

Outer Gippsland Homelessness Services

Local Area Services Network (LASN)

Practice and Partnership Manual



Gippsland & East Gippsland
Aboriginal Co-Operative Ltd.



Coordinated by:



GHN

Gippsland Homelessness Network

The Outer Gippsland Local Area Services Network acknowledges the need to assist and support both those experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Homelessness can present in many ways, the definitions of homelessness considered by the homelessness services in outer Gippsland align with Mackenzie and Chamberlain's cultural definition of homelessness.

Mackenzie and Chamberlain's (1992) definition includes three categories in recognition of the diversity of homelessness:

- **Primary homelessness** is experienced by people without conventional accommodation (e.g. sleeping rough or in improvised dwellings);
- **Secondary homelessness** is experienced by people who frequently move from one temporary shelter to another (e.g. emergency accommodation, youth refuges, "couch surfing");
- **Tertiary homelessness** is experienced by people staying in accommodation that falls below minimum community standards (e.g. boarding housing and caravan parks).

This definition was adopted by the Commonwealth Advisory Committee on Homelessness in 2001 and is widely used in the homelessness sector.

24 Hour Victorian Homelessness Accommodation call line:

1800 825 955

Partners in Outer Gippsland Local Area Services Network:

- Community Housing Limited
- Gippsland and East Gippsland Aboriginal Cooperative
- Gippsland Lakes Complete Health
- Mallacoota District Health Support Service
- Orbost Regional Health
- Uniting Vic Tas
- Yarram and District Health Service

Supporting Partners:

- Department of Families Fairness and Housing
- Gippsland Children's Resource Coordinator (Auspice Uniting Vic Tas)
- Principal Strategic Advisor – Family Violence (Auspice Gippsland Women's Health Service)

Facilitated and Coordinated by:

Gippsland Homelessness Network Coordinator (Auspice Quantum Support Services)

Review and amendments of manual:

This manual is reviewed and amended by the above listed partners through the Outer Gippsland Local Area Services Network, quarterly meetings. Any changes identified by the LASN will be administrated and drafted by the Gippsland Homelessness Network Coordinator as the facilitator of the Outer Gippsland LASN. When changes are endorsed by the LASN partners the amendments will be entered in a new version of the document and then circulated to all funded Homelessness Services.

If the reader of this manual notes any discrepancies or inconsistencies in this document, they are encouraged to contact the Gippsland Homelessness Network Coordinator (Phone 0400 600 068). Proposed amendments will then be tabled on the next Outer Gippsland LASN agenda, for discussion.

Dispute resolution between partners:

In the event of any dispute between members, the following process will be followed:

- Wherever possible the party with the grievance will raise the issue with the relevant individual/s and seek to resolve it informally at an operational level.
- Where a dispute is unable to be resolved the issues should be escalated to next line of management.

- If the above processes do not resolve a dispute within the agencies, an independent mediator may be appointed or referred to the Department of Families Fairness and Housing, Agency Performance and System Support team.

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Glossary & Definitions:

Term	Definition
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. An independent statutory agency, which produces authoritative and accessible information and statistics to support decisions about policy and service delivery, leading to better health and wellbeing for all Australians. Data collection agency for Homelessness.
APTCH	A Place to Call Home. DoFFH funded activity number 94654. Support for families in housing crisis to successfully transition to secure long-term housing.
ATAR	Aboriginal Tenancies at Risk supports and advocates for Aboriginal People to establish and maintain tenancies through individual support.
CHL	Community Housing Limited. Homelessness service provider.
CHP	Council to Homeless Persons. Peak Body representing organisations and individuals in Victoria with a commitment to ending homelessness.
Client Support	Case management support for individuals and families experiencing or at risk of homelessness.
Consent	Permission granted in full knowledge of the possible consequences, typically that which is given to homelessness services by service users.
CRC	Children's Resource Coordinator. Regional representative of the State-wide children's services, to offer support and brokerage for children accessing homelessness assistance.
DoFFH	Department of Families Fairness and Housing. Primary funding and monitoring body for Victorian homelessness services.
Emergency Accommodation	Short term crisis accommodation (hotel, caravan park etc) offered to individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness.
E-Referral	Electronic referral process for the sharing of information for referral between homelessness service providers.
First Contact Screening	First attempt to identify most appropriate support for those seeking assistance. First contact staff i.e. receptionists and duty workers.
Flexible Funds	The use of identified funding in a flexible manner to secure reasonable outcomes for individuals and families.
GEGAC	Gippsland and East Gippsland Aboriginal Cooperative. Homelessness service provider.
GHN	Gippsland Homelessness Network is the combination of the Inner and Outer Gippsland Local Area Services Networks. This is governed by a steering committee convened by the Network Coordinator.
GLCH	Gippsland Lakes Complete Health. Homelessness service provider.
HEF	Housing Establishment Fund a grant program to assist service seekers to access or maintain private rental housing or emergency short-term accommodation.
IAP	Initial Assessment and Planning. Provides an assessment, housing information and assistance to individuals and families in housing crisis.

Term	Definition
IAR	Initial Assessment and Referral form is the tool used in Outer Gippsland for Initial Assessment and Planning.
IR	Interim Response is the short-term support offered to individual's and families who have been assessed as eligible for homelessness support but are awaiting allocation to client support.
LASN	Local Area Services Network has a representative from each of the homelessness funded services within a DoFFH area. The network focuses on service collaboration and improvement related to homelessness.
MDHSS	Mallacoota District Health Support Service. Homelessness service provider.
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding. An agreement between parties, it outlines the agreed common line of action.
NPAH, NAHA	National Partnership Agreement Homelessness. COAG agreement which began in 2009 initiating a whole of government approach in tackling housing affordability and homelessness.
OG	Outer Gippsland local Department of Families Fairness and Housing area. Including the local government areas of Wellington and East Gippsland
ORH	Orbost Regional Health. Homelessness service provider.
SHIP	Specialist Homelessness Information Platform. Is the primary client management system, administered by AIHW.
SHS	Specialist Homelessness Services is the provision of support and assistance for those experiencing or at risk of homelessness. It is the common collective term for homelessness services.
Tenancy Plus	Formerly known as the Social Housing Advocacy and Support Program (SHASP). The program aims to prevent homelessness by assisting people to remain in their housing.
THM	Transitional Housing Management is supported short-term accommodation program. It acts as a stepping stone to more permanent housing in public housing, community housing or the private rental market.
TOR	Terms of Reference. Defines the purpose and structures of a project, committee, meeting, negotiation which outlines agreed terms of working together.
X-Regional Referral	The agreed processes for sharing of information and details of assessment between homelessness services across all local areas.
YDHS	Yarram and District Health Service. Homelessness service provider.

GOVERNANCE & PARTNERSHIP

GOVERNANCE & PARTNERSHIP

- INTRODUCTION (PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION)
- BACKGROUND
- HOMELESSNESS NETWORK'S
- GIPPSLAND HOMELESSNESS NETWORK COORDINATOR – ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES
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- USERS RIGHT TO SERVICE
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- CONSUMER PARTICIPATION AND ADVICE
- WORKFORCE CAPACITY BUILDING
- COMMUNICATION, MEDIA & ADVOCACY

Governance & Partnership

Introduction (Partnership and Collaboration)

Outer Gippsland Homelessness Service providers work in partnership and collaborate, to offer quality, flexible and improved assistance and support for people in the Local Government Areas of Wellington and East Gippsland experiencing homelessness. The Outer Gippsland Homelessness Practice and Partnership manual is developed to guide the day to day operation of Homelessness service provision. The information in this manual is a summary of guidelines, protocols and partnership agreements which underpin Homelessness assistance and support in Outer Gippsland.

This manual should be read in conjunction with the Homelessness Services Guidelines and Conditions of Funding May 2014.

This manual is a revision of the Outer Gippsland Local Area Services Network – Opening Doors Service Coordination Practice Manual 2017. All documents referenced in the development of this document are attached in the final section of this manual entitled “References”.

Background

Opening Doors Framework (2005)

The Opening Doors framework was developed in 2005/06 after consultation with the community sector, in response to the 2002 Victorian Homelessness Strategy. The framework was piloted over 2006-2008. Phase one, area-based service coordination, has remained in place and is still operational today. It operates as a practice and systems approach with ambition to provide timely and effective access to homelessness and social housing services for people seeking assistance. Phase two, expansion of the framework to include mainstream and allied services, was not fully achieved. Opening Doors established and implemented the initial assessment and response team, resource register (now Vacancy Management System) and Local Area Services Network. Evaluation reports related to the Opening Doors Framework have not been released. The Outer Gippsland Local Area Service Network remains active and utilises the practice framework.

