

Rent and Rent Management Procedure (UnitingSA Housing)

1. PURPOSE and SCOPE

- 1.1. This procedure applies to current UnitingSA Housing tenants.
- 1.2. This procedure outlines the responsibilities and process involved when dealing with rent, rent reviews and rent arrears in relation to the housing being managed by UnitingSA Housing.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. This procedure applies to properties owned and/or managed by UnitingSA Housing.

3. LEGISLATION AND POLICIES

- 3.1. UnitingSA Housing will comply with the Residential Tenancies Act 1995.
- 3.2. UnitingSA Housing will comply with the Community Housing Rent Policy which provides an overarching framework for setting rents.
- 3.3. UnitingSA Housing will comply with the rent guidelines set for National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS) properties.
- 3.4. Rents for Nation Building Economic Stimulus Properties will be set by UnitingSA Housing according to the Nation Building Economic Stimulus Package (NBESP) Rent Policy.

4. PROCEDURES

4.1. Rent

- 4.1.1. The tenant will pay rent on a fortnightly basis in advance.
- 4.1.2. The rent to be charged to tenants will be set using the software and vendor services (Chintaro) that has been accredited by South Australian Housing Authority for debentured properties.
- 4.1.3. The rent for NBESP properties will be set using the NBESP Rent Policy.
- 4.1.4. Rent for NRAS properties will be set as per NRAS Guidelines and Funding Agreements.
- 4.1.5. Rent for properties managed for other owners/leaseholders will be set according to their requirements.

4.2. Rent Payment

- 4.2.1. Rent is payable two weeks in advance by an approved payment method.
- 4.2.2. Payment of rent may be via:

Please note printed copies are not able to be controlled and the Intranet will always be referred to for the current version.

Property and Assets

Classification: For Internal Use Only

Adopted: January 2013

Version 4.0: June 2022

Review Date: June 2025

Owner: Manager UnitingSA Housing

Page No. 1 of 4

Rent and Rent Management Procedure (UnitingSA Housing)

- Direct payment from Centrelink using Centrepay;
- Direct debit from a financial institution;
- Payment at any Commonwealth bank via deposit book;
- Electronic funds transfer;
- Payment by the Office of the Public Trustee.

4.3. Bond

4.3.1. The bond is the equivalent of six weeks of the applicable rent when the rent exceeds \$251 per week or equivalent to four weeks of the applicable rent when the rent is below \$251 per week and is payable in advance, or by bond guarantee from HousingSA.

4.4. Receipting of Payment

4.4.1. Rents will be receipted from the bank statements and the Centrepay reports, printed daily, into UnitingSA Housing's tenancy database.

4.4.2. No cash payments will be received as a rental payment by any staff. Tenants wishing to pay cash will be given a deposit book or bank deposit slip and invited to pay at the nearest Commonwealth Bank branch.

4.5. Rent Review

4.5.1. The tenant's income will be reviewed on a regular basis.

4.5.2. For tenants in a UnitingSA Housing property under Community Housing, this review will be performed every six months. Normally rent reviews will occur in June and December each year as Centrelink payments change.

4.5.3. Rents may be reviewed at any time by UnitingSA Housing, where there is reasonable evidence to suggest that a household may not be eligible for an Income Based Rent that they are currently charged.

4.5.4. Variations in household income of \$20 or more per week in income outside of rent review periods must be notified within 14 days to UnitingSA Housing so that a new calculation of rent can be carried out. Change in rent will be applied from the first date when rent falls due after the rent calculation, subject to meeting requirements under the Residential Tenancies Act.

4.5.5. Change in circumstances of the household will require a new rent calculation to be completed.

4.5.6. For tenants under the NRAS, this review will be performed yearly.

4.5.7. UnitingSA Housing will forward a Tenant Information Sheet to each household and the tenant will need to return the completed Tenant Information Sheet

Rent and Rent Management Procedure (UnitingSA Housing)

together with a copy of income from salary or wages and/or Centrelink payments by the advised date for every person in the household.

4.6. Privacy and Confidentiality

4.6.1. Details of income will be kept confidential by UnitingSA Housing and will only be divulged to a Support Worker or other third party with the prior written consent of the tenant.

4.7. Arrears Management

4.7.1. All tenants are treated equitably with respect to management of rent arrears.

4.7.2. Arrears are where a tenant is less than two weeks in advance in rent.

4.7.3. It is the tenant's responsibility to provide proof of rent paid (when requested).

4.7.4. A Rent Arrears Reminder letter will be sent to a tenant who owes between 1 and 14 days of rent, stating the amount owing and requesting immediate payment. An SMS may also be sent.

4.7.5. A tenant who owes part or all of a fortnight's rent and that amount is 15 days or more overdue, will be issued with a Form 2 – Notice by Landlord to Tenant to Remedy Breach of Agreement – Notice of Termination.

4.7.6. A letter to accompany the Form 2 is sent explaining the need for the Form 2 and informing the tenant as clearly as possible their next steps in regard to the Form 2, i.e. pay the amount asked in full, apply for a repayment agreement by contacting the office or vacate the property by the due date stated on the Form 2.

4.7.7. If the Form 2 has not been paid in full, a repayment agreement entered into or the property vacated by the expiry date of the Form 2, an application to the South Australian Civil and Administration Tribunal (SACAT) will be completed seeking a hearing to terminate the tenancy, an Order for Payment, or to ratify an agreed repayment schedule.

5. DOCUMENTATION

5.1. Tenant Information Sheet

5.2. Form 2 – Notice by Landlord to Tenant to Remedy Breach of Agreement – Notice of Termination

Rent and Rent Management Procedure (UnitingSA Housing)

6. REFERENCES

- 6.1. Community Housing Rent Policy and Procedures
- 6.2. Appeals Procedure (UnitingSA Housing)
- 6.3. Privacy Policy
- 6.4. Arrears and Debt Management Procedure (UnitingSA Housing)
- 6.5. UnitingSA Housing Nation Building Economic Stimulus Package (NBESP) Rent Policy
- 6.6. Residential Tenancies Act 1995
- 6.7. SA Gov website: <http://www.sa.gov.au/communityhousing>
- 6.8. South Australian Civil and Administration Tribunal (SACAT)
- 6.9. UnitingSA Housing Tenant Handbook