

Prior to starting the social housing application

Social housing (also known as public housing) assessments are generally completed when all other housing options have been explored and where a housing need has been identified, or where they have requested an assessment. Before commencing the assessment there are several factors you must check.

On this Page:

Identify emergency housing need

People who do not have access to adequate accommodation tonight or within the next seven days may require immediate assistance.

[If you identify a person with an emergency housing need please follow the four-step emergency housing process. \[http://doogle/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/emergency-housing/four-step-emergency-housing-process.html\]](http://doogle/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/emergency-housing/four-step-emergency-housing-process.html)

CMS records

The client, partner and additional occupants must each have a full and up-to-date CMS record which reflects their current household before an application can be created (e.g. partners and children added/end-dated). This is because the application will pre-populate with the client's name, partner and children using information which exists in CMS.

Identification

An application for public housing is an application for on-going assistance; therefore the same [Identification Standards \[http://doogle/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/work-and-income/core-procedures/identification/\]](http://doogle/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/work-and-income/core-procedures/identification/) apply as they do when applying for a benefit.

If the client is already in receipt of a benefit (or has been in the past), and has previously provided the correct identification, then the [Subsequent applications for on-going assistance \[http://doogle/resources/helping-clients/processing-standards/subsequent-applications-for-on-going-assistance-in-01.html\]](http://doogle/resources/helping-clients/processing-standards/subsequent-applications-for-on-going-assistance-in-01.html) identification standards apply.

Note: Where an applicant is already in receipt of a main benefit, 2 year identification does not need to be provided for public housing applications.

When completing a phone assessment, if the client does not have primary ID recorded they can still have a phone assessment, however they will need to take their ID into any Service Centre or Community Link, including Work and Income, Senior Services or StudyLink Outreach.

Existing application already exists

If an open application already exists, select 'resume'. Check if there has been any change of circumstances between when the application was started and you completing it now. If a change is identified you will need to update the evidence in the public housing application.

Clients already on the Social Housing Register can be identified in CMS by selecting either:

the Social Housing Services link on the right hand side of the Person Details banner
via the Person Details tab > Products & Services > Services

If an existing 'Waitlist' service already exists then the client is already included in an application that is on the Social Housing Register.

Transfer applications

If the reason for application is transfer, all of the current signatories must be requesting the transfer. If at least one of the signatories is remaining in the current property, the application for those leaving is considered a 'New Application' as not all signatories are transferring.

Note: If an existing Additional Occupant is applying in their own right, this is not a transfer. This is a 'New Application'.

There are three types of transfer requests:

- general property management issues
- client initiated transfer (due to change of circumstances)
- housing concerns (overcrowding, underutilisation, cold, damp and/or mouldy)

For more information see:

[Social Housing Transfers \[http://doogle/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/social-housing/transfers-and-join-ins/transfers-request-process.html\]](http://doogle/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/social-housing/transfers-and-join-ins/transfers-request-process.html)

Removed from the Social Housing Register

People seeking housing support will have a serious or immediate housing need. If a client has been removed from the Social Housing Register in the last 13 weeks due to having declined an offer of a suitable property without a good and sufficient reason this may indicate they do not have a serious or immediate housing need and will be taken into account when we assess them for public housing.

Note that failing to accept an offer of a suitable property by not responding to a public housing provider can be treated as having declined the property offer.

To see if the person has been removed from the social housing register, in CMS check:

client event notes 'Register – Household Composition'
if they have been sent a 'Removal from the register' letter in launch correspondence
housing service status history

Change in circumstances identified

Where a client has had a change in circumstances which is likely to increase their housing need you may exercise your discretion and assess the client as eligible for public housing during this 13 week period. You will need to complete an assessment, noting in the client event that they are being assessed within the 13 weeks due to a change in circumstances.

Change in circumstances not identified

Where a client has declined a suitable property within the last 13 weeks and there has not been any significant change in circumstances, you will advise the client that this has been considered as an indication they do not have a serious housing need. If the client insists on being assessed then continue with the assessment and if there is no significant change in circumstances consider downgrading the rating to reflect that they do not appear to have a serious housing need. Other housing options and advice should be provided to the client to assist with their existing housing need.

