

148 Eligibility for \$5 Minimum Rent Policy

1. Customer Statement

At Link Wentworth our customers and communities are at the centre of what we do. We are committed to:

- treating our customers with compassion and respect
- communicating clearly so that our customers can make informed decisions
- providing fair service by following the right process
- working openly with customers to find shared solutions
- following all relevant laws and regulations

2. Purpose

In some situations, Link Wentworth will assess a tenant or household member's contribution to the rent payable as \$5 per week.

3. Scope

This policy relates to all Link Wentworth tenants and adult household members living in social housing properties who are receiving a rent subsidy. This policy does not include Affordable Housing tenants.

4. Policy

Link Wentworth recognises that there are times when additional assistance beyond a rent subsidy is needed to make the rent affordable.

Eligibility

A tenant or adult household member's rent contribution may be reduced to \$5 per week for a limited time when the tenant or adult household member moves to other accommodation for which they will have to pay, or they are not receiving an income.

Link Wentworth may reduce a tenant or household member's contribution to the rent to \$5 a week in the following situations:

Residential Aged Care Facility/Other Temporary Accommodation – Three (3) month review

A tenant or adult household member is required to pay an accommodation fee while temporarily staying in a residential aged care facility, a rehabilitation centre, respite care, or in a refuge (or other safe place) after leaving domestic violence.

We will continue to include the income of other adult household members living in the property when we calculate the total rent for the tenancy.

Link Wentworth offers a \$5 per week rent contribution for a maximum of six months.

Reference: **148**
Approved by: **CCuO**

Eligibility for \$5 Minimum Rent Policy

Date Approved: **15 July 2022** Version: **1.1** Next Review: **30/06/2024**

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We review the \$5 rent approval after three months and extend or cancel it depending on your circumstances. If you are the tenant, we expect you to relinquish your tenancy if you move into a residential aged care facility, rehabilitation centre, respite, or refuge for a period of more than six months. In this situation, other adult household members may be eligible to succeed the tenancy under our Succession Policy

Prison

A tenant who is in prison for six months or less is eligible for the \$5 minimum rent.

We will continue to include the income of other adult household members living in the property when we calculate the total rent for the tenancy.

Link Wentworth offers the \$5 per week rent contribution for a maximum of six months.

We expect you to relinquish your tenancy if you remain in prison for a period of more than six months. In this situation, other adult household members may be eligible to succeed the tenancy under our Succession Policy.

If you are in prison and unable to contact us, your advocate or parole officer can contact us on your behalf, with your written consent.

Centrelink Means Test

If you are not eligible for a Centrelink income because your partner earns too much, we may agree to reduce your rent contribution to \$5 per week.

Youth Allowance/Abstudy and the Parental Means Test

If you are a household member (not the tenant) we may agree to reduce your rent contribution to \$5 per week if you are not eligible to receive Youth Allowance or Abstudy due to Centrelink's family / parental means test and both of the following apply to you:

- Centrelink does not consider you to be economically independent.
- You have no other income.

Immigration Status

If you are a household member (not the tenant) and not eligible for Centrelink benefits because you are a sponsored migrant within a two-year waiting period, we may agree to reduce your rent contribution to \$5 a week. We will consider this if you meet all of the following conditions:

- You hold a temporary visa.
- Your visa is not a New Zealand non-protected Special Category Visa.
- You are waiting for a Department of Immigration and Border Protection decision on your permanent visa.
- You have no other income.

Death

Upon the death of a tenant, Link Wentworth may agree to reduce the rent contribution to \$5 per week if the family is experiencing financial difficulty whilst finalising the tenancy. If approved, we apply the \$5 rent for a maximum of two weeks.

Tenants Transferring from other Community Housing Providers

If you are transferring to a Link Wentworth property from another community housing provider, we charge \$5 rent for the first two weeks of your new tenancy.

Evidence

A tenant or adult household member must substantiate all claims for \$5 per week rent. Evidence may include an invoice detailing nursing home or rehabilitation fees, a Death Certificate/Notice, an order of imprisonment from Corrective Services, a copy of a Visa to confirm immigration status or a confirmation from Centrelink of statutory income ineligibility.

5. Definitions

Tenant – the person or persons who has signed a Residential Tenancy Agreement with Link Wentworth.

Adult household member – a person or persons over the age of eighteen (18) years whose names do not appear on the Residential Tenancy Agreement but are authorised by Link Wentworth to reside in the property.

Succession – when Link Wentworth allows an eligible adult household member to take over the tenancy of a tenant who has died or left the property permanently due to ill health, disability, or imprisonment.

Community Housing Provider – a not-for-profit organisation that provides housing to people in need.

6. Legislative or other applicable framework

- *Residential Tenancies Act 2010*

7. Complaints and appeals

An Applicant for social housing who is not happy with a decision we make or who believes that we have not followed this policy can complain or appeal using the complaints and appeals policies that are available on the Link Wentworth website www.linkwentworth.org.au or by phoning Link Wentworth on 9412 5111.

8. References

- Succession Policy
- Death of a Tenant Policy
- Rental Subsidy Policy

8. Privacy and Confidentiality

Link Wentworth has obligations and responsibilities under its Privacy Policy please refer to the policy for further information.

Approval, Policy Owner and Review Frequency

Policy type:	Management Level
Executive Leadership Team owner:	Chief Customer Officer
Business owner:	Head of Tenancy
Ultimate Approval body:	ELT-member
Review Frequency:	Every two years or more frequently if circumstances warrant.

Approved by – Chief Customer Officer