



SOCIAL HOUSING APPLICATION POLICY

SPO10

Responsible Manager: Executive Manager Housing Services

Heads of Power: *Local Government Act 2009 (Qld)*
Local Government Regulation 2012 (Qld)
Housing Act 2003 (Qld)
Housing Regulation 2003 (Qld)
Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008 (Qld)
 Housing Policy PO12

Authorised by: Council

Authorised on: May 2017

Implemented from: May 2017

Last reviewed: N/A

Review history: N/A

To be reviewed on: June 2019

Corporate Plan: Environment

1. POLICY STATEMENT

- a) Torres Strait Island Regional Council provides affordable housing for low to moderate income families and individuals throughout 14 of its 15 Divisions. Social (community) housing is provided to eligible applicants for the duration of their need.
- b) Council uses eligibility criteria for social housing to ensure the rental subsidy is provided to people in need of rental assistance.
- c) To be eligible for long term social housing, applicants must meet all eligibility criteria. Applicants must have:

- Australian citizenship or permanent residency;
- Torres Strait Islander or Aboriginal descent; descent is understood as:

Membership of the Indigenous people depends on biological descent from the Indigenous people and on mutual recognition of a particular person's membership by that person and by the elders or other persons enjoying traditional authority among those people.

Source: Leading Judgment in *Mabo v Queensland No2*

Exception: where a Non-Indigenous applicant is the registered primary care giver of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children, that person may be eligible for social housing, to ensure that Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children are not disadvantaged through homelessness;

- Queensland residency;

Exception: the Queensland residency requirement may be waived on a case-by-case basis where interstate applicants can provide evidence of a definite need to move to the Torres Strait;

- Independent income; social housing will not be provided to applicants who cannot demonstrate income. This is to ensure that applicants are able to meet rent payments once they become tenants;
- Current and valid proof of identity;
- Not own or be in the process of purchasing property;

Exception: the Executive Manager Housing Services has discretion in allocating where there is a home ownership interest, to facilitate home ownership in the Torres Strait.

- Applicants with current or ex-tenancy debts will only be eligible once they have entered into and sustained, an unbroken Arrears Payment Plan for a minimum of three months.
- d) When staff are applicants, Councillors and staff will follow Council processes for managing conflict of interest situations.
- e) Eligible applicants shall be prioritised in order of their level of need and placed on Council's Register of Need.
- f) All matters related to applications and other tenancy-related decisions can be reviewed and appealed, either through Council appeal processes or through the *Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008* (Qld).

2. SCOPE

This Policy applies to all Council social housing applicants, being existing tenants, employees, Councillors, contractors, volunteers and agents of Council.

3. PROCEDURE

This Policy is to be applied in conjunction with Social Housing Application Procedure SPO10-PR1.

4. AUTHORISATION

This Policy was duly authorised by Council as the Torres Strait Island Regional Council Social Housing Application Policy on 31 May 2017 and shall hereby supersede any previous policies of the same intent.



Chris McLaughlin
Acting Chief Executive Officer

Date 31 / 05 / 2017