[Declining an offer of a suitable property \[http://doogle/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/social-housing/screening-and-assessment/declining-an-offer-of-a-suitable-property.html\]](http://doogle/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/social-housing/screening-and-assessment/declining-an-offer-of-a-suitable-property.html)

[MAP - Good and sufficient reasons for declining offer of suitable property \[http://doogle/map/social-housing/register-management-and-referrals/good-and-sufficient-reasons-for-declining-offer-of-01.html\]](http://doogle/map/social-housing/register-management-and-referrals/good-and-sufficient-reasons-for-declining-offer-of-01.html)

Clients who are suspended by a social housing provider

A client can be suspended from a housing provider for damages to a property, rental debt or anti-social behaviour.

If a client has been suspended by a particular housing provider they can still:

apply and be assessed for public housing. The client can apply for a waiver if the housing provider has a waiver policy.
be referred to other public housing providers, for example, another housing provider may offer specialist support services that would help the person to sustain a social tenancy.

There is no visible information in CMS that indicates whether a client is suspended with a provider, so you will only know if a client advises that they are suspended.

Community Housing Providers manage their suspensions themselves (they keep a list of their suspended clients and disregard them if they come up in matching).

For Housing New Zealand (HNZ), clients who are suspended with HNZ are automatically not matched to their properties. When the suspension has ended, the client will be eligible for matching to HNZ properties.

For more information, see:

[Client is suspended by a housing provider \[http://doogle/map/social-housing/register-management-and-referrals/client-is-suspended-by-a-housing-provider-01.html\]](http://doogle/map/social-housing/register-management-and-referrals/client-is-suspended-by-a-housing-provider-01.html)

Family Violence Intervention Programme

During a public housing assessment, you may identify a client experiencing family violence. The Family Violence Intervention Programme (FVIP) enhances our ability to respond to people experiencing family violence.

These MSD staff are trained to identify and respond appropriately to clients who are living in or leaving violent family situations. By providing a skilled response, closely linked into local family violence service providers, MSD can make a significant contribution to reducing family violence and promoting the safety and wellbeing of clients and their families.

For more information, including information on identifying & recording family violence, please refer to:

Application from Quota Refugees, Protected persons and Asylum seekers, Christchurch Mosque Attack and Christchurch Response Visa

[Family Violence Intervention Programme \[http://doogle/resources/helping-clients/products-services/work-and-income/family-violence-intervention/\]](http://doogle/resources/helping-clients/products-services/work-and-income/family-violence-intervention/)

Social Housing assessments for 'quota' refugees are managed by the Housing Case Manager (HCM) linked to the Mangere Refugee Resettlement Centre.

Christchurch Response Visa or people getting Christchurch Mosque Attack payments are managed by the Christchurch response team.

Note: Migrants claiming refugee or protected person status and people getting SNG domestic violence programme payments generally live in the community and are managed by the HCM nearest to where they are living.

[Quota Refugees, Protected persons and Asylum seekers, Christchurch Mosque Attack and Christchurch Response Visa \[http://doogle/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/social-housing/screening-and-assessment/social-housing-for-quota-refugees-protected-persons-and-asylum-seekers-christchurch-mosque-attack-and-christchurch-response-visa.html\]](http://doogle/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/social-housing/screening-and-assessment/social-housing-for-quota-refugees-protected-persons-and-asylum-seekers-christchurch-mosque-attack-and-christchurch-response-visa.html)

Content owner: [Service Delivery - Business Process Management](#) Last updated: 04 November 2020

About

[Our Purpose and Values](#)

[Our Chief Executive](#)

[Our regions](#)

[Our leadership team](#)

Help and support

[MSD Service Desk](#)

[Helpline](#)

[IT Guide](#)

[IT tools and applications](#)

[Corporate templates](#)

Contacts and directories

[Family Services Directory](#)

[Contacts and websites in an emergency](#)

[Staff Directory - Global](#)

[Ministry websites](#)

Declining an offer of a suitable property

When a client declines a suitable property a decision is made as to whether the reason for decline is good and sufficient. If the client has not provided a good and sufficient reason they are removed from the social housing register. The client is told that their decision to decline a suitable property without a good and sufficient reason will be taken into account when assessing whether they have a serious housing need during the next 13 weeks. A letter is sent to the client informing them of this decision.

