

# Housing Options

## Community housing and low cost rental

### What is community housing?

Community housing provides long term housing, security and affordable rent for people on low incomes.

It does not refer to rooming /boarding house. Each person/household rents a self-contained unit. Community housing is not an emergency housing service. There is a single register for all community housing registrants.

Community housing providers are non-government, not-for profit organisations operating under the *Community Housing Providers (National Law) (South Australia) Act 2013*. They are also subject to the *Residential Tenancies Act 1995*.

To be eligible people must meet:

- the government's eligibility criteria for all Community Housing; this includes residency, income, assets and needs tests
- the specific eligibility criteria of the individual housing provider in which you are interested.

Community housing organisations provide housing for people on low income; some cater especially for people with special needs such as disability, mental health issues or who have experienced homelessness.

Many tenants require support services to maintain independent housing. These are provided by partner government and community service agencies, not necessarily the community housing provider.

Each organisation manages its own tenant selection processes. Some may require tenancy supports to be in place before a referral will be accepted.

A single form ('Registration of interest for public and community housing') can be used for Housing SA and community housing accommodation. The form is available from the [www.sa.gov.au](http://www.sa.gov.au) website. If you register your interest for both at the same time, Housing SA will be your primary contact for information on your registration.

It is also possible to register for community housing only. In this case you can nominate your preferred community housing provider, which will become your primary contact. Before doing so it is recommended that you contact the provider to discuss your needs. They may assist you with completing the form.

The website [www.sa.gov.au](http://www.sa.gov.au) features a list of community housing providers. Alternatively contact **Housing SA** on **131 299**.

**Volunteer member-tenant managed community housing** (also called housing co-operatives) are run by a group of people with a common interest who work together to maintain and manage housing for their members.

Volunteer members perform landlord roles (e.g. tenancy, rent and maintenance) and business roles (e.g. administration, bookkeeping). Membership requires significant ongoing commitment, including attending meetings and actively participating in the management of the co-operative.

Each co-operative manages its own member and tenant selection processes. People interested in this housing type must complete the form *Registration of Interest*. Contact the **Community Housing Council of SA** on 8362 1022 or visit its website to download the form. The completed registration form should be posted to Housing SA Contact Centre, GPO Box 292, Adelaide SA 5001.

The **Community Housing Council of SA's** website also features further information on community housing - [www.chcsa.org.au](http://www.chcsa.org.au).

Community Housing is only one of a number of affordable housing options (see other options below). For more information about community housing, ring Housing SA's Contact Centre on 131 299 or visit a Housing SA office.

### Low cost rental accommodation

Low cost rental accommodation is offered by not-for-profit and community organisations. They usually consist of one- and two-bedroom units and are specifically for older people who do not own their homes.

A low rental is charged and an assets test may be required. These are generally governed by the *Residential Tenancies Act 1995*.

### Supported rental accommodation

**Community houses** offer low cost bed-sitter housing for people who would prefer to live in close proximity to other people and need limited services, such as meals.

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#### Housing SA

Housing SA is the South Australian government's public housing authority. It provides public rental housing for low income households and people with special needs including a special housing program for Aboriginal people. There is usually a very long waiting list. A priority system applies. A large number of Housing SA houses have been transferred to community housing providers (See relevant section above).

Housing SA also provides financial assistance to eligible customers in the private rental market through Private Rental Assistance. Application forms are available from local offices and from [www.sa.gov.au](http://www.sa.gov.au).

To contact **Housing SA**, tel. **131 299**, email [housingcustomers@sa.gov.au](mailto:housingcustomers@sa.gov.au) or visit an office.

#### Renting in residential parks

Some residential parks provide the option to rent a dwelling (e.g. caravan or cabin). A residential parking tenancy agreement should be in place. For information on renting a home in these parks see the relevant section of the [www.sa.gov.au](http://www.sa.gov.au) website and the associated booklet ***Living in a residential park - information for residents who rent both a site and a dwelling***, published by South Australian Government's Consumer and Business Services.

Further information can be provided by **Consumer and Business Services**, tel. **131 882** and **Catalyst Foundation** (including a list of parks in SA).

#### Accommodation for people with a disability

Some community housing providers specialise in providing low cost rental accommodation for people with a disability. See section *Community Housing* above.

