-based community of people 55+, the Village Hub collaborates with older people to utilise their strengths and abilities so they can continue to live independently for as long as possible in the community they love.

As members, tenants can access the Village Hub Member Help Centre for assistance with day-to-day issues to help them continue living independently. They can also ask for help from other members for small tasks in the home.

At the Village Hub, they also have an array of classes and lifelong learning activities available at affordable rates and at a short distance from their units.

CVP Inc encourages tenants to take part in the Village Hub as a way to promote healthy ageing, social connection and sustainable tenancies.