A client is still able to reapply for social housing at any time, but it is only during this 13 week period that their decision to decline a suitable property be taken into account. Currently there is no specific indicator in CMS that a client has declined a suitable property. Therefore before completing a social housing assessment, you should check client event notes to see if a client has been removed from the register for declining an offer of a suitable property within the last 13 weeks.

Note that failing to accept an offer of a suitable property, by not responding to a social housing provider is treated as having declined the property offer.

Screening and Assessment

You will need to establish the reason the client has been removed from the register in the last 13 weeks by:

looking in the client events updated in the last 13 weeks to establish if they were removed due to declining of a suitable property, this is under the client event 'Register – Household Composition'.

Where a client has a 'Decline reason reviewed – not good and sufficient' reason within the 13 week period you should talk with the client see if they have had a significant change in circumstances since their last social housing assessment.

If the client hasn't had a significant change in circumstances they should be told that their decision to decline a suitable property means they are unlikely to be eligible for social housing at this time. If the client insists on being assessed then continue with the assessment and if there is no significant change in circumstances consider downgrading the rating to reflect that they do not appear to have a serious housing need. Other housing options and advice should be provided to the client to assist with their existing housing need.

If the client has had a significant change in circumstances you should:

complete a social housing assessment

advise the client that their decision to decline a suitable property within the last 13 weeks will be taken into account

determine from the assessment whether the change in circumstances is likely to increase their housing need.

If the client has had a significant change in circumstances and is eligible for social housing then discretion can be used to put them back on the social housing register.

The decision on whether a decline reason is good and sufficient is at the discretion of MSD and cannot be reviewed by clients. However, a decision on eligibility for social housing (i.e. removing a client from the social housing register or deciding they are not eligible if they reapply) can be reviewed by clients. Current business practices should be followed where a review of decision has been requested.

[MAP - Good and sufficient reasons for declining a suitable property \[http://doogle/map/social-housing/register-management-and-referrals/good-and-sufficient-reasons-for-declining-offer-of-01.html\]](http://doogle/map/social-housing/register-management-and-referrals/good-and-sufficient-reasons-for-declining-offer-of-01.html)

[MAP - Examples of good and sufficient reasons for declining a social housing property \[http://doogle/map/social-housing/register-management-and-referrals/examples-of-good-and-sufficient-reasons-for-declining.html\]](http://doogle/map/social-housing/register-management-and-referrals/examples-of-good-and-sufficient-reasons-for-declining.html)

[MAP - Client does not respond to offer from social housing provider \[http://doogle/map/social-housing/register-management-and-referrals/client-does-not-respond-to-offer-from-social-housing-provider.html\]](http://doogle/map/social-housing/register-management-and-referrals/client-does-not-respond-to-offer-from-social-housing-provider.html)

[Resetting Expectations FAQs \[http://doogle/whats-on/projects/social-housing/social-housing-reform-programme/information-for-staff/frequently-asked-questions/resetting-expectations.html\]](http://doogle/whats-on/projects/social-housing/social-housing-reform-programme/information-for-staff/frequently-asked-questions/resetting-expectations.html)

Content owner: [Work and Income National Office](#) Last updated: 22 January 2016

About

[Our Purpose and Values](#)

[Our Chief Executive](#)

[Our regions](#)

[Our leadership team](#)



Map. The Guide to Social Development Policy

Home | Social housing | Register management and referrals | Referrals | Declining offer of a suitable property | Good and sufficient reasons for declining offer of a property

<http://doogle.ssi.govt.nz/map/social-housing/register-management-and-referrals/good-and-sufficient-reasons-for-declining-offer-of-01.html>

Printed: 9/11/2020

Good and sufficient reasons for declining offer of a property

To decide if a client has a good and sufficient reason for declining the offer of a property, you need to consider the information provided by the housing provider and the client. Each case should be considered on its merits.