Homelessness Network's

Networks have been established to provide an opportunity for all homelessness services to come together at a local (Outer Gippsland Local Area Services Network), regional (Gippsland Homelessness Network – Steering Committee) and state (Victorian Homelessness Network) level to strengthen responses to individuals and families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Although participation in the state and regional networks is optional, funded homelessness services are required to participate in the Local Area Service Networks as per their funding and services agreement.

Members enter into a Memorandum of Understanding which guides governance and processes. Each MOU is reviewed every 18 months.

The Outer Gippsland Local Area Service Network works to:

- Build consistency and quality of service delivery practices amongst partner agencies.
- Undertake data monitoring and consumer satisfaction review for the purposes of identifying gaps and trends in service provision,
- Make evidence-based recommendations to the Homelessness and accommodation support unit and peak bodies about responses to service gaps and trends.
- Workforce skill development Training
- Review and endorse proposals for future improvement
- Document and guidance management
- Ensuring experience are reflected through homelessness count and consumer participation

Gippsland Homelessness Network Coordinator – role and responsibilities

The Gippsland Homelessness Network Coordinator (GHNC) is a resource to the homelessness sector operating in the Gippsland Region. This role offers information and resources to assist people working in Specialist Homelessness and Family Violence Services, in the areas of service collaboration, Advocacy and Workforce Development. The GHNC is the GHN contact and representative for media and communications.

Department of Families Fairness and Housing - roles and responsibilities

The Department requires that organisations and practitioners providing services to the community are fit for purpose and meet standards of acceptable governance, safety and protection for Victorians. By participating in the LASN the department offers information and guidance which supports these standards.

This role acts as a co-opted non-voting member of the Local Area Services Network

Gippsland Children’s Resource Coordinator – roles and responsibilities

The Children’s Resource program aims to improve service delivery for children and young people accessing homelessness and family violence services with their family. The Coordinator provides resources, training, information, and secondary consult. They can improve service provision and advocacy to raise awareness of the issues facing children and young people. Brokerage is available through the CRC to assist children and young people to engage in and maintain their education and facilitate access to social, recreational and support opportunities.

This role acts as a co-opted non-voting member of the Local Area Services Network

Principal Strategic Advisor Family Violence – roles and responsibilities

The Principal Strategic Advisor (PSA) (Auspiced to GWH), represents the Gippsland Family Violence Alliance (GFVA) in the Homelessness Network. The GFVA is 31 organisations who work to integrate family violence reforms, identify and address systems gaps, build capacity and advocate at both a local and state level for regional issues. The GFVA has committed to support the Homelessness and LASN's in their strategic priorities and advocacy.

This role acts as a co-opted non-voting member of the Local Area Services Network

Peak Bodies – roles and responsibilities

A Peak Body is a non-government organisation that has membership of entities with allied interests. Peak Bodies provide a one stop shop for government and the sector to share information and experience. Peak bodies advocate and educate through research and development.

The key peak bodies for the LASN are:

State:

- Council to Homeless Persons
- Community Housing Industry Association Victoria
- Domestic Violence Victoria
- Victorian Council of Social Services
- Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare

National:

- Homelessness Australia
- Australian Council of Social Services

Peak bodies are not a voting member of a Local Area Service Network, however the LASN is an important forum for Peak bodies to consult with the homelessness sector.

Data Collection

Current processes for submitting data is dual track to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) and Department of Families Fairness and Housing.

Local data for analysis will also be collected via the following methods:

- Sharing of LASN data
- Regular reports from LASN participant agencies indicating the level of unmet demand,

- Regular reports from the THM services indicating the amount of money spent on emergency accommodation,
- Reports generated from state and federal government showing the level of funding expenditure,
- Reports from St Kilda Crisis Centre, upon request, outlining the number of after-hours individuals and families from this LASN,
- Report generated from consumer participation initiatives.
- Reports from Peak bodies including the Council to Homeless Persons.

The collation of this data will form the basis of reviewing the current practices and overall model of service delivery in Outer Gippsland, along with advocating for increased resources from funding sources.

Consent

As early as practicable written consent needs to be sought from the consumers. Consent is a freely given agreement to the sharing of information for referral or de-identified statistical reporting to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). Agencies will have their specific consumer consent form, however it must include at a minimum the information in *(Appendix 1)* the attached template.

Where written consent is unable to be obtained, verbal can be given, but should be clearly noted in the case recording. Where a consumer does not appear able to understand or give informed consent the team/practice leader should be consulted. Options may be to set another time for the consumer(s) to return, contacting of specialist including mental health, interpreters, parents or caregivers.

Consumers Right to Service

Homelessness Services are to be provided in a respectful manner consistent with consumer's rights including:

- Ensuring social justice, human rights, access and equity, dignity, respect and an individually responsive service provision.
- Active consumer participation in any actions/decisions affecting their lives.
- Consumers are fully informed of available options, policy, and services offered.
- Making consumer's files available when requested and allowing opportunities for consumer feedback as per privacy principles.
- Providing appropriate security in service and accommodation.

Restriction of service

Historically agencies have created exclusion rules for several reasons such as to target resources to the people assessed as most in need and to manage demand. Another reason

for potentially restricting service is to manage worker and others risk and for “occupational health and safety concerns”.

While these are all reasonable and necessary objectives, practices intended to achieve these can become unfair and counter-productive over time. Agencies and workers can lose sight of the original rationale for an exclusion rule, and indiscriminately and universally apply that rule so that it becomes entrenched in practice, without any evidence of effectiveness.

It is crucial to distinguish between the limit’s agencies impose to prevent overloading their capacity at any given time, or to discharge their duty of care to both staff and consumers, from practices that prevent people from receiving assistance.

The onus is on each agency to provide transparent reasons for any exclusionary practices that may be taking place.

The LASN, will map limitations and trends in many areas including restriction of service and will work with partners to ensure equality of access to service for consumers.

Consumer Participation and Advice

The voice of the consumer is important in the designing, reviewing, testing and actioning improved ways of working in homelessness services. Outer Gippsland maintains a strong relationship with the Council to Homeless Persons – Peer Education and Support Program. Outer Gippsland LASN is hopeful to expand its consumer participation work in the future.

Workforce Capacity Building

Effective Workforce planning considers both recruitment and retention. Outer Gippsland is committed to its workforce and it remains a priority in the GHN strategic plan. The Outer Gippsland LASN offers several forums to increase workforce capacity including:

Practitioner Forums

Practitioner forums are facilitated by the Gippsland Homelessness Network Coordinator a minimum of twice per year. Forums are an option for homelessness staff to connect, network, learn about the work of colleagues in Homelessness and allied services. Agencies are encouraged to support their staff to participate in these forums, to strengthen partnership and collaboration across Outer Gippsland.

Training

It is the responsibility of homelessness agencies to ensure their staff are fully trained in all aspects of service delivery related to their role. The provision of ongoing training is an effective way to ensure staff are up to date with current good practice and processes. The Specialist Homelessness Services *Training Hub* facilitated by the Council to Homeless Persons may be of assistance in maintaining staff skills.

Communication, Media & Advocacy

Each LASN member agency has their own internal media and communications policies and processes. Any area or regional media enquiries relating to homelessness issues and trends can be directed to the Gippsland Homelessness Network Coordinator, who has authorisation from the members of the steering committee to make broad comments in relation to Gippsland and other state-wide messaging. This work includes development of media releases for Homelessness Week.

ACCESS TO SERVICE

This section includes the homelessness entry points.

Access & Referral

Homelessness Entry Points

Entry points are the first point of contact for people accessing the homelessness service system. It is where individuals and families will receive a screening, an initial assessment of their needs, and a plan developed to assist them in meeting their own needs.

Entry points are to have staff available **9am to 5pm Monday to Friday**. Staff are to be available via the **free call 1800 825 955** and answering machines are not to be used during business hours.

NB: All individuals and families are to be offered a screening and Initial Assessment regardless of the resources available in the local catchment area.

Outer Gippsland Entry Points:

Local Government Area	Area	Homelessness Agency
Wellington	Sale and surrounds	Uniting Vic Tas 126 Raymond St Sale 5144 7777
Wellington	Yarram and surrounds	Yarram District Health Service 85 Commercial Rd Yarram 5182 0222
East Gippsland	Bairnsdale and surrounds	Community Housing Limited Shop 4, Riviera Plaza Bairnsdale 5152 8933
East Gippsland	State wide	Nungurra Youth Accommodation Service, GEGAC 87 Dalmahoy St Bairnsdale 5152 2188
East Gippsland	Lakes Entrance and surrounds	Gippsland Lakes Complete Health 18-28 Jemmeson St Lakes Entrance 5155 8300

East Gippsland	Orbost and surrounds	Orbost Regional Health 104-107 Boundary Rd Orbost 5154 6666
East Gippsland	Mallacoota and surrounds	Mallacoota District Health Support Service Cnr Mattsson and Genoa-Mallacoota Rd Mallacoota 5158 0243

Free-call Phone Number - 1800 825 955

The Opening Doors initiative is supported by the provision of a state-wide free-call (1800) telephone number that directs consumers who call from a landline to their nearest entry point based on the postcode from where they are calling.

