

Australian Capital Territory

NATIONAL HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS AGREEMENT

PRELIMINARIES

1. This Schedule is an agreement that is a supplementary housing agreement for the purposes of section 15C of the FFR Act.
2. This Schedule will commence as soon as the Commonwealth and the ACT sign this and the Agreement.
3. Unless terminated earlier or extended as agreed in writing by the Parties, this Schedule will:
 - (a) expire no later than 30 June 2023; and
 - (b) be replaced for further terms of up to five years by the written agreement of the Parties.
4. A Party to this Schedule may terminate their participation in the Agreement at any time by giving 12 months' notice of intention to do so, in writing, to the other Party.
5. This Schedule may be amended at any time by agreement in writing by the relevant Commonwealth and State portfolio ministers.
6. The purpose of this Schedule is to provide an indication of how the Australian Capital Territory (the ACT) intends to implement the conditions agreed in the Agreement, including the actions that will be undertaken as stated in the ACT's housing and homelessness strategies, and any actions to be undertaken by the ACT to support the Data Schedule.
7. To enable payments to commence from 2018-19, the ACT confirms that it satisfies the requirements of clause 17 of the Agreement as at 1 July 2018 and as set out in this Schedule. At the commencement of this Schedule, the ACT notes that its housing and homelessness strategies are currently set out in various public documents which are referenced in Parts 2 and 3 of this Schedule. During 2018-19, the ACT Government will be reviewing and updating its housing and homelessness strategies.

PART 1 – OVERVIEW

8. The prosperity and liveability of the ACT can conceal real disadvantage experienced by many at the individual level; in other words, the overall prosperity enjoyed is not always enjoyed equally. This is why the ACT Government spends around \$145 million each year on social housing and homelessness assistance, and pays \$144 million each year in rental rebates to help those who need it.

9. The ACT Government provides more than \$20 million to fund homelessness service providers to deliver intensive support and assistance to individuals and families who are homeless, and those who are at risk of becoming homeless, to address their individual circumstances and needs, and provide them with the skills and capacity to secure and sustain long term housing and better participate in the community. People seeking homelessness support in the ACT often have high and complex needs requiring a specialist response from skilled practitioners to provide the necessary case management and wrap-around support. There are also key groups in the ACT that need more support, such as older women, people sleeping rough, asylum seekers and migrants, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and women and children escaping domestic and family violence.
10. The ACT is working to strengthen the responsiveness of homelessness services to the needs of key and emerging vulnerable cohorts, supporting a balance between crisis and early intervention. Based on an extensive co-design process with the Specialist Homelessness Sector, the ACT Government has provided greater flexibility under service contract arrangements to enable homelessness services in the ACT to:
 - (a) resolve crises;
 - (b) re-establish family links where appropriate;
 - (c) re-establish the capacity of clients to live independently, achieve sustainable housing and social inclusion; and
 - (d) provide homelessness services in an equitable and efficient manner.
11. Changes to the ACT homelessness sector recognise that support should not be tied to accommodation, and services should have the flexibility to assist clients at risk of homelessness who are not residing in accommodation managed by the service. The new categorisations above reflect a more contemporary view of 'homelessness' which is a broader concept than 'not having a roof over your head'. The aim is to intervene as early as possible to help avert a crisis. Preventing homelessness requires much less intensive support and costs less than supporting a person in crisis accommodation.
12. The ACT is also seeking to embed holistic and trauma informed care throughout the homelessness sector and ensure there are pathways for clients and key vulnerable cohorts to exit from homelessness into long term accommodation. Key to successful outcomes for tenants transitioning from homelessness or crisis accommodation into mainstream housing is improving their access to appropriate assistance and supports that will assist them sustain their tenancy long term, improve their opportunities for participation and provide greater access to training, education and employment opportunities. This approach provides a clear pathway out of poverty, disadvantage and exclusion.
13. The ACT Government spends around \$125 million each year on social housing. This is in addition to \$144 million paid each year in rental rebates for public housing. We manage over 10,848 social housing properties with a value of over \$5 billion. This portfolio underpins the broader human services system in the ACT which provides accommodation, assets and purpose built facilities for not only public housing, but also people with mental health or disability needs, refugees, older persons, people exiting corrections, those in need of child protection or family safety, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people requiring homelessness and mainstream services.

14. The ACT has the most targeted public housing portfolio in Australia with housing being allocated to those in greatest need. Priority housing is offered to:
 - (a) people who are homeless;
 - (b) families with children;
 - (c) people formally diagnosed with mental health issues;
 - (d) women with or without children escaping domestic violence;
 - (e) children at risk of abuse or neglect;
 - (f) people with serious and chronic health issues;
 - (g) people with disability including frail-aged; and
 - (h) Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander persons and families having difficulty accessing private rental accommodation and facing complex issues.
15. The ACT public housing program provides long-term support to around 22,000 Canberrans. Significant work is being undertaken to ensure the long term viability and sustainability of public housing service delivery. This includes plans to grow and diversify the portfolio, renew ageing stock and ensure stock is appropriate to the needs of current and future households and demographics. A key challenge for the ACT is to continue to build affordable housing that maintains high design standards, including ensuring that as far as practicable, new public housing is made adaptable, energy efficient and accessible with links to transport and community services. The ACT also plans to strengthen levels of tenant choice in housing services through streamlined and innovative service delivery.

