



Tenant Handbook

V21 April 2022

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WELCOME TO REGIONAL HOUSING LIMITED

This handbook is designed to provide you with helpful information regarding your tenancy and to ensure you are aware of your rights and responsibilities as a Regional Housing Limited (RHL) tenant.

All tenants are provided with the handbook during their sign-up appointment.

If you wish to seek additional tenancy information or support, the Queensland State-wide Tenant Advice and Referral Service (QSTARS) is a free independent advocacy, advice and referral service for all Queensland renters and can be contacted on 1300 744 263, or you can access their site at www.qstars.org.au.

Alternatively, the Residential Tenancies Authority (RTA) is also available on 1300 366 311 or you can visit their website at www.rta.qld.gov.au

STARTING YOUR TENANCY

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

When moving into your new property, you should read the RTA's *Information Statement Form 17a Pocket guide for tenants – houses and units* to understand your rights and responsibilities. For more information regarding your rights and responsibilities, please refer to your *General Tenancy Agreement (Form 18a)* or *Rooming Accommodation Agreement (Form R18)*. These documents have been provided in your sign-up pack.

GENERAL TENANCY AGREEMENT (FORM 18A) / ROOMING ACCOMMODATION AGREEMENT (FORM R18)

At your sign-up you will have signed a tenancy agreement. You are responsible for maintaining your tenancy in accordance with this agreement and the *Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008*.

Please make sure you read your agreement carefully so you know all your rights and responsibilities. If you have any questions regarding your tenancy agreement please contact our office.

INSURANCE

Our organisation does not take responsibility for any loss or damage of personal belongings. We strongly encourage you have home contents insurance cover for your personal belongings. This includes insuring your furniture, clothing and personal items against fire, water damage, overflowing sewage, theft and vandalism.

CONNECTING UTILITIES

Electricity, phone, internet and gas (if applicable) will need to be connected in your name. Any associated costs and charges are payable by you during the tenancy.

Please note: There are some properties where utilities are already connected. This will be specified in Item 12 of your *General Tenancy Agreement (Form 18a)*.



RENT

RENT CALCULATION

Your household's total assessable income is used to calculate the amount of rent you'll pay.

Depending on your circumstances, you may be eligible to receive Commonwealth Rent Assistance from Centrelink. The amount you are entitled to will be incorporated into your rent calculation. To check your eligibility, please contact Centrelink.

If you would like any additional information, please visit <https://www.qld.gov.au/housing/public-community-housing/community-housing/during-your-tenancy/rent-in-community-housing>.

PAYING RENT

We encourage tenants pay their rent via Centrepay deductions. This means your rent will be deducted from your Centrelink benefit and deposited directly into our account. Listed below are our Customer Reference Numbers (CRN) required to set up the payment/s:

- Rent 555 079 203 C
- Bond 555 080 960 S
- Repairs 555 080 961 K
- Grouped Charges and Services 555 080 962 H

If you require assistance, staff are available to set up a Centrepay deduction on your behalf with your consent.

Other methods to pay rent include cash or EFTPOS at our offices and direct debit into our bank account. Please see below our bank details:

| | |
|----------------|--------------------------|
| Bank | NAB |
| Account name | Regional Housing Limited |
| BSB | 084 571 |
| Account number | 30 585 8809 |

If you choose to deposit directly into our account please ensure your reference number is clearly used when making the payment so that we can allocate your payment correctly. We will be able to provide you with your reference number, if required.

RENT PAYMENTS

If at any stage you are having problems paying your rent, please contact our office as soon as possible. Arrangements may be discussed to assist you to maintain your tenancy.

It is a breach of your tenancy agreement if any rent payments are late or missed. We may contact you from the first day your rent payment is not made. If your account falls eight days or more into arrears you may be issued with a *Notice to Remedy Breach (Form 11)*.

If you do not contact us or respond to phone calls or letters, further action may be taken to recover this debt. This may involve an application being made to the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal which could lead to termination of your tenancy.



DURING YOUR TENANCY

VISITORS AND UNDECLARED OCCUPANTS

Visitors are allowed to stay at your property but you will need to notify us of their name, date of arrival and how long they are visiting. Please be aware that visitors who stay longer than 4 weeks are considered residents.