While St Kilda Crisis Centre has been contracted by the Department of Families Fairness and Housing to manage the free-call service, it should be noted that they only accept calls from consumers after hours and on weekends and public holidays. During business hours, all calls are routed to the most appropriate entry point based on the location of the caller.

Agencies will advertise both their local contact number and the free-call number when developing promotional material.

SCREENING & ASSESSMENT

SCREENING & ASSESSMENT

SCREENING

FIRST CONTACT SCREENING

INITIAL ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING

SPECIALIST ASSESSMENTS

THE ORANGE DOOR – FAMILY VIOLENCE AND CHILD WELLBEING

STATE-WIDE CHILDREN'S RESOURCES PROGRAM

AFTER-HOURS RESPONSE

Screening & Assessment

Screening

Screening determines whether individuals or families seeking assistance are homeless, at risk of homelessness or in need of immediate assistance to secure accommodation or other specialist assistance. Screening assists to manage the volume of consumers at the entry points and to determine the initial response consumers need.

Screening activities may include:

- clarifying what the individual or family need and the most appropriate pathway to meet those needs.
- offering basic advice including wait times, and information required to take the next steps in securing assistance.
- helping to navigate the local service system to best meet the needs identified.

First Contact Screening

Screening is completed at initial contact to screen for identifiers of Family Violence, age and aboriginality to ensure appropriate referral to specialist services or Initial Assessment and Planning, at a Homelessness assistance Entry point.

Given screening is often completed by reception staff as the first point of contact, in person or via phone, confidentiality and privacy for the consumer needs to be considered.

Initial Assessment and Planning (IAP)

What is Initial Assessment and Planning?

Initial Assessment and Planning (IAP) provides an immediate response and access to the homelessness service system. The idea is to have a conversation with the consumer so they can tell their story in their own words. Planning then builds on the consumer's own strengths and skills to deal with their homelessness and housing related issues.

What does Initial Assessment and Planning involve?

The initial assessment and planning process can be broken down into the following steps:

Introduction

As an introduction the worker must inform of all below:

- ask the individuals and families if there is anything more important they need to address right now. Including safety of belongings, pets, other appointments or collecting children from school etc.

- explain roles, responsibility and relevant documents related to the Initial Assessment and Planning.
- provide their name and explain their role and their capacity and limitations in assisting with the resources available on that day.
- explain the agency's confidentiality and duty of care policies.
- be honest and transparent about their role.
- ascertain that the individuals and families want assistance.
- establish that the individuals and families are comfortable with that worker. Where possible, try to offer options about the gender and age of the worker.

Begin a needs conversation

- encourage the individuals and families to explain their situation, and what they need, in their own words.
- determine the household composition (including children), their names and ages. Make sure to include people who are not present.
- coherency of speech and thoughts
- level of emotional distress
- extremes in energy levels (high or low)
- very pale or very flushed skin/face
- distraction
- particularly wild gestures or extreme lethargy
- inappropriate dress for weather conditions.

Ascertain if there is potential harm to self or others, or for harm from others

Those who experience or at risk of homelessness can be at a much higher risk than the general population of experiencing violence, criminal involvement, exploitation, mental distress and deterioration of physical health.

These risks are reduced by addressing housing needs and offering support where required.

Make a collaborative safety plan with the individuals and families for known risks.

As per the Initial Assessment and Referral review points, any concerns relating to family violence, child well-being, mental health or alcohol and drugs should be reviewed with the practice or team leader on duty that day.

Where risks are identified, workers with the support of their direct line manager should provide the best response possible within the limits of appropriate resources. Clear, concise case notes are important for recording the options given by the worker and choices made by the individuals and families, and the necessary follow-up work.

Clarify needs and risks

Before ending the assessment, the worker should:

- clarify their understanding of the initial need's conversation.

- tease out the situation if it is not clear.
- not pressure individuals and families to disclose more information.
- explain that they are concerned about the individuals and families' safety and that they want to offer the best possible response to their needs.
- reiterate the agencies capacity and limitations in assisting with the resources available on that day.
- confirm any safety or action plan with the line manager at the time.

The worker should prioritise needs:

- remember the individuals and families should be the person making the decisions about the relative importance and urgency of the issues.
- establish what is most important for the individuals and families whilst considering any risks as a key priority.
- determine what must be done first.
- clarify what must be done today.
- prioritise individuals and families' issues so that the most important can be addressed first.
- Utilise the prioritisation process to address needs that cannot be met immediately.

Specialist Assessments

Specialised services have expertise working with target groups and/or in the provision of specialised responses. Where possible, individuals and families should be offered a specialist response appropriate to their issues.

Specialised services are also available for secondary consultation to assist in the assessment and planning consumers receive at the entry point.

Specialised services in Outer Gippsland LASN include:

Specialist Assessment Area	Agency
Family Violence – East Gippsland	Gippsland Lakes Complete Health 281-285 Main St, Bairnsdale 5152 0052
Family Violence - Wellington	Quantum Support Services 65 Macalister St, Sale 5120 2000
Family Violence – Aboriginal	GEGAC 37-53 Dalmahoy St, Bairnsdale 5150 0700
Youth Specific Response	GEGAC 87 Dalmahoy St, Bairnsdale 5152 2188
Indigenous Children's resource worker	GEGAC 95 Macleod Street, Bairnsdale 5150 0712

State-wide Children's Resources Program

The Children's Resource Program aims to provide a response to children experiencing homelessness to reduce the impact of trauma on their immediate and long term emotional and physical wellbeing.

The service also aims to improve the knowledge, skills and confidence of the Specialist Homelessness Sector in providing support to children and families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

The Children's Resource Program assists Specialist Homelessness agencies to deal with the needs of children who accompany adults in homelessness and provides the sector with information, resources, training and brokerage.

The Children's Resource Program also provides support to the Specialist Homelessness Service sector by providing secondary consultation to practitioners with the opportunity to consult around issues that have presented for the child within the family group. This is done through one on one contact, via phone, email or through inter agency contact. Any issues that the practitioner is unsure about can be discussed with the Children's Resource Coordinator to determine better outcomes for the child and family by encouraging referral to other suitable service providers or funding sources where appropriate.

Regional Children's Resource Program Coordinators will assist referring agencies with information on other options that may be available to meet the child's needs.

Gippsland Children's Resource Coordinator can be contacted on 5144 7777.

After-Hours Response

Phone 1800 825 955

The Department funds The Salvation Army, St Kilda Crisis Centre to provide a coordinated housing response to people seeking emergency accommodation outside of business hours.

The after-hours service was established to:

- provide a homelessness response from Monday to Friday from 5pm to 9am and from 5pm Friday to 9am Monday and all day and night over public holidays
- provide people without safe accommodation with emergency accommodation, which includes purchase of overnight accommodation and or a referral to a crisis accommodation service
- coordinate a pathway to local homelessness and/or community services for people seeking assistance outside of business hours.

St Kilda Crisis Centre will outline the following rules to all individuals and families accessing overnight crisis accommodation:

- the motel room will be provided for the individuals and families only and not for their guests.
- the arrangement is for room only, and only for the agreed number of nights.
- strictly no alcohol or mini-bar access allowed.

- substance affected people will not be accommodated.
- phone calls are not covered within the cost of accommodation. If an individual or family wishes to make phone calls, they must arrange this with Motel staff at their own cost.
- behaviour must, always, be respectful of surrounding occupants and Motel staff, and not include any unlawful activities or criminal damage.
- police will be called for any unlawful activities, rowdy behaviour, wilful damage or major disturbances caused by the consumer/s or any of their visitors.
- additional nights of accommodation will only be provided with the approval of the relevant Transitional Housing Manager.
- if any of the above rules are breached – Police may remove the consumer/s from the Motel immediately and further accommodation options may not be made available.

Following a consumer accessing after-hours accommodation, the St Kilda Crisis Centre will advise the appropriate entry point the following day enabling entry point staff to make contact and follow up with the consumer. Payment of after-hours invoices is the responsibility of the THM.

INTERIM RESPONSE

INTERIM RESPONSE

PRIORITISATION

LEVEL ONE INTERIM RESPONSE

LEVEL TWO INTERIM RESPONSE

CLOSING LEVEL ONE INTERIM RESPONSE

Interim Response (IR)

The Opening Doors Framework defines interim response as a strategy to provide service continuity to people seeking assistance when there are no appropriate or available resources.

The main function of interim response is to remain engaged with the individual/households who have been assessed and await housing and/or support and to monitor their situation for any changes and/or assist at-risk individuals and families to prevent homelessness.

