

# **ANTI-POVERTY NETWORK**

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## **SOUTH AUSTRALIA**



### **Accessing Emergency Housing Support, Applying For Public/Community Housing, And Other Housing Info**

#### **Emergency Housing Support**

##### **[Homelessness Connect](#)**

24/7 assistance for people experiencing homelessness, or at risk of homelessness (and those supporting people in these circumstances).

Ph: 1800 003 308

##### **Domestic Violence And Aboriginal Family Violence Gateway**

Ph: 1300 782 200; 1800 800 098

##### **[Directory Of Homelessness Services](#)**

#### **Registering For Public And Community Housing**

##### **Housing SA**

Ph: 131 299

Anyone who wishes to apply for public and community housing must complete a 'Registration Of Interest In Housing' form, and there are several steps that have to be met.

##### **'Registration Of Interest In Housing' form.**

##### **Checking Your Eligibility**

###### *Income and asset limits*

If your income and your assets exceed certain limits, you are unable to apply for public or community housing.

The limits will depend on the size of your household, i.e., how many children you have.

If you have assets over a certain level, you will be unable to apply for public or community housing.

[Further info here.](#)

*Have you been banned for anti-social behaviour?*

People who have been excluded from Housing SA properties and services because of anti-social behaviour are unable to apply for public and community housing.

*Housing SA debts*

If you have accrued a debt with Housing SA, you need to pay your debt, or arrange a repayment plan, in order to apply for public or community housing.

You should contact Housing SA as soon as possible, if you cannot pay your debt by the due date, or cannot pay one of your scheduled repayments.

Debt repayments are set at a minimum amount of 20% of your weekly income, if you are a Housing SA tenant, or \$15 a week, for others.

[Further info here.](#)

[To find out if you have accrued a debt with Housing SA, log-in to \(or register for\) your Housing Connect account.](#)

Next Steps

*Providing proof of income and identity*

This can include proof of income from paid work, details about your Centrelink payment, or confirmation of your Aboriginality.

[Further info about providing proof of income and identity.](#)

*Choosing where you are prepared to live*

Indicate which areas in Metropolitan Adelaide or Regional South Australia you are prepared to live in.

*Providing proof of special circumstances*

'Special circumstances' are circumstances that will significantly affect your ability to find and maintain accommodation, i.e., medical issues or cultural factors.

You will be notified by letter, when your registration of interest for public housing has been successful.

You might be asked to provide further information, or attend an appointment.

### Which Housing SA Category Do You Fall Under?

Applications for Housing SA are sorted into four categories, based on the level of need of the applicant.

Applicants are sorted on the basis of their accommodation history; their available housing options; their individual need; and the circumstances of anyone else included on their registration of interest form.

#### *Category 1*

The highest category, for people who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness, and whose personal history indicates that private housing is unsuitable as a long-term option.

#### *Category 2*

For people who do not have urgent housing needs, but who have long-term barriers to accessing and maintaining private housing.

#### *Category 3*

For people who do not have urgent housing needs, or long-term barriers to accessing private housing.

#### *Category 4*

**Existing** Housing SA tenants who are seeking to transfer to another Housing SA property, but who have not been approved for Category 1 or 2.

Applicants in Category 1 are reviewed, 12 months after their initial application, to ensure they are still eligible for Category 1. If the applicant does not respond, their registration is moved to Category 3 or 4, and deferred for 12 months.

Housing SA contacts applicants in Categories 2, 3, and 4, every 12 months, to check they still need public housing, and that their contact details and other info are still correct. If applicants do not respond, their registration is deferred for 12 months.

### [Further info on how Housing SA applicants are assessed into different categories.](#)

#### Some Tips For Bumping Applications Up The Housing SA Waiting List

- Support letters from social workers, indicating that you have very limited

housing options, and major long-term barriers to accessing and maintaining private housing.

- An eviction notice.
- Proof of rough-sleeping, or proof of risk of rough-sleeping.

## **Key Info And Supports For Renters**

### **RentRight**

Free, independent, legal advice for people renting in the private, public, and community sectors.

Advice provided for issues such as leases, bond disputes, property maintenance, and unpaid rent.

Monday-Friday, 8am-8pm, advisors available through phone or e-mail, and face-to-face appointments across multiple locations.

Ph: 1800 060 462.

### **For booking a face-to-face appointment.**

## **Common Issues And Questions For Tenants**

### *What type of lease*

Fixed or periodic? A fixed term agreement is for a defined period and has a set starting date and a set ending date.

A periodic agreement is for a recurring period without a fixed term (it has a starting date but no specified end date). A periodic tenancy can continue indefinitely.

### *Breaking a fixed-term lease*

If you need to leave a property early, it is always best to try to negotiate with your landlord, and arrive at a written, mutual agreement.

If this is not possible, a tenant can apply to SACAT (South Australian Civil And Administrative Tribunal) and ask the Tribunal to be released from the lease early on grounds of undue hardship, domestic violence, or any other special circumstance (financial penalties may be incurred).

### *Minimum notice for property visits and inspections*

Your Housing Provider has to give you 7 to 14 days notice of their intention to enter your property to inspect. However, they can attend without prior notification in the case of an emergency or to make urgent repairs.

### *Rent increases*

Are allowed every 12 months, if written into your rental agreement, as long as 60 days notice is provided.

### *Getting your bond back*

A bond should be returned to the tenant at the end of the lease, provided there are no claims made by the landlord.

**[For information about what kinds of issues a landlord can make a claim on a bond for, and disputing bond claims.](#)**

### *What is a Form 2*

A Form 2 is a warning letter. You need to rectify the breach by the date stated. If you do not rectify the breach by this date the landlord/agent can apply to the SACAT for a hearing to have you evicted.

**[For further info, check out the 'Frequency Asked Questions' page on the RentRight website.](#)**

**[You can also find fact-sheets and forms for private tenants on the State Government's website.](#)**

### SACAT And Housing Disputes

SACAT (South Australian Civil and Administrative Tribunal) is the State Government body that deals with disputes between tenants and landlords.

Ph: 1800 723 767

**[See here for some info.](#)**

Applying to SACAT to resolve a dispute with a landlord is a serious decision.

You should seek advice from RentRight, and consult the SACAT website, to ensure it is the right decision for your situation.

### *How to apply*

**[Applications can be made online, face-to-face, or over the phone, for those requiring further assistance. Individuals must organise any necessary documentation before they apply to SACAT.](#)**

Generally, applications to SACAT require fees to be paid, but there are discounts and exemptions, based on financial hardship.

Fees may be reduced, if proof of any of the following is produced, when applying to SACAT:

- Pensioner Concession Card
- Health Care Card
- Commonwealth Seniors Health Card
- Department of Veterans Affairs Gold Card
- Student identification card (full-time students only)
- Asylum seekers receiving SRSS payments from the Department of Home Affairs

SACAT resolves disputes between tenants and landlords through either conciliation, conference, or a full hearing.