If you would like someone to stay at the property for more than four weeks you will need to seek approval by lodging an Application for New Household Member. This form is available from our office. If you have a visitor regularly stay at the house for periods of less than 4 weeks, they may be considered a permanent member of your household and their income is assessed as part of your total household income.

As the tenant, you are responsible for the behaviour of your visitors. Please ensure all visitors behave in accordance with your tenancy agreement e.g. do not disturb the reasonable peace, comfort and privacy of neighbours.

Undeclared occupants and sub-letting are considered breaches of the tenancy agreement and could put your tenancy at risk.

ABSENCES FROM THE PROPERTY

Please notify us if you are planning to be away from your property for more than seven consecutive days. This helps RHL know where you are in case of any damage to the property or if maintenance is scheduled to be carried out during the time you are away.

Approval is required for absences more than eight weeks. Please submit an Application for Temporary Absence and supply evidence to support your request. This form is available from our office.

For more information please refer to the Temporary Absence Factsheet available from our office.

CAR PARKING

Please make sure cars are only parked in the designated parking area and not on common areas, for example footpaths, lawn areas etc. Unregistered vehicles are not to be kept at the property.

Any visitor parking provided will be marked clearly at unit complexes. Tenants and their household members shouldn't use the visitor parking. If there's no visitor parking, visitors need to park outside the property boundary (i.e. on the street).

There may be times where we assign a designated parking space to a tenant for reasons of health or mobility. For more information please refer to the Multi-unit Car Parking Factsheet available from our office.

RUBBISH BINS

Please contact the local council for regular waste and recycling collection dates.

Some unit complexes have communal waste and recycling bins. If this is the case, please make sure the responsibility of putting the bins out and bringing them in after collection is shared between all tenants.

SMOKING

There is no smoking allowed within RHL buildings, cars or properties. Please maintain a smoke free property for the comfort and health of all residents and visitors. Please consider your neighbours with the drifting of smoke and also the disposal of cigarette butts.

KEYS & LOCKS



Spare keys are available from the RHL office during business hours. If you require additional keys cut or locks changed, you will need to cover the associated costs.

Please ensure you notify us before changing any locks on the property and a copy of the new keys will need to be supplied to RHL within two working days.

If you are locked out or lose your keys after hours please contact a locksmith. You will be responsible for any associated costs.

ONGOING ELIGIBILITY REVIEWS

The Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy requires us to review your rent and eligibility for housing assistance each year to identify if your circumstances have improved or if you still need social housing assistance. You will receive notification when your review is due and what information we require from you.

CHANGES TO YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES

Please notify us as soon as possible if your household or your income changes during your tenancy. We will ask you to supply income details for your household and we will conduct a rent review. You will be notified of the outcome of your review in writing.

PETS

We recognise that pets can contribute to the health and wellbeing of our customers, and will ensure a fair and consistent process is applied for tenants keeping pets in their home. If you wish to keep a pet at your property please ensure you let us know so we can check you comply with local government laws and check if any restrictions are applied to your property.

There are no restrictions if you require a guide dog, hearing dog or other assistance animal – these aids are not considered pets.

If we receive a dispute regarding your pet we will investigate to see if it is a breach of your tenancy agreement and action in accordance with the *Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008*. Depending on the nature of the dispute, we may also refer the matter to the local council.

MAINTENANCE

If your maintenance issue is an urgent matter please contact us on the numbers below:

- 1300 642 123 – 9:00am to 4:30pm, Monday to Friday
- 1300 171 266 – after hours emergency maintenance; Townsville region only
- 0412 699 087 – after hours emergency maintenance; all other regions

Please refer to 'Timeframes for Repairs' table below for examples of urgent maintenance.