Interim response work *may* include but is not limited to:

- staying in contact with people temporarily housed in purchased emergency accommodation (i.e. caravan parks, motels and rooming houses),
- assistance with housing applications and transfers (where appropriate),
- where possible, acting as a contact point for messages and correspondence,
- financial assistance through material aid or negotiating with Centrelink and debtors,
- referral as required to services such as legal, health, counselling or family support,
- referring people for case-managed support and transitional housing and maintaining a relationship with them while they await a service.

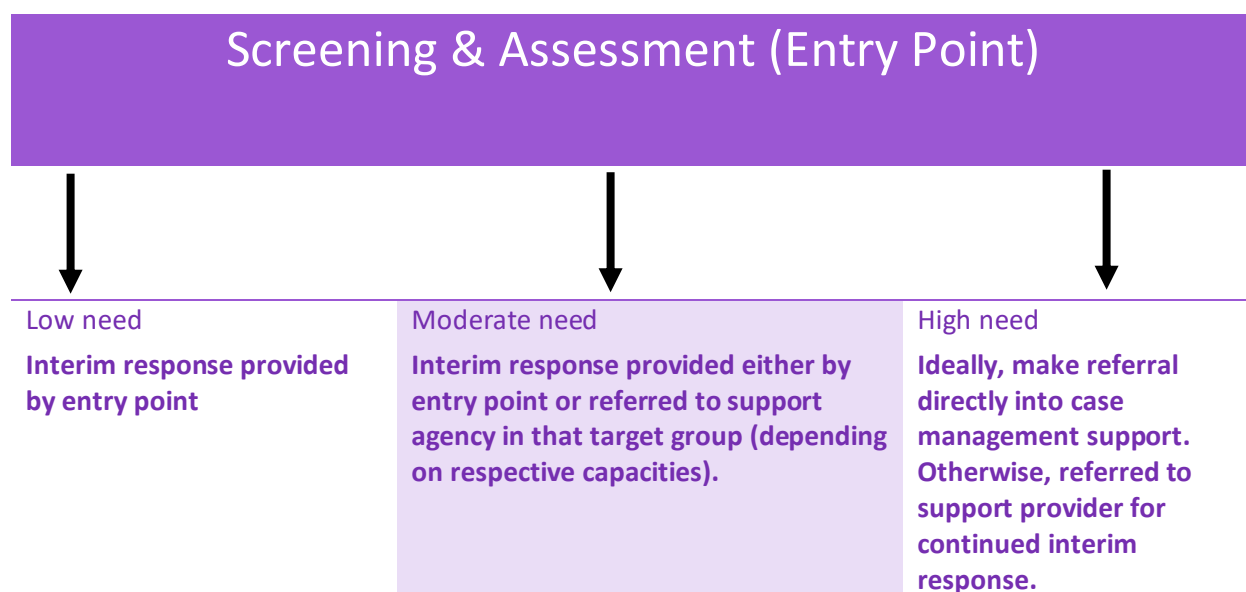
Prioritisation

Interim response involves two streams depending on the level of need a consumer requires. These streams have been defined as level one and level two.

Decision pathway for prioritisation of individuals and families

Initial assessment worker determines need for further support or interim response and decides if it falls into three broad categories:

- no likely support needs or consumer does not wish to be supported
- low support needs/low vulnerability
- high support needs/high vulnerability



Level One Interim Response

Level One IR involves the development of a course of action to access services or prevent homelessness, including active referral to appropriate housing, support and material aid services. It is a minimum standard provided to all consumers who access an entry point. Activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Placement in emergency short-term accommodation and subsequent exit planning, outreach (where available) and follow up.
- Monitoring while the consumer waits for other services.
- Safety planning.
- Assist with access to food, clothing, personal hygiene etc.
- Assistance to secure and/or maintain accommodation including private rental accommodation.
- Assistance to secure community-managed housing.
- Assistance to prevent homelessness occurring.
- Financial assistance for housing-related needs.
- Referral for assistance with legal issues.
- Housing advice and information.
- Advocacy/liaison
- Emotional support.
- Secondary consultation regarding housing issues.

Level Two Interim Response

Level Two IR involves provision of a service to individuals and families assessed as requiring a more in-depth response than can be provided at an entry point. Activities may include but are not limited to:

- Short-term case coordinated response (where capacity exists at the support agency)
- Assistance with Public Housing applications and transfers (where appropriate)
- Assistance with securing private rental where the consumer requires more assistance than can be provided by office based (entry point) staff
- Transportation of consumers in line with case plan, and
- Outreach to consumers living in crisis accommodation.

Where a level two interim response is offered, a prioritisation process must occur to determine the consumers most in need of a service.

Who undertakes Interim Response?

Level One IR is undertaken by entry point workers while a Level Two response is delivered by homelessness-funded services, and/or dedicated interim response workers.

Referrals for Level Two interim responses are made to an appropriate homelessness support agency. If this is a homelessness-funded support they will then prioritise and allocate based on their own capacity utilising the decision pathway for prioritisation table, above.

Where a referral is made to a support agency for level two interim response, and that agency is unable to provide an immediate service, the following process occurs:

- the support agency will add the individuals and families to a waiting list.
- while awaiting allocation to a worker, the entry point will continue to provide a minimum level of response to the consumer.
- when an entry point staff member has contact with consumers awaiting interim response allocation, any updated information on the consumer will be communicated to the person responsible for the waiting list as soon as possible after contact. This communication should be in writing (email).
- once the consumer is allocated an interim response worker (level two), the entry point agency will be advised, and level one interim response can cease.

Closing Level One Interim Response

Consumers receiving Level One Interim Response from an entry point will have their level of contact determined by their prioritisation level based on their initial assessment. The level of contact will vary from quite regular contact (i.e. twice per week) to greater lengths of time between contact (i.e. monthly contact) and will be affected by their current accommodation situation combined with their level of vulnerability.

Agencies are responsible for maintaining contact with those on interim response and will not require the consumer to make the ongoing contact to maintain a service.

When a consumer is no longer receiving Level One Interim Response, the outcome of their situation will be determined under the following categories:

- Non-engagement - consumers cannot be contacted after three attempts or is contacted and advises that they no longer wish to receive a service.
- Promotion to Level Two Interim Response – the consumer’s accommodation situation and/or vulnerability escalates and requires a Level Two Interim Response, which is arranged via a referral to an appropriate support service
- Transitional Accommodation – the individuals and families is successful in securing transitional accommodation.
- Family and Friends – the consumer is accommodated with family and/or friends and is considered stable.
- Social Housing – the consumer is successful in obtaining public or community housing.
- Private Rental – the consumer is successful in obtaining accommodation via the private rental market.
- Relocated – the consumer has relocated out of the catchment area
- Other – other outcomes not accounted for in the above list.

Consumers must be informed that they are able to re-present at the agency, or any other entry point, at any time to have their needs reassessed and a plan, which may include interim response, put into place.

REFERRALS

MAKING A REFERRAL

E-REFERRAL

REFERRALS FROM OUTSIDE THE AREA

ACCEPTANCE OF A REFERRAL

REFERRALS TO ALLIED SERVICES

Making a referral

All referrals made or received on behalf of consumers are actioned in the spirit of partnership and collaboration. Any challenges faced in referral processes should be approached with a solution focus, in trying to obtain the best outcomes for the individuals and families we assist.

Once initial assessment and planning has been undertaken and determined in collaboration with the consumer that a referral for case management is required, then a referral will be made to a support agency. The Initial Assessment and Referral form (*Appendix 3*) should be completed in consultation with the individual or family being referred, to ensure their needs and priorities are adequately conveyed.

If a referral is being made for homelessness support the Initial Assessment and Referral (IAR) tool will be used. If a referral is being made outside of the homelessness service sector, the Initial Assessment and Referral tool should be offered. If the service receiving the referral is unwilling to accept the IAR and requests a specific tool related to their service to action the referral instead, then that tool should be utilised. With the consent of the individual or family, information from the IAR can be transferred to the preferred referral tool.

E-referral

If individuals and families from other service catchments or interstate present at any given homelessness services, all efforts are to be made to provide the level of assistance appropriate to their needs. This is assisted by Cross regional referrals and E-referral.

E-referral refers to an enhancement to the referral tab on SHIP that enables SHIP and SRS users to send, receive and respond to referrals from other SHIP/SRS users electronically.

The aim of this enhancement is to reduce the time in processing referrals and improve the security of the consumer's personal information.

E-referral was to be rolled out by DoFFH in two phases. Phase one was activated on the 1st July 2018. This means that SHIP/SRS users will be able to receive and respond to E-referrals but only Initial Assessment and Planning workers (IAP workers) will be able to send referrals.

At the time of printing this manual Phase 2 has not been activated.

