

Winda-Mara Housing Program (WMHP) Renter Charges Policy

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WMHP Renter Charges Policy

Winda-Mara Aboriginal Corporation ('WMAC') and Winda-Mara Housing Limited ('WMHL') work together to deliver safe, secure and affordable housing solutions for eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members living in far southwest Victoria.

The activities, principles, policies and elements that contribute to and regulate the housing schemes of WMAC and WMHL are collectively referred to as the Winda-Mara Housing Program ('WMHP').

The WMHP's policies and procedures are designed so that its practice and service delivery align with the following cultural statement:

Our vision is to create a thriving community where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have access to safe, affordable, and culturally appropriate housing. We aspire to empower individuals and families through improved health, education, and wellbeing, fostering a strong sense of identity and pride in our cultural heritage. Through collaboration and sustainable development, we aim to build a future where every member of our community has the opportunity to flourish and succeed.

1. Scope

This is a Housing Program Policy. It applies to all residential tenancies managed by WMAC or WMHL.

2. Purpose and Objectives

This policy outlines which costs will be transferred to the renter and recouped by WMHP during a tenancy. WMHP will pass on renter charges where they are the sole responsibility of the renter and have been directed to WMHP for payment.

3. Types of Charges

The following types of charges may be passed on to renters if incurred by WMHP:

- utilities costs that are the renter's responsibility;
- repairs for damage that has been deemed the renter's responsibility (see WMHP Property Damage by Renter Policy);
- Council or Body Corporate fines that are attributable to the renter's acts or omissions;
- rectification of modifications to properties.

This list is not exhaustive and there may be other scenarios where a renter is liable for costs.

4. Identifying and Recouping Charges

4.1 Communication

WMHP will ensure that renters are aware of their responsibility to transfer accounts for utilities to their name at the start of the tenancy.

WMHP will ensure renters are aware of their responsibility regarding cost of repairs as detailed in the WMHP Property Damage by Renter Policy and WMHP Modifications Policy.

4.2 Documentation

Where a renter has incurred a cost that has been directed to WMHP for payment, WMHP will notify the renter in writing and provide copies of all relevant documentation. This may include invoices, utilities payment notices, fines, or other documents. The charge will be added to the renter's account.

4.3 Repayment of Charges

Renters are required to pay the full amount of the charge within 30 days or arrange a repayment agreement with the Housing Officer. A repayment agreement may result in paying back the charge in smaller increments alongside rental payments. This will only be approved at the discretion of the relevant housing Subcommittee.

Where the renter fails to repay the charge or enter into a repayment agreement, WMHP will commence action at VCAT to recover the costs of the charge. WMHP will keep renters informed of this process as it progresses. WMHP will abide by the Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic) throughout this process.

5. Complaints and Appeals

Renters who wish to submit a complaint or appeal a decision by WMHP can submit the Complaints and Appeals Form to the Housing Officer. This form can be found on WMHP's website, or renters can contact the Housing Officer to access a copy. See the WMHP Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures for more information.

6. References

6.1 External or Statutory Requirements

This policy complies with the following external legislation or requirements:

- Residential Tenancy Act 1997 (Vic)

6.2 Internal Requirements and Forms

This policy refers to the following internal documents, which are available in the WMP Document Register:

- WMHP Modifications Policy
- WMHP Property Damage by Renter Policy
- WMHP Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures

- [WMAC Privacy Policy](#)

7. Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years or earlier if the legal, regulatory, and contractual environment requires.

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AMENDMENT HISTORY

Date	Version	Approved by	Amendment Notes
16-07-2024	1.0	Board of Directors	New Document. Full review from previous ToR incorporating new Housing Program