PART 2 – ACT HOUSING PRIORITIES

16. Under the *Treasury Laws Amendment (National Housing and Homelessness Agreement) Act 2018* and clause 17 (a) of the Agreement, States are required to have a publicly accessible housing strategy.
17. The ACT's Affordable Housing Action Plan 2007 is now over ten years old and will be replaced with a new ACT Housing Strategy in 2018. The new strategy will address legislative requirements and the requirements of clause 17 (a) of the primary housing agreement. It will cover the full housing spectrum, from homelessness, through public housing and affordable rental and home purchase opportunities, through to supporting a sustainable, diverse and equitable supply of housing for the ACT community.
18. In supporting the delivery of programs, services and reforms with respect to housing, homelessness and housing affordability, the ACT agrees to undertake the commitments outlined in the following table. The table below includes details of the ACT's housing priorities, policies and initiatives that are in addition to or supersede the ACT's Affordable Housing Action Plan.

Key commitment	Policy/Action	Timeframe and Performance Indicator
Targets for land release	The ACT will set and publish annual targets for provision of public, community and affordable housing as part of the Indicative Land Release Program.	Targets set in June each year alongside the ACT Government's Indicative Land Release Program.
Continue to invest in innovation to support more affordable housing options.	Deliver the Affordable Housing Innovation Fund to explore and test new solutions to increase affordable housing and reduce homelessness in the ACT.	Funding Agreements put in place for successful projects before the end of June 2018, with appropriate delivery, reporting and payment milestones over 12 months from date of grant
Encourage the growth of affordable housing in the private sector.	<p>Promotion of an Affordable Home Purchase Registration Database</p> <p>Establishment of Affordable Housing Purchaser Eligibility Criteria to require purchasers of dedicated Affordable Homes to meet new eligibility criteria to ensure affordable homes are targeted effectively.</p>	Eligibility criteria and database already established. Delivery to be tested throughout 2018 and 2019, Performance to be measured by how many dedicated affordable homes are matched successfully to eligible purchasers
Investigate possible planning and zoning reform to facilitate affordable housing projects and improve housing choice	Housing Choices community engagement process and Demonstration Housing project	To be progressed throughout 2018 to 2020. Performance to be measured by successful construction of demonstration housing projects, completion of community engagement process and subsequent review of any planning changes.

Key commitment	Policy/Action	Timeframe and Performance Indicator
Renewing existing stock of social housing to meet contemporary tenant need.	Identify and develop initiatives to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • diversify social housing stock; and • renew aging and inefficient housing stock. Construct public housing dwellings that are built to national liveable design standards.	The ACT Government is undertaking a program to renew 1,288 public housing properties by June 2019 to improve outcomes for public housing tenants and support the renewal of Canberra’s urban areas. The ACT Government has invested \$608 million in the public housing renewal program in the 2015–16, 2016–17, 2017–18 and 2018-19 Budgets, supporting the sale of older properties that are no longer fit for purpose, the construction and purchase of replacement housing and the relocation of tenants.
Improve viability and growth of social housing	Review the existing ACT social housing model to improve viability. Identify and develop initiatives to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • achieve efficiencies; and • Improve stock utilisation. 	Development of a long term asset management plan.
Innovative programs to improve the social housing experience	Improve tenant accessibility and choice through the implementation of a digital service delivery platform.	Staged implementation commenced in 2017-18 and will continue over the life of this agreement.

PART 3 – ACT HOMELESSNESS PRIORITIES

19. Under the *Treasury Laws Amendment (National Housing and Homelessness Agreement) Act 2018* and clause 17(b) of the Agreement, States are required to have a publicly accessible homelessness strategy.
20. As discussed in Part 2, the ACT's Affordable Housing Action Plan addresses homelessness but is now over ten years old and will be replaced with a new ACT Housing Strategy in 2018. The new strategy will address legislative requirements, the requirements of clause 17 (b) of the primary housing agreement and will cover the full housing spectrum, including policies, programs and initiatives to address homelessness.
21. The table below includes details of the ACT's homelessness priorities, policies and initiatives that are in addition to or supersede the ACT's Affordable Housing Action Plan.