Referrals from outside the area

Agencies often ask for proof that the individuals and families have a "link" to the area when assessing for resource eligibility in the belief that local resources should be targeted to local people, and that people have a greater risk of failing if they are housed in unfamiliar communities/environments. This does not consider that some people experiencing homelessness may have no connection to any particular area and others may be looking for a fresh start.

The Outer Gippsland LASN has agreed that all consumers will be provided with a minimum level of service *regardless of their area of origin*.

Referrals for case managed support from out of the area will rely on the capacity of the agency to accepting/reject the referral.

Outer Gippsland adheres to the state-wide cross-regional referral guidelines. **This guideline is currently under review. The Victorian Homelessness Network has requested HaAS to update the guidelines.**

Acceptance of a referral

Once a referral is received by the homelessness support agency, some follow up with the consumer or referring worker may be required to clarify some further details and allow the agency to prioritise the consumer correctly and allocate the most appropriate case manager.

The Initial Assessment and Planning agency will keep a waiting list of individuals and families seeking case managed support and will prioritise and allocate off this list as per the procedures.

In the interests of inclusive service to consumers, when a referral is prioritised and allocated to a case manager, the support agency will advise the referring agency (usually an entry point), providing details of the case manager involved. This information can then be updated on the consumer's original file at the referring agency, and interim response to that consumer can cease.

Referrals to allied services

Referrals will not only be made to the Homelessness client support programs, but also other allied services. It is important to engage with the services to whom you intend to make the referral. It is important to confirm the preferred referral process, forms etc for the receiving service are correct. This work will assist with the smooth transition for consumers, it will also assist with warm referral processes.

CLIENT SUPPORT & CASE MANAGEMENT

CLIENT SUPPORT & CASE MANAGEMENT

OUTER GIPPSLAND HOMELESSNESS ACCOMMODATION CROSS TARGET SUPPORT PROVIDERS

OUTER GIPPSLAND SPECIALIST SUPPORT SERVICES

NUNGURRA YOUTH ACCOMMODATION SERVICE - GEGAC

CORRECTIONS HOUSING PATHWAYS INITIATIVE – COMMUNITY HOUSING LIMITED

MENTAL HEALTH PATHWAYS – QUANTUM SUPPORT SERVICES

MULTIPLE AND COMPLEX NEEDS INITIATIVE (MACNI)

Client Support & Case Management

Client support is a collaborative and planned approach to ensuring an individual or family who experiences homelessness gets the services and support they need to move forward with their lives. The support offered is to be consumer centred with the establishment of clear case plan goals which empower people to draw on their own strengths and capabilities. The support should be timely and offered with respect.

Each support provider is guided by their own internal case management process, which considers the core expectations of consumer support and case management outlined above.

Consumer support and case management in Outer Gippsland is offered through a variety of funded services which include.

- Homelessness Accommodation Cross Target Support (Any age)
- Creating connections
- Crisis accommodation support
- PRAP Plus

Referral to these support programs is via the Homelessness Entry points.

Outer Gippsland Homelessness Accommodation Cross Target Support Providers

Local Government Area	Homelessness Agency
Wellington (Sale)	Uniting Vic Tas 126 Raymond St, Sale 5144 7777
Wellington (Yarram)	Yarram and District Health Service 85 Commercial Rd, Yarram 5182 0222
East Gippsland	Gippsland Lakes Complete Health 281-285 Main St, Bairnsdale 5152 0052
East Gippsland (Orbost)	Orbost Regional Health 104-107 Boundary Rd, Orbost 5154 6666
East Gippsland (Mallacoota)	Mallacoota District Health Support Service Cnr Mattsson and Genoa-Mallacoota Rd, Mallacoota 5158 0243

Outer Gippsland Specialist Support Services

Specialist Support	Agency
Family Violence (East Gippsland)	Gippsland Lakes Complete Health 281-285 Main St, Bairnsdale 5152 0052

Family Violence (Wellington)	Quantum Support Services 65 Macalister St, Sale 5120 2000
Indigenous specific Family Violence support	GEGAC 37-53 Dalmahoy St, Bairnsdale 5150 0700
Youth specific response	GEGAC 87 Dalmahoy St, Bairnsdale 5152 2188
Indigenous Children's resource worker	GEGAC 95 Macleod Street, Bairnsdale 5150 0712

Nungurra Youth Accommodation service - GEGAC

Nungurra Youth Accommodation Services is a crisis youth refuge which provides short term crisis accommodation and support for young people aged between 16 and 20. Young people receive up to 6 week's accommodation at Nungurra.

Nungurra provides a relaxed and caring environment which places emphasis on developing the personal and living skills needed to sustain independent living.

The primary focus for each resident is to work through their crisis in a safe and supportive environment. Where appropriate, residents aged 16 & 17 will be encouraged to reconcile with their families. If other residents also wish to repair family breakdown, they will be supported to do so. Where reconciliation is not appropriate, staff will assist residents to find independent housing and provide the necessary supports to ensure their tenancy can be sustained.

Corrections Housing Pathways Initiative – Community Housing Limited

The Initiative is a collaboration between correctional and housing services that seeks to reduce homelessness and the risk of re-offending from those exiting the prison system through the provision of housing and homelessness support. The Initiative operates from Fulham Correctional Centre in Sale where Clients may exit to anywhere in the state.

Mental Health Pathways – Quantum Support Services

Mental Health Pathways is intended to provide housing information and advice to people who are aged 16 and over, who are exiting a mental health residential facility and who may experience homelessness or be at risk of homelessness. Housing information and referral is provided to all people in a residential facility to identify people who would benefit from the program and ensure everyone has a place to go.

A referral into the program requires case management by the Latrobe Regional Hospital Mental Health Service.

Multiple and Complex Needs Initiative (MACNI)

MACNI is a time-limited specialist service for people 16 years and older, who have been identified as having multiple and complex needs, including people with combinations of mental illness, substance abuse issues, intellectual impairment, acquired brain injury and forensic issues. Often these individuals pose a risk to themselves and to the community.

Given the complexities these individuals face, homelessness is commonly a contributing or resulting factor. As a result, homelessness services may be invited to assist with MACNI service plans.

The panel considers referrals from individuals or practitioners in cases where it is believed multi-disciplinary and multi program perspectives could benefit the client or care team.

The Complex Client team facilitates these panels and triage's the referrals.

The Complex Needs Panels is responsible for endorsing eligibility for MACNI clients and reviewing MACNI service plans also.

Tenancy

TENANCY

TENANCY PLUS

ABORIGINAL TENANCY AT RISK

TENANCY ADVICE AND ADVOCACY PROGRAM

Tenancy

Tenancy Plus – Quantum Support Services

The target group for this program is social housing tenants, establishing a tenancy or residing in long term community or public housing. Assistance includes, establishing a tenancy, intervening in a tenancy at risk, assisting with priority transfer or advocacy. Referral to the program is primarily the housing provider, however self and support agency referrals will also be accepted.

Aboriginal Tenancy at Risk – Quantum Support Services

This program uses an intensive case management and support service model to assist Aboriginal people living in mainstream public housing community housing or Aboriginal Housing Victoria properties whose tenancies have emerging issues such as financial difficulty, neighbourhood disputes, drug and alcohol and mental health issues. Households are supported to stabilise their housing and retain their tenancies rather than leave the property or risk eviction.

Tenancy Advice and Advocacy Program – Quantum Support Services

This program is designed to assist Victorian tenants dealing with issues in a private tenancy agreement, to avoid homelessness, through the provision of information and referral to other services, negotiation with landlords or real estate agents, and assistance in preparing for and attending hearings at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT).

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING MANAGEMENT

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING MANAGEMENT (THM)

ALLOCATION OF TRANSITIONAL HOUSING PROPERTIES

JOINED-UP INITIATIVES

CRISIS PROPERTIES

YOUTH PROPERTIES

A PLACE TO CALL HOME (NPAH)

VACANCY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

CASE CLOSURE & WITHDRAWAL OF SUPPORT

Transitional Housing Management (THM)

Transitional Housing vacancies are to be advertised on the Vacancy Management System (VMS). It is expected that nominated consumers have case management support including a case plan. It is a condition of tenancy that the tenant remain engaged with support for the duration of their tenancy.

Allocation of Transitional Housing Properties

Please note: This is the process for general stock only. Processes for crisis and youth properties will be outlined in specific sections of the manual.

- Properties, once they become vacant/untenable, will be listed on the Vacancy Management System (VMS).
- Nominations will be accepted until 12pm 2 weeks from the date advertised on the VMS.

Workers applying for transitional accommodation on behalf of a consumer will need to supply a *Transitional Housing Application and Summary (Appendix 5)* and the *Transitional Nomination Support Agreement (Appendix 6)* should be attached to the Application. The Application will provide:

- demographic information
- housing history and barriers
- support needs, other circumstances and considerations, and
- Exit Plan

All nominations will be considered by the THM. The THM will aim to meet as soon as possible after the closing time and date for applications, ideally the same day (within 24 hours of closing). The THM will aim to allocate the property within 2 business days of the application closing.

