



Communique

Aboriginal Housing Victoria Board Meeting

Thursday 7 October 2021

The Board of Directors of Aboriginal Housing Victoria (AHV) held their thirteenth Board meeting for the calendar year on Thursday 7 October 2021, via videoconference.

AHV Development Pipeline

The Board discussed the recent announcements by Homes Victoria that they will be opening further funding rounds under the Social Housing Growth Fund, during the remainder 2021-22.

AHV is focussing on refining our pipeline of potential development sites, so we are well placed to submit competitive funding proposals when funding rounds open, and support increased housing opportunities for Aboriginal Victorians.

Sales Program

The Board approved the sale of 7 properties. Properties identified for sale are subjected to a rigorous assessment process which is consistent with the AHV Asset Management Policy and multiple factors are considered. The sales will support AHV's objective to increase housing stock through the reinvestment of proceeds into future developments.

Occupational Health and Safety

A specialist adviser in Occupational Health and Safety was invited to present to the Board in relation to responsibilities on a range of issues including COVID-19. The safety and wellbeing of our staff, renters and the Aboriginal community is our priority and AHV will be following directions issued by the Chief Health Officer.

Aboriginal Home Connect Program

The AHC program rapid evaluation has been concluded, with a positive outcome for the AHC program. A wide range of recommendations were made, including that the AHC must continue, given it has demonstrated a level of unmet need that pre-dates the COVID-19 pandemic and will likely remain, once the impact of the pandemic recedes.

A direct mail campaign using Marlion Pickett (AFL footballer) as the ambassador, commenced in the last week of September, to advise 3,200 public housing clients about the program.

AHC is a free telephone and online service for Aboriginal renters living in Victorian social housing, to help them connect to the services they need, or to simply have a yarn with someone who cares. To find out more, go to the AHV website at:

<https://ahvic.org.au/aboriginal-community-home-connect-program>

AHV COVID-19 Update

We understand that many people continue to experience higher levels of stress and hardship as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, which finds those of us in Melbourne and parts of regional Victoria in lockdown again. To keep our community safe, government and community agencies are adopting a partnership approach to the crisis.

These are the 3 points of contact we strongly recommend for access to health updates and services:

- Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) coronavirus updates. This should be your first point of reference for government-issued updates related to the outbreak. Visit <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus> or call 1800 675 398 (available 24/7). Please leave 000 (triple zero) for emergencies only.
- Victorian Aboriginal Health Service (VAHS): VAHS is available for a range of services, including if you are suffering from stress or anxiety related to the outbreak. You can follow them on Facebook page for the latest updates <https://www.facebook.com/victorianaboriginalhealthservice/> or give them a call on (03) 9403 3300.
- Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO): please visit their website to learn more about VACCHO's response: <https://www.vaccho.org.au/about-us/coronavirus/>

Keep strong and stay connected. If you need support, there is support out there:

- Victorian Aboriginal Health Service **03 9403 3300**
- Djirra Aboriginal Women's well-being helpline **1800 105 303**
- Dardi Munwurro Aboriginal men's well-being helpline **1800 435 799**
- Safe Steps family violence support **1800 015 188**
- Beyond Blue **1300 22 46 36**
- Lifeline **131 114**
- Kids Helpline **1800 551 800**
- In a medical emergency call **000**