Key commitment	Policy or program	National Priority Cohort	Timeframe
Beyond a crisis response for domestic and family violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commit dedicated funding for services to exclusively provide support to women and children in need of an immediate safety response. • Pilot services to support women and children to stay at home when it's safe to do so. • Pilot a therapeutic program targeting people who use violence to effect long term behavioural change 	Women and children affected by family and domestic violence	Service Funding Agreements in place until 30 June 2019.
Provide youth specific services to support young people obtain/sustain appropriate forms of long term housing and participate in the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported accommodation outreach and tenancy management support for young parents with children. • Support to access and sustain long term accommodation • Assist young people to reside with a support family of choice • Supporting young people to engage with the private rental market, • Mentoring and life skills training • Support to access and engage in education training and employment 	Children and Young people	Service Funding Agreements in place until 30 June 2019.

Key commitment	Policy or program	National Priority Cohort	Timeframe
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are at risk of, or experiencing homelessness, are supported with services that respond their needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support for young ATSI people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. • Outreach support and case management for young ATSI people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. • Provide advice and advocacy to support service users to access appropriate housing options and support people to sustain their tenancies. • Explore options to build a purpose built support accommodation complex for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander older people 	Indigenous Australians	Service Funding Agreements in place until 30 June 2019.
Provide support which contributes to a reduction in the incidence of homelessness, including repeat homelessness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening support for households to sustain tenancies and prevent homelessness. • Long term supportive accommodation for those who need it. • Provide early intervention and outreach support to those at risk of homelessness to maintain housing and assist service users to access sustainable housing. • Undertaking research into the support needs and built form for people who require long term supportive accommodation to remain out of homelessness. 	People experiencing repeat homelessness	<p>Service Funding Agreements in place until 30 June 2019.</p> <p>Research to be finalised by June 2018</p>
Reducing homelessness amongst those exiting care and institutions, including the corrections system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A better coordinated system across ACT Government by improving linkages with existing support programs for people who are homeless or at risk (including current managed accommodation for men exiting the corrections system 	People exiting institutions and care into homelessness	Service Funding Agreements in place until 30 June 2019.
Better understand the support needs of older people who are at risk of, or are experiencing, homelessness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate affordable long-term accommodation options for older women at risk of or experiencing homelessness. 	Older people	2018-19

PART 4 – JOINT REFORM COMMITMENTS

22. The ACT and the Commonwealth will explore opportunities to share data and undertake agreed projects to share and link social housing and homelessness data with social security and other datasets.

PART 5 – STATE-SPECIFIC MEASUREMENT

23. State-specific indicators may be agreed between the Parties from time to time.

PART 6 – REPORTING

24. The ACT will report annually on the implementation of the reforms and initiatives agreed in Parts 2, 3 and 5 of this Schedule. Reporting will be provided to the Commonwealth Minister with portfolio responsibility for housing and homelessness and will be made publicly available.
25. Reporting will consist of the following:
 - (a) The ACT's Community Services Directorate Annual Report, released within 15 weeks of the end of the reporting year each year (mid-October), provides comprehensive reporting on the social housing and homelessness sectors and includes key statistics and data as well as strategic performance indicators. This report will cover the implementation of social housing and homelessness reforms and initiatives outlined in Parts 2 and 3 of this agreement;
 - (b) The ACT's Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate Annual Report, released within 15 weeks of the end of the reporting year each year (mid-October), provides comprehensive reporting on land release, planning policy and planning delivery related to the broader housing market, including affordable housing initiatives. This report includes key statistics and data as well as strategic performance indicators and will cover the implementation of broader housing market reforms and initiatives outlined in Parts 2 and 3 of this agreement; and
 - (c) Reporting on any remaining initiatives, not covered by the above reports.

PART 7 – OTHER CONDITIONS/PRIORITY POLICY AREAS

26. Other conditions and/or priority policy areas may be agreed between the Parties from time to time

PART 8 – SIGN OFF

27. The Parties have confirmed their commitment to this agreement as follows:

Signed for and on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia by

The Honourable Scott Morrison MP
Treasurer of the Commonwealth of Australia

June 2018

Signed for and on behalf of the ACT by



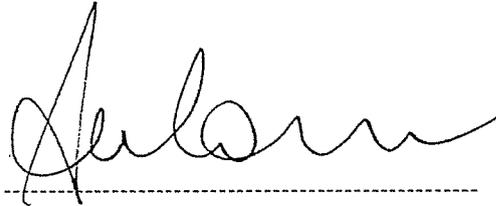
Andrew Barr MLA
Chief Minister of the Australian Capital Territory

12 June 2018

PART 8 – SIGN OFF

27. The Parties have confirmed their commitment to this agreement as follows:

Signed for and on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia by



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Scott Morrison', is written over a horizontal dashed line.

The Honourable Scott Morrison MP
Treasurer of the Commonwealth of Australia

14 June 2018

Signed for and on behalf of the ACT by

Andrew Barr MLA
Chief Minister of the Australian Capital Territory

June 2018