General maintenance/repair requests can be submitted by:

- Phoning our office on 1300 642 123
- Emailing assets@regionalhousing.org.au
- Lodging a website enquiry at www.regionalhousing.org.au
- Completing a Maintenance Request Form at one of our offices



TIMEFRAMES FOR REPAIRS

The table below provides you with estimated timeframes for repairs:

| Immediate 1 hour | Urgent 4 hours | Priority 24 hours | Normal 1 week | Non-urgent 2 weeks |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| Gas Leaks | No power | Partially blocked sewerage (not overflowing) | Slow dripping taps | External repaints |
| Fire | Any identified health and safety risks to tenant or visitors to property. | Toilet not working (not overflowing) | Stove partially faulty | Internal repaints |
| Live exposed wiring | | | Water hammer | Fence repairs |
| Burst internal water pipe | Serious storm damage | Faulty external door locks | External entry doors jamming | Fence replacement |
| Seniors or incapacitated tenants who are locked out of their home at night. | Burst external water pipe | Unsecured external doors and windows | Tree lopping/removal of unsafe trees | Ceiling fan repairs/installation |
| | Blocked sewerage overflowing | Fast dripping taps | Leaking gutters and downpipes | Partially loose joinery |
| | Structural damage endangering occupants | No hot water | Faulty single light or power outlet | Cupboards doors not closing |
| | Smoke alarms not working | No power to multiple power points | Repair TV reception (detached house) | Internal doors jamming |
| | Toilet not working and overflowing | No power to multiple lights | Meter box replacement | Tree lopping |
| | Unsecured yard fence for small child | Communal area lights not working | Uneven, unsafe, irregular pathway/driveway | Lawn and garden maintenance |
| | Full stove not working | Repair TV reception (complexes) | Furniture replacement excluding bed (CMSU properties) | Mandatory, statutory and other essential maintenance services as required |
| | Any loose or faulty bannister or hand railings | Faulty internal door locks | | Site drainage |
| | Serious water penetration | Blocked drains – minor | | |
| | Seniors or incapacitated tenants who are locked out of their home during day. | Bed replacement (CMSU properties) | | |
| | Building unsecured after forced entry/break in | | | |
| | No water to property (e.g. through taps) | | | |



REPAIR CHARGES

Some property damage occurs as a result of deliberate action by a tenant, household member or visitor. This can be from misuse, carelessness or poor standard of cleaning. If the issue is not deemed as fair wear and tear you may be responsible for the repair costs.

MODIFICATIONS AND ALTERATIONS TO THE PROPERTY

If you would like to make any modifications or alterations to the property or garden please submit a request to our office. This includes painting, creating gardens, hanging picture hooks, installing air conditioners, changing fittings etc.

An Application for Alterations form is available from our office upon request. Your application will be reviewed and you will receive a response in writing.

CLEANING AND HYGEINE

Regular and effective cleaning in the household is important for reducing the risk of transmission of many germs. The following tips will assist with keeping your household clean and hygienic:

- Use different coloured cloths/sponges to clean different areas, e.g. kitchen, bathroom, toilet. This will help keep your cloths/sponges separate and prevent cross-contamination in your home
- Always read and follow the manufacturer's directions and safety information before using any cleaning products
- Follow a three-step process when cleaning your home:
 1. Use detergent, water and a clean cloth
 2. Rinse with water and a clean cloth
 3. Allow to dry
- Use a disinfectant product if a surface has been contaminated with an infectious material. Note: Disinfectants will not work on if the surface is dirty. You may need to clean with detergent and water first
- Clean the cleanest room first then the dirtier areas. This decreases the risk of contaminating a clean room with germs from a dirty room
- Wash your bedding and towels regularly
- If someone in your home is sick, frequently used items and surfaces should be cleaned at least once a day. This includes kitchen benches, tables, doorknobs, bathroom and kitchen taps, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets and bedside tables. Surfaces should be visibly clean
- To minimise your risk of catching or spreading a virus, follow these five tips:
 1. Clean your hands often with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rubs
 2. Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue or bent elbow when coughing or sneezing
 3. Avoid touching your face, nose and mouth
 4. Stay home if you are sick.
 5. Practise social distancing, which includes staying 1.5 metres away from others as much as you can.

For more information please visit <https://www.health.qld.gov.au/>



ENDING YOUR TENANCY

NOTIFYING RHL

In accordance with the RTA, you must notify RHL in writing. If you decide to move out, please notify our office as soon as you are able to. We will post you a vacate pack to assist in this process.