A waiting list for transitional accommodation is not held. Every time a new tenable property becomes available it will be listed on the VMS and workers will need to submit a new application on behalf of the consumer.

When an agency is seeking to refer a consumer to a transitional property vacancy outside their catchment area, the application must include a negotiated support plan in writing clearly outlining the roles and responsibilities of support providers. If an agency is unable to provide ongoing case management to a consumer outside of their catchment, then they must negotiate with the support agency closest to the property address to accept a referral for the consumer and commit to providing ongoing support. Without this negotiated agreement in writing, the application for transitional accommodation will not be considered.

Housing reviews will be undertaken every 3 months with the tenant and support worker to ensure housing outcome/exit plan are progressing.

Joined-Up Initiatives

Joined-up initiatives are a process where programs are developed in partnership with relevant stakeholders to tackle interconnected issues and improve service delivery.

In Outer Gippsland LASN, most of the joined-up initiatives include the provision of transitional accommodation properties that a non-homelessness, agency would have nomination rights over. This allows that agency to determine who goes into the property, with that agency being responsible for the case management of the consumer for the duration of the tenancy.

The following joined-up initiatives apply in this LASN:

- Leaving Care, Housing and Support
- Youth Justice Pathways Program
- Drug and Alcohol Pathways Program
- Prison pathways/corrections
- Family Violence

Where a joined-up initiative is in place, the responsibilities are as follows:

- The specialist support service is responsible for the provision of case-managed support for the duration of the tenancy.
- The Transitional Housing Management service is responsible for assisting the specialist support service with exit planning where homelessness is not the core business of that support agency.
- If the support relationship breaks down between the specialist support agency and consumer during the tenancy, the consumer will be referred to another support agency, where possible, to assist in exiting into long term accommodation.

Crisis Properties

Allocation of Crisis Properties

- once a crisis property becomes vacant/untenantable, it will be listed on the Vacancy Management System (VMS)
- all crisis applications received will be considered in the same manner as a general THM. Applicants will need to be **private rental ready**..
- an appointment will be made at the THM as soon as possible to complete the appropriate paperwork.

Crisis properties are provided for short-term crisis accommodation to people who have a clear exit plan in place and who only require housing for a period of 12 weeks or less.

Where a tenant is unable to exit a crisis property within the proposed 12 weeks, the continuation of the tenancy is at the discretion of the Transitional Housing Manager. Application would then need to be made for general THM stock, to allow a longer tenancy.

Youth Properties

Young people in Outer Gippsland aged 15 to 25 who are homeless can reside in transitional housing for extended periods up to 18 months to two years on the basis that they are assisted by a homelessness case management service.

East Gippsland Youth THM nominations are shared by agreement between Gippsland Lakes Complete Health and GEGAC.

Wellington Youth THM nominations come from Uniting.

Any youth THM nominations received from outside of the above agencies/areas would require the same transfer of support agreement outlined above.

When allocating a class 1B Youth share property, both tenants must be supported by the same agency. The THM provider will take advice from the support provider regarding a tenants suitability to share however the THM provider will have the right of veto if there is significant reason to believe the tenant is/is not suitable to share.

A Place to Call Home (NPAH)

APTCH is available to women escaping family violence, aboriginal families and those who have long term experiences of homelessness. All households are required to be on an approved homelessness with support application. Under APTCH families in need of housing assistance will be provided with a THM tenancy and support for 12months. After the 12 months the property will be transferred with the tenants to public housing rental general stock. This avoids an additional move for the family, allowing for sustaining of community connectedness.

The THM provider will receive a suitable replacement property from DHHS once available.

A critical component of the success of *A Place to Call Home* is the requirement for the original support agencies to continue to work with the family for up to a fourteen month period. Support agencies are best placed to nominate clients they are working with who would meet the eligibility criteria for allocation to the initiative's properties.

Vacancy Management System (VMS)

The homelessness Vacancy Management System (VMS) was introduced in December, 2020 as an integral component of the Specialist Homelessness Information Platform (SHIP) to replace the Opening Doors Resource Register (ODRR) previously accessed through the Department of Families Fairness and Housing (DFFH) Ebiz portal.

All homelessness funded agencies have access to the VMS, whether or not they use SHIP as their principal Client Management System (CMS).

It is the expectation of DoFFH that all Service Networks incorporate the VMS into how services are delivered.

Details of all vacancies available in the area are to be listed on the VMS. There are eleven 'Vacancy Types' available, with the first three relating to accommodation:

- Supported Crisis Accommodation
- Supported Transitional Accommodation
- Longer Term Accommodation
- Support
- Brokerage
- HEART
- Interim Support
- Short Term Support
- Case Management
- Assertive Outreach
- FV Specialist Support

Case Closure & Withdrawal of Support

Occasionally a support agency is unable to continue working with a consumer, or the consumer chooses to withdraw from support. If this occurs while the consumer is a tenant in a transitional property, their tenancy will be in jeopardy.

If the consumer is in a transitional property and case-managed support is to be withdrawn, then it is the responsibility of the case manager to refer the tenant to another support agency to secure a new case manager for the consumer. If a successful referral cannot be made, then the withdrawing agency must liaise with the THM manager regarding the tenant's housing outcomes.

If the consumer is supported on an outreach basis rather than in a transitional property and support is withdrawn, it is the responsibility of the support agency to advise the consumer of potential referral points to access ongoing case management should they require it.

Best practice is not to close until a housing outcome is achieved. If as a last resort closure needs to occur the worker should notify the referring worker of the outcome of support. It is also helpful to share with the referring worker the outcome of support when housing exit is successful. This information will help if the consumer represents at the entry point in the future.

HOMELESSNESS BROKERAGE

HOMELESSNESS BROKERAGE

HOUSING ESTABLISHMENT FUND (HEF)

PRIVATE RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (PRAP) – COMMUNITY HOUSING LIMITED

PRIVATE RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (PRAP) PLUS – COMMUNITY HOUSING LIMITED

HOMELESS CHILDREN'S BROKERAGE

Homelessness Brokerage

Housing Establishment Fund (HEF)

The principal responsibility of HEF providers is to assist people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to access crisis, longer-term or alternative housing options. Funds can also be used to assist individuals and families to maintain their tenancies. HEF eligibility is assessed by IAP and support providers. HEF is designed to be flexible and focussed on the individual needs of consumers and delivers appropriate outcomes for each individual or family.

Eligibility for HEF is assessed against the DoFFH income and asset test for bond loan or public housing. HEF providers can offer funds on a discretionary basis for those who do not meet the income and asset criteria but are experiencing significant housing difficulty. If a consumer re-presents for HEF assistance and demonstrates they are experiencing homelessness or at risk, HEF assistance or support must not be refused.

Expenditure of (HEF) must not contravene expectations outlined in the *Homelessness Assistance Program Guidelines*

The Outer Gippsland LASN has agreed to the following principles regarding the utilisation and distribution of HEF:

- every homelessness agency has access to HEF.
- HEF is to be used for the establishment and sustenance of medium to long term accommodation options, as well as purchasing crisis accommodation.
- as part of Interim Response provided by homelessness support agencies, HEF should be used to purchase crisis accommodation. Agencies providing Interim Response should also manage their HEF to maintain a capacity to provide funds to establish and maintain tenancies.
- if a homelessness-funded agency utilises all its HEF providing crisis accommodation, they may apply to the Transitional Housing Manager (THM) for funds to establish and/or maintain long-term accommodation options. In these instances, the homelessness-funded agencies will be required to show that they have expended these funds and justify the additional resources for their consumer/s. The referring agency is required to contact the THM to discuss the request and ensure the appropriate paperwork is completed, before a booking can be made with an emergency accommodation provider.
- other uses for HEF funds outlined in the Flexible Funds Management guidelines include storage costs, removal expenses, lock changes, and the provision of essential furniture such as whitegoods and beds.

Private Rental Assistance Program (PRAP) – Community Housing Limited

Private rental assistance is provided to households who can sustain private rental housing with time limited support. Resources are targeted to people who:

- Are at risk of losing their current tenancy – for example, due to a personal crisis, short term financial crisis, rent arrears, tenancy dispute etc.
- Are currently homeless but can be rapidly and sustainably housed in the private rental market with short term assistance
- Could sustain affordable and appropriate housing in the private rental market but need assistance with the transition from crisis, transitional or social housing.

Each consumer will be assessed individually, with an emphasis on identifying personal or financial capabilities that can be enhanced to improve their capacity to sustain appropriate and affordable housing in the private rental market. When assessing consumers, agencies should prioritise assistance to people who are in one or more of the following categories:

- Presenting at entry points with a recent private rental history
- Living in marginal private rental housing such as rooming houses or caravan parks who can afford and sustain a private rental tenancy
- On the Victorian Housing Register who can afford and sustain a private rental tenancy
- Those living in social housing or transitional housing who are working and who can afford to sustain a private rental tenancy.

