



Communique

Aboriginal Housing Victoria Board Meetings

Thursday 7 April 2022

The Board of Directors of Aboriginal Housing Victoria (AHV) held their third Board meeting for the calendar year on Thursday 7 April 2022, via videoconference.

Eligibility for housing and allocations policy

The Board approved some minor amendments to the housing and allocations policy. Policy changes included:

- Combining the former chapters 2 and 3 of the Housing Services policy, given that Chapter 2 largely related to waiting list management and much of the detail is no longer necessary, given AHV now uses the Victorian Housing Register (VHR);
- Updating of terms to achieve consistency with AHV's current organisational structure, and the revised *Residential Tenancies Act 1997*;
- Clarification of AHV's role in assisting Aboriginal applicants who potentially meet priority housing access criteria, to be supported by homelessness and/or family violence services to make a VHR application; and
- Some streamlining of content to improve readability.

The revised policy will now be uploaded to AHV's website, at:

<https://ahvic.org.au/tenants/ahv-tenancy-forms>

Social Housing Growth Fund

The Board received an update on the progress of AHV's submission for grant funding under the *Homes for Aboriginal Victorians Round* of the Victorian Government's Social Housing Growth Fund (HfAVR).

The grant funding process is highly competitive, with submissions assessed for funding based on the amenity that they intend to deliver, and the co-contributions that organisations will make to the overall project. Mainstream organisations making submissions to the HfAVR will be required to demonstrate their commitment to Aboriginal self-determination, and their capacity to deliver culturally safe and responsive services.

National Housing and Homelessness Agreement NHHA

The NHHA defines the respective housing roles and responsibilities of the Commonwealth and the States/Territories. Issues outlined in the NHHA include: housing assistance; policy objectives/priorities; funding administrative rules; and reporting. The Productivity Commission is reviewing

the NHHA, to examine the performance of governments in achieving the objectives, outcomes and outputs set out in the NHHA, and the suitability of the NHHA for the future. The review is also looking at the impact of social and economic factors, including the coronavirus pandemic, on housing and homelessness in Australia. The Productivity Commission's report is due by June 30, 2022.

After extensive engagement with the Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness forum, AHV made a submission to the Productivity Commission. Key points in the submission included:

- Need for all governments to make commitments to the Closing the Gap target and the sector-strengthening plan for housing, and to establish clear, meaningful targets.
- Commonwealth government leadership is required on housing and homelessness, including strengthening, monitoring and accountability of state and territory governments.
- Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) are best placed to deliver services to their communities. However, governments continue to roll over funding to mainstream programs. We need separate programs and funding streams for housing and homelessness services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- A national strategy must recognise the importance of genuine engagement with ACCOs and local decision-making.

NAIDOC Week 2022

The theme for NAIDOC Week this year is 'Get up! Stand up! Show up!'. AHV is busy planning our 2022 NAIDOC event, which will have a significant focus on celebrating the artistic achievements of our communities.