CLEANING AND REPAIRS

Please ensure the property is properly cleaned, all items and rubbish removed and the lawns/gardens left neat and tidy. If the property is not returned in an acceptable standard, we will engage contractors to complete any cleaning and/or repairs required. You will be required to pay for any costs associated.

For more information, please refer to the Moving out Guide for Tenants included in your vacate pack.

RETURNING KEYS AND DOCUMENTS

Once the property has been cleaned, please return the keys to our office, including any sets given to other household members. Please note, you will continue to be charged rent up until the day you return the keys to us.

When finalising your tenancy, we request you complete a Tenant Feedback Survey and a Key/Document Return Sheet. These forms provide us with valuable feedback and ensure we obtain your forwarding address and bank account details (if a refund is applicable).

BOND

If your property is returned in an acceptable standard and you have no outstanding debts, we will apply to the Residential Tenancies Authority to have your bond refunded. You will need to provide bank account details for the refund as the RTA no longer issues cheques.

REFERRALS TO SERVICES

If you feel you need any further assistance during your tenancy, please contact our office. We will discuss the type of assistance you require and the resources available to you depending on your needs and risks.

We may refer you to another community service, if required. We also accept referrals from other organisations.

Alternatively, please refer to the services listed on p. 11 of this handbook, or the below community directories for information on other community services in your area:

- Bundaberg Regional Community Directory
<https://www.bundaberg.qld.gov.au/community-directory>
- Fraser Coast Community Directory
http://www.mycommunitydirectory.com.au/Queensland/Fraser_Coast/
- South Burnett Community Directory
http://www.mycommunitydirectory.com.au/Queensland/South_Burnett/
- Townsville Community Directory
<http://www.mycommunitydirectory.com.au/Queensland/Townsville>



TRANSLATING AND INTERPRETER SERVICES

If you need interpreting assistance to help you understand the information in this booklet, please come into our office or contact the Translating and Interpreting Service on 131 450 and ask to call Regional Housing Limited on 07 4153 1239.

Auslan (Sign Language Communications)

If you need assistance to help you understand the information in this booklet or to discuss any other issues, an Auslan interpreter can be arranged to assist in communications

Arabic

إذا كنت بحاجة إلى ترجمة المساعدة لمساعدتك على فهم المعلومات الواردة في هذا الكتيب ، يرجى الدخول إلى مكتبنا أو الاتصال بخدمة على الرقم Regional Housing Limited 07 4153 1239 والترجمة والترجمة الفورية على الرقم 131 450 وطلب الاتصال بـ

Chinese (Simplified)

如果您需要口译服务以帮助您理解本手册中的信息，请进入我们的办公室或致电131 450联系翻译和口译服务，并要求致电区域住房有限公司，电话：07 4153 1239。

Chinese (Traditional)

如果您需要口譯服務以幫助您理解本手冊中的信息，請進入我們的辦公室或致電131 450聯繫翻譯和口譯服務，並要求致電區域住房有限公司，電話：07 4153 1239。

Croatian

Ako vam je potrebna pomoć za tumačenje kako bi vam pomogla da razumijete informacije u ovoj knjizi, molimo stupite u naš ured ili se obratite službi za prevođenje i tumačenje na 131 450 i zatražite da nazovete Regional Housing Limited na 07 4153 1239.

Filipino (Tagalog)

Kung kailangan mo ng pagbibigay-kahulugan sa tulong upang matulungan kang maunawaan ang impormasyon sa buklet na ito, mangyaring pumasok sa aming opisina o makipag-ugnayan sa Serbisyo ng Pagsasalin at Pag-iinterpret sa 131 450 at hilingin na tumawag sa Regional Housing Limited sa 07 4153 1239.

German

Wenn Sie Hilfe beim Dolmetschen benötigen, um die Informationen in dieser Broschüre zu verstehen, wenden Sie sich bitte an unser Büro oder wenden Sie sich an den Übersetzungs- und Dolmetschdienst unter 131 450 und wenden Sie sich an Regional Housing Limited unter 07 4153 1239.