In determining eligibility for assistance, agencies are expected to ensure that the rent paid by the client is affordable, based on an assessment of the household's ongoing capacity to sustain housing.

Assistance may be used to access or maintain shared tenancies.

Referral to this program can occur via Initial Assessment and Planning or other support services or directly via the real estate.

PRAP Plus – Community Housing Limited

PRAP Plus was developed in response to feedback from PRAP service providers and homelessness funded service providers to the need for increased support for some households accessing private rental.

PRAP Plus is an outreach intervention for households living in or entering private rental tenancies that require additional practical support to establish or maintain their housing.

PRAP Plus is designed to:

- Provide time-limited outreach intervention to support tenancies.
- Address issues which are contributing to the risk of tenancy breakdown.
- Achieve outcomes that lead to successful, sustainable private rental tenancies.
- Reduce preventable exits from private rental.
- Prevent homelessness.

Homeless Children's Brokerage

Brokerage is available to meet the needs of children 0-18 who are accompanying adults in homelessness services. This brokerage is to be used to improve service delivery for children in the homelessness sector, enhancing opportunities for children. This is to support homelessness service providers to better integrate child focused assessment and case planning into their work practice.

Brokerage is available for activities which:

- Engage and maintain their education (including early education services such as childcare and kindergarten).
- Reduce social isolation by enhancing access to a range of support, social and recreational opportunities within their community.
- Provide social and emotional growth opportunities for children and provide opportunities to increase relational bonds between parents/carers and children.

To access this brokerage, contact the Children's Resource Co-ordinator on 5144 7777.

APPENDICES & REFERENCES

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Opening Doors Consent Form
- Appendix 2: Initial Assessment & Planning and Referral Form
- Appendix 3: Nungurra Youth Accommodation Service Referral Form
- Appendix 4: Transitional Housing Management - Scoring sheet
- Appendix 5: Gippsland Transitional Housing Application and Summary
- Appendix 6: Gippsland Transitional Nomination Support Agreement

Appendix 1: Opening Doors Consent Form

Consent

Client consent to share information

To record freely given informed client consent to share their information with a specific agency(s) for a specific purpose

Name:

Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy):

Sex:

Section 1: Proposed Information Uses and Disclosures

1.1 Referrals

The following service(s) are recommended. It is also recommended that relevant information is forwarded to the agency(s) that provide these services, in order that consumers receive the best possible care.

Service Type Eg. - Housing support - Drug & Alcohol support	Name of Agency	Type of information (including limits as applicable) Eg. - All relevant information - Housing situation only

1.2 Victorian Homelessness Data Collection

Consent is sought for information about clients and the services they receive to be recorded by the agency and sent in a format that *does not identify the client* to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, for statistical reporting purposes.

Section 2: Record of Consumer Consent

2(a) Verbal consent

Worker Use Only

Verbal consent can be used when it is not practicable to obtain written consent.

I have discussed the proposed referrals with the consumer or authorised representative and I am satisfied that the consumer understands the proposed uses and disclosures, and has provided their informed consent to:

Referrals

Signed:
.....

(Worker)

Date/...../.....(dd/mm/yyyy)

Worker name:.....

Position:.....

2(b) Written Consumer Consent

My worker/practitioner has discussed with me how, and why certain information about me may need to be provided to other service providers. I understand the recommendations and I give my permission for the information to be shared as detailed above.

Signed
.....

Signed by Client or Authorised representative

Date/...../.....(dd/mm/yyyy)

Name:.....

Witnessed:.....
(worker)

Worker
Name.....

Position:.....

Appendix 2: Initial Assessment & Referral Form

Initial Assessment & Planning Referral Tool						
Referral To						
<hr/>						
Agency Name:						
Staff Member:						
Email address:						
Fax Number:						
Service:						
Vacancy:						
Referral From						
<hr/>						
Agency Name:						
Staff Member:						
Phone Number:						
Fax Number:						
Email Address:						
Date Referred:						
Client Contact Details						
<hr/>						
Client Name:						
Preferred Name/Alias:						
Address:						
Date of Birth:						
Gender:						
Phone No:						
Mobile No:						
Can a worker call you on this number and leave a message? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N						
Alternative Contact Details:						
Country of Birth:						
Indigenous Status:						
Source of Income:						
Labour Force Status:						
Student Status:						
Date of assessment						
Is an Interpreter required: <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N						
If yes, please provide further information:						
Household members+						
<hr/>						
Other Names	Surname	Relationship	Gender	DOB enter year only if estimate		Cultural Identity

Summary

Needs and Risks

Current housing situation

Housing history

Other relevant information (D&A, Mental health, legal issues, financial issues etc... if applicable)

Services provided by IAP worker

Priority Status

Housing Need

Support Need

Assessment of Personal Vulnerabilities

Status of Interim Response

Appendix 3: Nungurra Youth Accommodation Service Referral Form



Gippsland & East Gippsland Aboriginal Co-Operative Ltd
Nungurra Youth Accommodation Services
Referrals: (P) 03 5152 2188
(F) 03 5152 3196



Client No:

Referral Screening Form

Client Details

Date of referral:

Client Name:

Date of Birth:

Age:

Gender:

Cultural background:

Language spoken at home:

Interpreter required

Referral / Agency details

Referring Agency:

Referring Worker:

Contact:

Email:

Date accommodation required:

Reason for wanting accommodation at Nungurra

Brief outline of issues and needs:



Client No:

Gippsland & East Gippsland Aboriginal Co-Operative Ltd
Nungurra Youth Accommodation Services
Referrals: (P) 03 5152 2188
(F) 03 5152 3196



Client Information

Level of anger (1 to 10)

Client's previous address:

Past Accommodation Services:

Main income source (Youth Allowance / DSP / Newstart etc.)

Is support required with Centrelink payments?

How are the client's literacy skills? Assistance required?

Does client have a disability (e.g. Physical, learning, ABI)?

Education / Training status

Is client still at school? (Y / N) Highest school year attended:

Past Education / Training:

Current Education:

Other comments:

Parent / Family contact

Please list Names and contact details, does client want contact?



Client No:

Gippsland & East Gippsland Aboriginal Co-Operative Ltd
Nungurra Youth Accommodation Services
Referrals: (P) 03 5152 2188
(F) 03 5152 3196



Drug & Alcohol

Past use and type:

Current use and type:

Health & Medication

Does client have any health issues.

Is client on any medication? If yes, please list current medications

Mental Health

Does client have mental health issues? (Past and current including depression, self harm, suicidal thoughts)

Has client been a victim of abuse or trauma;

Client No:



Gippsland & East Gippsland Aboriginal Co-Operative Ltd
Nungurra Youth Accommodation Services
Referrals: (P) 03 5152 2188
(F) 03 5152 3196



Legal History

Please list pending court matters, current orders and conditions:

Other Support Services / key workers

Name of support person/agency	Contact details	Role

Referring agency roll and responsibility

What contact / support will you continue with client?

Appendix 4: Transitional Housing Management - Scoring sheet

Transitional Housing Needs Assessment

No. of Bedrooms:

Location:

Household Type	Family: Four or more children	6
	Family: with children	5
	Aged/frail	3
	Single	2
	Couple	1
Current Housing	Sleeping Rough; squat, outdoors, vehicle	10
Multi score	Residing with violent perpetrator/unsafe	9
	Warrant of Possession Purchased	8
	Sub-standard accommodation	7
	Temporary accommodation (institution, D&A Rehab, refuge, crisis, caravan park, hotel/motel)	6
	Couch surfing	5
	Overcrowded	3
	VCAT (Order of Possession)	3
	Notice to Vacate	2
Region	Links to the area	2
Family Violence	Recently left violent family situation	5
Risks	Pregnancy (7months+)/new born baby	2
Multi score	Family reunification (letter from DHHS must be attached)	6
	Psychological well being threatened	5
	Cultural barriers	5
	Income Support Issues	3
	Youth allowance	2
Health related vulnerability	Diagnosed mental health illness	6
	Life threatening illness undergoing treatment	6
	Aboriginal person 50+ yrs	5
	Other 65+ yrs	4
	Physical Disability and mobility issues requiring aids or modifications	4
	Drug and/or alcohol issues	5
	Private Rental Blacklisting	4
	Bankruptcy	3
	DHHS Debt	2
Total		

Appendix 5: Gippsland Transitional Housing Application and Summary

**Please note: As applications for transitional housing are considered anonymously, the client's name will be removed from this application prior to being sighted by the panel. Please ensure that throughout this document you refer to household members as client1, client 2 etc. Please ensure that this document is completed in readable format. Please make sure that you strike out or circle where applicable for every field. Do not highlight fields as the highlighter does not show when documents are scanned or printed.