People who are registered with the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and are not happy with their current accommodation may make *'Explore more appropriate housing options'* as one of their goals when preparing for their planning meeting. The ***Exploring Housing Options Packages (EHOP)*** is an amount of money that can be used to investigate other housing options.

**Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA)** is a market-based system that has been created under the NDIS to provide housing for people with very high support needs. SDA payments are made by the

NDIS to SDA property owners for the cost of housing a person with SDA funding allocated in their NDIS plan.

**The Housing Hub ([www.thehousinghub.org.au](http://www.thehousinghub.org.au))** is an online resource containing information on disability housing. It includes a portal where people can find disability-friendly properties across Australia. The website advertises vacancies for apartments and houses that are owned by housing providers. It also has a library of useful information about housing options and planning your move.

#### Useful contacts and resources

**Catalyst Foundation** (including Seniors Information Service) provides information about housing options available to seniors, younger people with a disability and other vulnerable people.

It offers a directory of rental and community housing in South Australia, available in print and on the website. The information is also listed on a publicly available online database and vacancy register where subscribing housing organisations update their respective vacancies. Access the database at [www.catalystfoundation.com.au/housing/](http://www.catalystfoundation.com.au/housing/).

Our staff can also assist with accessing these resources and information from other sources. Contact us by telephone, fax, email or visit our office. Bookings are advisable for face-to-face consultations.

**Assistance with Care and Housing** assists people aged 50 years and older who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, or who live in insecure rental accommodation to find secure, affordable housing and liaises with support services. A referral from My Aged Care (tel. **1800 200 422**) is required for this service. Providers of this service include:

- **Hutt Street Centre**, tel. 8418 2500
- **Adelaide Day Centre for Homeless Persons**, tel. 8232 0048
- **East (Resthaven Paradise)**, tel. 8337 4371
- **West (UnitingCare Wesley Bowden)**, tel. 8346 5249
- **North (City of Salisbury - Community Services - Housing Support Program)**, tel. 8406 8227
- **South (Anglicare - Housing Support for Older People)**, tel. 8186 8928, 0411 599 675

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- **North, East and West (Anglicare SA Housing Support for Older People)**, tel. 1800 317 009
- **Riverland (Resthaven Riverland Community Services)**, tel. 8584 5866
- **Murray Bridge and Hills (Resthaven Murray Bridge and Hills Community Services)**, tel. 8531 2989; 1300 136 633
- **Limestone Coast (Resthaven Limestone Coast Community Services)**, tel. 8762 4389
- **Port Pirie (Helping Hand Aged Care)**, tel. 8638 3777
- **Port Lincoln (Australian Red Cross)** tel. 8683 0551
- **Ceduna (Centacare Catholic Family Services)**, tel. 8625 3810

**Homelessness Gateway** provides help with accessing emergency accommodation and provides referral to specialist homelessness services for longer term support.

**Tel. 1800 003 308; 8202 5821;**  
**[HGS\\_referrals@unitingcommunities.org](mailto:HGS_referrals@unitingcommunities.org)**

The **South Australia Government's** website contains information on housing including a range of resources on rental accommodation - [www.sa.gov.au/topics/housing](http://www.sa.gov.au/topics/housing).

**Consumer and Business Services** - If a resident requires advice or further information about tenancy issues. Tel. 131 882;  
[www.cbs.sa.gov.au/wcm/rentingletting](http://www.cbs.sa.gov.au/wcm/rentingletting)

**South Australian Civil Administrative Tribunal (SACAT)** (taking the roles previously performed by the Residential Tenancies Tribunal) deals with housing disputes including those between private landlord and tenants, community housing and housing cooperative housing cases and decisions made by Housing SA. **Tel. 1800 723 767, email [sacat@sacat.sa.gov.au](mailto:sacat@sacat.sa.gov.au); [www.sacat.sa.gov.au](http://www.sacat.sa.gov.au)**

**Tenants Information and Advocacy Service (TIAS)** is a free, state-wide and independent service providing information, advice and advocacy to help people on low income to sustain their tenancies in private rental, community housing or public housing (e.g. if facing eviction).

The service is provided by **SYC Ltd, tel. 1800 060 462, [www.syc.net.au/tias/](http://www.syc.net.au/tias/)**. Sites are located in Adelaide, Port Adelaide, Elizabeth and Christies Beach.

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