

WINTRINGHAM HOUSING PROPERTY INSPECTIONS POLICY

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Purpose

This policy will outline the circumstances and process for entering a renter's property for a general property inspection or annual inspection.

Policy Statement

Entry into Wintringham owned and/or managed properties will be in accordance with the *Residential Tenancies Act (RTA) 1997*.

A general inspection can occur due to:

- annual property inspections,
- inspections of maintenance works,
- damage created by the renter or others, or
- a natural event that cannot be controlled or prevented, (i.e. earthquake or a floods etc).

Commitment

Wintringham Housing is committed to:

- ensuring that all their properties are maintained to a high standard.
- ensuring renters are able to manage their home independently
- proactively addressing any property issues as they arise.

Scope

This policy applies to all rental properties owned or managed by Wintringham Housing in Victoria and Tasmania.

Definitions

HHS	Housing and Homelessness Support
Inspections	Checking conditions of properties.
Rental Provider	Also known as the landlord, is the owner of a property, but it can also include agents acting on behalf of the owner.
Managed	Properties managed on behalf of another owner of the property.
Owned	Properties owned by Wintringham Housing.
RTA	Residential Tenancy Act 1997 (Vic & Tas)
RTC	Residential Tenancy Commission (Tas)
Renter	Under the <i>Residential Tenancy Act 1997 (Vic)</i> , the term renter has replaced the term tenant. A person who has the right to occupy a residential property under a residential tenancy agreement.
VCAT	Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (Vic)
Wintringham Housing	Refers to both Victoria Wintringham Housing owned and managed and Tasmania Wintringham managed properties unless stated.

Responsibilities

HHS Manager (or delegate)	Responsible for ensuring their staff act in accordance with the policy and the RTA.
Tenancy Manager (or delegate)	Responsible for ensuring their staff act in accordance with the policy and the RTA.
Renter	Have a duty under the RTA to report all damages, defects, and any relevant property issues to their Tenancy Management Worker (TMW) for action. This is stipulated in the residential rental agreement and the RTA.
Asset Services / Maintenance Team	Responsible for inspecting and assessing the nature of damages and the repairs required. The team will also work with Tenancy to provide a timely response or generate a planned response.

Procedure

1. Gaining Access for a Property Inspection

- 1.1 To conduct a property inspection, a letter will be sent out to the renter detailing the date and time of inspection.
- 1.2 If access is not permitted and the renter will not arrange for another date of inspection, Wintringham Housing can issue a Breach of Duty Notice. Should the renter continue to refuse entry, Wintringham Housing can apply to VCAT (Vic) or RTC (Tas) for a Compliance Order.

2. Entry of Premises

2.1 Victoria:

A rental provider or the rental provider's agent has a right to enter rented premises together with any persons who are necessary to achieve the purpose of the entry

- a) at any time agreed with the renter if the renter has consented not more than 7 days before the entry; or
- b) for a purpose set out in section 86 of the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997*, at any time between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. on any day (except a public holiday) if at least 24 hours' notice has been given to the renter in accordance with section 88 of the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997*.

2.2 Tasmania:

An owner of residential premises may enter the premises by giving at least 24 hours' notice to the tenant if entry is for one of the following reasons¹:

- a) to meet commitments under the residential tenancy agreement;

¹ Residential Tenancy Act (1997) Tas - Section 56 (1)

- b) if it is reasonably suspected that the tenant has failed to comply with any provision of the residential tenancy agreement;
 - c) to ensure that repairs have been properly carried out
- 2.3 Where possible, 2 staff members are to enter the property, to conduct the house inspection.
- 2.4 Knock on the door or bell at least two times, allowing a reasonable time for the renter to answer the door. Call out to the renter.
- 2.5 If staff feel unsafe or see evidence of unusual, suspicious or criminal activity, they must contact the police on '000' immediately and notify their manager.
- 2.6 If no one is at home and it is safe to do so, Wintringham staff may enter the house to conduct the inspection. Staff should not stay any longer than is required.

3. Inspections

- 3.1 The Wintringham Housing - General Inspection Report (TMM Fm 1.16a) will be completed with the following areas to also be considered as part of the inspection:
- Check to ensure taps, oven, all exhaust fans and heaters are working and confirm with the renter
 - Check under cupboards that have sinks for water leaks
 - Check bathroom and laundry for mould and water leaks throughout
 - Check or ask the renter if all window coverings are working and windows are opening and closing
 - Check water tanks in back yard are not leaking and the opening is not full of debris
 - Give updated fridge magnet, if not visible on the renter's fridge
 - Ensure fire evacuation instructions are displayed on the wall
 - Ensure each key lock is checked: code is working and spare key inside (at Wintringham's cost)
 - Check the property for signs of hoarding. If support is available, liaise with support around further assistance. If not, refer renter to support for assistance. Arrange are to revisit the property in 4-6 weeks' time with support
 - Check for damage to the property
 - Check the front and back yard to ensure the mulch is up to level and there are no trip hazards
 - Inspect around at any surrounding trees to ensure no low hanging branches
 - General eye inspection of gutters, to ensure they are free of debris
 - General eye inspection of roof, to see if there are any loose tiles or roofing sheets
 - Ask the renter if they have any issues to report.
- 3.2 If there is an identification of an at-risk tenancies during the inspection of the property, Wintringham staff may make an assessment of whether the renter requires support to meet their tenancy responsibilities, and effectively sustain their tenancy.
- 3.3 Wintringham staff may inspect works that have been carried out or inspect damage that has been caused by weather (i.e. rain, flooding etc.) or renter damage.

Arrangements will be made directly with the renter to schedule an inspection and to ensure that the renter is at home.

4. Post Inspection

4.1 After inspection, all maintenance jobs will be logged onto Chintaro, with a brief note under the renter's section including:

- date of inspection
- state of general maintenance reported (i.e. clean and tidy)
- any supports offered (i.e. home help etc)

4.2 If required, the key safe code sheet will be updated.

4.3 The [Wintringham Housing - General Inspection Report](#) (TMM Fm 1.16a) will be filed in the renter's Wintringham Housing file. If requested, the renter will be provided with copy of the inspection report.

Legislation & Standards

Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic & Tas)
Housing Act 1983 (Vic)
Performance Standards for Registered Housing Agencies (2015)

Resources

Guidelines for Registered Housing Agencies published by DFFH

Related Documents

TMM 1.16a	WH - General Inspection Report
TMM 1.16b	VIC Annual General Inspection Letter

Authorisation

This policy has been authorised by General Manager Homelessness and Client Support – December 2024

Review Date

December 2027

This policy is published on the Wintringham website www.wintringham.org.au