Client 1 Name: _____ **DOB:** _____

Phone no/ _____ **Male/Female/Self described** _____

Client 2 details:

Name: _____ **Male/Female/Self described** _____

DOB: _____

Relationship Status to client: _____

Extra details: _____

Worker Name: _____

Worker Contact Number: _____

Support Organisation: _____

I confirm that I have the consent of the client/s to nominate for the below property

Property Code: _____

Demographic Information:

Client 1:

Cultural status:

Indigenous Torres Strait Islander

Other: Please specify _____

Client 2:

Cultural status:

Indigenous Torres Strait Islander

Other: Please specify _____

Family make-up:

Number of adults: _____ Number of children: _____

Pets: _____ Type of Pets: _____

Children's details

Child 1:

Male/Female/Self described _____

DOB: _____

Extra details: _____

Time in parents care: _____

Child 2:

Male/Female/Self described _____

DOB: _____

Extra details: _____

Time in parents care: _____

Child 3:

Male/Female/Self described _____

DOB: _____

Extra details: _____

Time in parents care: _____

Child 4:

Male/Female/Self described _____

DOB: _____

Extra details: _____

Time in parents care: _____

Child 5:

Male/Female/Self described _____

DOB: _____

Extra details: _____

Time in parents care: _____

Child 6:

Male/Female/Self described _____

DOB: _____

Extra details: _____

Time in parents care: _____

Access arrangements: _____

Access to be confirmed: _____

Is there a Reunification Order in place? _____

Relevant Risk Factors:

Is there an Intervention Order in place? Yes / No

Please specify: _____

Are there any unsafe areas that client cannot reside in due to risk or other safety reason? _____

Has a Comprehensive Risk Assessment (TRAM) been completed where applicable?
Yes/No

Income support:

Client 1: WAGED / CENTRELINK / OTHER CRN _____

Client 2: WAGED / CENTRELINK / OTHER CRN _____

Is income support in place? Yes/No

Income type: _____

Income amount: \$ _____ PER FORTNIGHT PER HOUSEHOLD

Does the client/s have any foreseeable income barriers?

Please specify: _____

****THM furniture provided – any changes to this is to be by negotiation with THM provider.**

FURNITURE REQUIREMENTS OF APPLICANT: PLEASE LIST (IF APPLICANT HAS NO FURNITURE, PLEASE WRITE ALL)

Housing History and Barriers:

Please outline the client’s past/current housing situation (i.e. friends/family, crisis, motel, car etc.)

Has the client/s resided in Transitional Housing previously Yes / No

If yes, please specify area _____

Does the client have an Office of Housing/Other Debt? Yes / No / to be confirmed

Details: _____

Is the debt being addressed? Yes / No

Details: _____

Does the client have lump sum savings in place? Yes / No

Have private rental applications been submitted? Yes / No Blacklisted? Yes /No

Have VHR/s been submitted? Yes / No

Application Type:

Application No: _____ Date Application Approved: _____

Have other Long-Term Housing applications been submitted? Yes / No

Details: _____

Please list the applicant’s broadband areas listed or to be listed on their VHR application

Is the applicant prepared to accept another area for housing? Yes / No

Reasons: _____

Support Needs:

Will support be provided by your agency for the duration of this tenancy? Yes / No

Has the Gippsland Transitional Nomination Support Agreement form been signed and attached?
Yes / No

If not, what alternative arrangements will be made for supporting this client?

(Please note: It is the expectation of the Transitional Housing Manager that your agency does not withdraw support until a referral to an alternative support agency has been allocated, noting that a referral to another agency is no guarantee a worker will be allocated by that agency)

Have support needs been identified and addressed? Yes / No

Will other agencies be involved in the support of this client? Yes / No

Please list all other agencies involved: _____

Other Circumstances and Issues for Consideration:

Health: _____

Mobility: _____

Family Supports: _____

Special needs for any family members: _____

Other: _____

Exit Plan:

Please outline client's exit plan: -

ANY OTHER INFORMATION- please detail in point form any other relevant information which will assist the Allocations Panel in making their decision ie: Strengths, Talents, Goals, Aspirations. Please capture any relevant information/direct quote from support documents/letters in this section.

Appendix 6: Gippsland Transitional Nomination Support Agreement

This form is to be attached to a Nomination confirming the agreement between Support Agencies referral details.

Property ID# _____

Client's Full Name: _____

Nominating Agency: _____

Nominating Support Worker Name: _____

Phone: _____

As the nominating agency, we understand that if this nomination is successful, we will be responsible for providing support as per the guidelines to the client until the referral agency has the capacity to pick up the client in their case load.

When this time comes, we will provide notification to the Housing Provider in email confirming the referral & ensure a handover has been completed between agencies accordingly.

Timeframe – capacity within 4 weeks. Modifications to this timeframe are to be negotiated between agencies.

Referring information regarding client.

Referral template made and received

Referral Accepting Agency: _____

Person authorised to accept referral: _____

Phone: _____

As the agency accepting this referral, we understand that we have agreed to accept this client in our case load once we have capacity to do so (within 4 weeks). We will work with the nominating agency direct to advise when this will occur accordingly.

Nominating agency has client consent to transfer the referral to the accepting agency Yes/No

Nominating Case Worker Signature: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Person Authorised to accept referral Signature: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____

References

In developing the 2019 Outer Gippsland Homelessness Local Area Services Network – Practice and Partnership Manual, several foundation documents were sourced, and these key documents form the basis of this guidance manual.

Below is a list of the key documents:

Practice Guidance:

- Outer Gippsland Local Area Services Network – Opening Doors Service Coordination Practice Manual (September 2017 – version 3)
- Opening Doors Manuals (July 2008)
 - Framework
 - Practice Guide
 - Service Coordination Guide
- Homelessness Services Guidelines and Conditions of Funding (May 2014 – Version 2.1)
- Case Management resource Kit for SAAP Services (August 1997)
- A guide to providing housing-focused support Council to the Homeless Person
 - An overview of homelessness
 - Engagement and rapport building
 - The role of assessment in housing focused support
 - Supporting consumers to access housing
 - Supporting resettlement and stabilisation
- Initial Assessment and Planning in Victorian prisons guidelines corrections housing pathways initiative (2017)
- Department of Health and Human Services Specialist Homelessness Information Platform (SHIP): *Ereferrals Implementat5ion and Protocols, June 2018.*
- Tenancy Plus – Tenancy Support Program operational guidelines (July 2018)
- Aboriginal Tenancies at risk
- Public Housing Allocations Operational Guideline (July 2018)
 - Chapter 1 Legislative framework and decision making principles
 - Chapter 2 Offers of Housing
 - Chapter 3 Signing the residential tenancy agreement
- Gippsland Creating Connections Service Component Guidelines and Forms (2011)
- Creating Connections Education Employment Pathways (CEEP) Guidelines (2009)
- Supporting Outcomes Framework for Youth (2008)
- Client Incident Management guide (November 2017)
- Service provision framework: Multiple and complex needs initiative (December 2017)
- Support for High Risk Tenancies Divisional Guidelines
- A Place to Call Home

Funding Guidance:

- Homelessness Services Guidelines and Conditions of Funding (May 2014 – Version 2.1)
- Policy and funding guidelines Vol 3 Human Services Policy and Funding Plan 2015-2019 Chapter 4 Activity Description (update 2017-18)
 - 94589 Initial assessment and planning
 - 20081 Crisis supported accommodation
 - 20082 Transitional support
 - 94591 Transitional housing
 - 94654 National Partnership Agreement – Homelessness (NPAH) a place to call home
- Intensive case management initiative (ICMI) Flexible brokerage guidelines (August 2011)
- Specialist homelessness Information Platform (SHIP) Guidelines for Enhanced “payments” tab in SHIP

Data Collection and Reporting Manuals:

- Specialist Homelessness Services Collection Manual (July 2017)
- Vision CHL THM
- Homelessness Data Collection
- Instructions for using the Vacancy Management System (VMS) (December, 2020)

Partnership Agreements:

- Gippsland Homelessness Terms of Reference (January 2017)
- Outer Gippsland Local Area Services Network Memorandum of understanding

Homelessness Projects/Reform:

- Private Rental Assistance Guidelines (2016)

Current Influencing Policies:

- Victoria’s Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Plan (January 2018)
- Homes for Victorians – Affordability, access and choice (2017)
- The Community Services Industry Plan Victorian Council of Social Services (2018)
- The Specialist homelessness sector transition plan (2018-2022)
- Victorian Community Housing Transition Plan Community Housing Industry Association (2018-2022)
- Family Violence Rolling Action Plan (2017-2020)
- Child and Family Services Industry Plan (2018-2021)
- Community Sector workforce capability framework – tool kit