



310 Youth Rent Incentive Scheme 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

This policy explains Link Wentworth's Youth Rent Incentive Scheme, developed to support young people living in transitional housing to achieve better futures.

3. Scope

This policy applies to young people who are residents in Link Wentworth transitional housing properties, with nomination rights allocated to Taldumande Youth Services, the Burdekin Youth Association, Phoenix House, and Platform Youth. Future services that provide transitional housing to young people will also be provided the opportunity to enter into this scheme. This policy excludes tenants in Link Wentworth Affordable, Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA), social and leasehold programs.

4. Policy

We support young people in transitional housing to successfully move to the private rental market. We do this by ensuring our transitional rent settings promote participation in employment and encourage young people to accumulate savings.

We provide all young people living in our transitional accommodation with the opportunity to participate in our Youth Rent Incentive Scheme.

Generally, young people living in transitional housing pay a subsidised rent based on 25 percent of income and 100 percent of CRA, in line with social housing rent policy and set out in our Rent Subsidy Policy. When extra income is earned, the subsidy is adjusted and rent increases.

Young people in our transitional accommodation who start working can agree to participate in the Youth Rent Incentive Scheme. This involves paying the same rent as you paid before starting work and were receiving a benefit payment. This means we do not include income from paid employment when calculating your rent if you participate in the Youth Rent Incentive Scheme.

Youth Rent Incentive Scheme eligibility

To participate in the Youth Rent Incentive Scheme, you must:

- be 16 – 24 years old and on Youth Allowance or a similar payment
- be living in Link Wentworth transitional housing
- have or get a job
- agree to save at least \$50 a fortnight once you earn \$600 or more a fortnight.

Rent calculation

Youth Rent Incentive Scheme participants

We calculate your rent under the Youth Rent Incentive Scheme as follows:

- if you are aged between 17 and up to 22 years – 25% of Youth Allowance plus 100% of the amount of CRA you would receive on Youth Allowance
- if you are 22 years or over – 25% of JobSeeker Payment plus 100% of the amount of CRA you would receive on JobSeeker Payment

Non-participants

If you do not participate in the Youth Rent Incentive Scheme, we increase your rent in line with our Rent Policy.

Participants earning less than \$600 per fortnight

If you participate in the Youth Rent Incentive Scheme and earn less than \$600 a fortnight, we encourage you to save money but it is not a requirement.

Rent and other arrears

We consider repayment of all arrears a priority. If you have rent or other arrears, we encourage you to set up a repayment plan with us. This involves using a reasonable amount of your additional income from working to pay off your arrears in a timely manner. Your youth service may help you to set up the repayment.

Change of participation status

You can start participating in the Youth Rent Incentive Scheme at any time after starting paid employment. If you choose not to participate when you first start working, you can change your mind later. We adjust your rent from the date we receive the information and copy of your agreement to save.

Accessing the Youth Rent Incentive Scheme

You must inform your youth service when you start or are advised of gaining new employment. Youth services are responsible for supporting your participation in the Youth Rent Incentive Scheme. They support you to develop a formal agreement to save, a savings plan and the necessary banking arrangements.

Your youth service advises us of your details, agreement to participate and a copy of your agreement to save, as set out in the Youth Rent Incentive Scheme procedures. See Attachment 1 for an agreement to save template.

5. Definitions

Transitional housing is short-term accommodation (up to two years) for young people who have previously been homeless or at risk of homelessness. Young people living in transitional housing receive support from Specialist Homelessness Services and some youth services.

Youth services partners are youth service organisation with nomination rights to Link Wentworth housing.

6. References

- 101 - Rent Subsidy Policy
- 144 - Arrears Management Policy
- 310P - Youth Rent Incentive Scheme Procedures

7. Privacy and confidentiality

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

8. Complaints and appeals

A transitional accommodation resident who is not happy with a decision made by Link Wentworth or who believes that Link Wentworth has not followed this policy can complain or appeal using the complaints and appeals policies available on the Link Wentworth website www.linkwentworth.org.au or by phoning Link Wentworth on 9412 5111.

Approval, policy owner and review frequency

Policy type:	Management Level
Executive Leadership Team owner:	Chief Customer Officer
Business owner:	Head of Community Outcomes and Partnerships
Ultimate Approval body:	Executive Leadership Team owner
Review Frequency:	Annual or more frequently if circumstances warrant.

Approved by – **Chief Customer Officer**

Attachment 1 – Agreement to Save Template

Youth Rent Incentive Scheme Savings Agreement

This Agreement sets out how much (*insert name of young person*) agrees to save each fortnight that s/he is employed. The minimum amount is \$50 per fortnight if earning \$600 or more a fortnight.

Amount to be saved each fortnight: *insert \$ amount*

Date that savings are to start: *insert date*

Savings goal (how much do you want to save) *insert \$ amount*

Name of bank *insert name of bank*

I hereby agree to save a minimum of \$_____ per fortnight whilst I am earning \$_____ or more a fortnight.

I understand that I need to save towards the cost of renting and so commit to not withdrawing savings from my account.

.....
Signature of young person member

.....
Signature of Youth Services staff

.....
Name of young person member

.....
Name of Youth Service staff

.....
Insert date

.....
Insert date