Japanese

この小冊子の情報を理解するのに役立つ通訳が必要な場合は、弊社のオフィスに来るか、131 450の翻訳通訳サービスに連絡して、07 4153 1239にRegional Housing Limitedに電話してください。

Korean

이 책자에있는 정보를 이해하는 데 도움이되는 도움이 필요하면 우리 사무실에 들거나 번역 및 통역 서비스에 131 450으로 연락하여 07 4153 1239에 지역 주택 제한 전화를 요청하십시오

Spanish

Si necesita ayuda con la interpretación para ayudarlo a comprender la información de este folleto, ingrese a nuestra oficina o comuníquese con el Servicio de traducción e interpretación al 131 450 y solicite llamar a Regional Housing Limited al número 07 4153 1239.

Turkish

Bu kitapçığıtaki bilgileri anlamınıza yardımcı olacak yorumlama desteğine ihtiyacınız varsa, lütfen ofisimize gelin ya da 131 450 numaralı telefonda Yazılı ve Sözlü Tercüme Servisine başvurun ve 07 4153 1239 numaralı telefonda Regional Housing Limited'i arayınız.



IMPORTANT CONTACT NUMBERS

| EMERGENCY/MEDICAL | |
|---|---|
| Emergency Services – Police, Fire, Ambulance | 000 |
| SES | 13 25 00 |
| Bundaberg Base Hospital | (07) 4150 2222 |
| Hervey Bay Base Hospital | (07) 4325 6666 |
| Kingaroy Hospital | (07) 4162 9200 |
| Townsville University Hospital | (07) 4433 1111 |
| UTILITIES | |
| Ergon Energy – Connections | 13 10 46 |
| Ergon Energy – Faults | 13 22 96 |
| Origin Energy | 13 24 61 |
| Elgas | 1800 626 988 |
| Telstra | 1800 670 017 |
| HOTLINES AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS | |
| Beyond Blue | 1300 224 636 |
| Child Abuse Prevention Service | 1800 688 009 |
| Crime Stoppers | 1800 333 000 |
| Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy (Bundaberg) | (07) 4331 7900 |
| Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy (Townsville) | (07) 4724 8500 |
| Domestic Violence Hotline | 1800 811 811 |
| Homestay Program | |
| <i>Bundaberg – Centacare</i> | (07) 4131 6871 |
| <i>Kingaroy – Centacare</i> | (07) 4162 5439 |
| <i>Hervey Bay – Centacare</i> | (07) 3324 3800 |
| <i>Townsville – Australian Red Cross</i> | (07) 4753 0600 |
| Lifeline | 13 11 14 |
| NDIS Quality & Safeguards Commission | 1800 035 544 TTY 133 677 ndiscommission.gov.au |
| Poisons Information | 13 11 26 |
| Police Link (non-urgent) | 13 14 44 |
| TENANCY ADVICE, INFORMATION AND ADVOCACY | |
| State-wide services: | |
| Residential Tenancies Authority | 1300 366 311 |
| Queensland State-wide Tenant Advice and Referral Service (QSTARS) | 1300 744 263 |
| Region-based services: | |
| <i>Wide Bay/Burnett areas – People with Disability Australia</i> | 1800 422 015 |
| <i>Townsville – Independent Advocacy In The Tropics Inc.</i> | (07) 4725 2505 |



| LOCAL COUNCIL | |
|--------------------------------|----------------|
| Bundaberg Regional Council | 1300 883 699 |
| Fraser Coast Council | 1300 794 929 |
| South Burnett Regional Council | (07) 4189 9100 |
| Townsville City Council | 13 48 10 |

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your tenancy, please feel free to contact us

Street Address 30 Tantitha Street, Bundaberg QLD 4670
6/12 Nissen Street, Pialba QLD 4655
F4/340 Ross River Road, Aitkenvale QLD 4814

Postal PO Box 540, Bundaberg QLD 4670

Phone 1300 642 123

Fax 07 4153 4000

Email referrals@regionalhousing.org.au

Website www.regionalhousing.org.au