Where the information provided or reasons given for declining an offer conflict, or cannot be agreed, the client should generally be given the benefit of the doubt.

Good and sufficient reasons

You need to consider whether the client had a good and sufficient reason to decline the property offer (including any alternative or additional reasons given). You must consider the following:

- does the offered property meet the assessed needs (property requirements) of the client (or any other person included in the offer):
 - does the offered property have the correct number of bedrooms for the client?
 - does the design and layout cater for the needs of the client eg modified bathrooms, wide enough doorways, flat section, living area fit for purpose?
 - do the features of the property meet the client's disability needs, needs of children, or specific needs due to being elderly?
 - is the fencing appropriate to meet the needs of the client?
 - is the offered property within reasonable proximity and access to the client's essential services eg medical services, public transport, and where appropriate schools and early childhood centres?
 - is the offered property within reasonable proximity and access to the client's workplace either via private or public transport?
- will requiring the client to accept the offer (in your opinion) have an adverse effect on the health, well-being, or safety of the client?
- is the offered property unsuitable because of any court, bail, or release conditions which would prevent the client from living in the property
- was the client offered the opportunity to view the interior of the property before deciding whether to accept?
- are there any other reasons given by the client that you considered are a good reason to decline the offered property?

Note in the above list reference to client includes any other person included in the offer.

Definition of person included in the offer

Person included in the offer, means a person who, when the offer was made, the agency understood would be living in the offered property with the person to whom the offer was made. The person included in the offer would be:

- an applicable person
- a dependent child of the client or any person included in the offer
- an additional occupant of the offered property

Good and sufficient reason is acceptable

When you are satisfied that the client has a good and sufficient reason, the decline will be recorded as having a good and sufficient reason.

This means that the reason for decline does not count against the client.

For more information see:

- [Declining offer of a suitable property](#)
 - [Shared housing](#)
 - [Change in circumstances at point of referral](#)
 - [Change in circumstances](#)
 - [Referrals](#)
 - [Examples of good and sufficient reasons for declining a social housing property](#)
-

Released Under The Official Information Act 1982



Map. The Guide to Social Development Policy

Home | Social housing | Register management and referrals | Clients in specific circumstances | Client is suspended by a housing provider

<http://doogle.ssi.govt.nz/map/social-housing/register-management-and-referrals/client-is-suspended-by-a-housing-provider-01.html>

Printed: 9/11/2020

Client is suspended by a housing provider

A housing provider might suspend a tenant who has breached their tenancy agreement. Suspension means that the housing provider is not willing to accept the client as a tenant.

Note the decision to suspend a tenant is made solely by the housing provider, not by the Ministry of Social Development.

Some providers also have a waiver policy where the client can apply for the suspension to be lifted.

Housing New Zealand has a suspension policy with a waiver provision.

- [Waiver of suspension](#)

Effect of a suspension on a client

If a client has been suspended by a particular housing provider they can still:

- apply and be assessed for social housing
The client can apply for a waiver if the housing provider has a waiver policy.
- be referred to other social housing providers
For example, another housing provider may offer specialist support services that would help the person to sustain a social tenancy.
- for clients who are suspended from Housing New Zealand, when the suspension has ended, the client will be eligible for matching to Housing New Zealand properties

Reasons for suspension

Housing providers can suspend a tenant in line with their own policies. In general policies will relate to serious or persistent breaches of their tenancy agreement. Reasons for suspension may include:

- anti-social behaviour
- fraud
- substantial and repeated rent arrears
- wilful damage

For more information see:

- [Waiver of suspension](#)
- Assessment of eligibility [Clients who are suspended from a housing provider](#)

Legislation

- Functions of agency section 101 Housing Restructuring and Tenancy Matters Act 1992
 - Agency to notify social housing providers of eligibility and housing needs section 103 Housing Restructuring and Tenancy Matters Act 1992
-

Released Under The Official Information Act 1982