

How we review your rent

This information sheet explains the process Foundation Housing uses to review the rent it charges tenants. It also explains why your consent to access your Centrelink statements can make the process simpler for you.

Consent Form and what you may give permission for

You will be given an Authorisation Form which invites you to give Foundation Housing permission for three separate things, and you are free to choose any number of them. Whilst all three should take the stress out of having to deal with CentreLink, the second is the one that enables us to download a centrelink Statement so we can decide what your rent should be. Many tenants have already returned this form and have seen the benefit.

- 1 The first consent allows Foundation Housing to inform Centrelink about your accommodation so that they can automatically adjust your Rent Assistance.
- 2 The second consent allows Foundation Housing to download a Centrelink statement for you, and this means you do not have to ask Centrelink for one yourself and then forward it to Foundation Housing.
- 3 The third consent allows Foundation Housing to adjust your Centrepay which saves you the time and effort of having to go to Centrelink yourself. You would always be notified if changes are made.

Many tenants have previously signed a permission form allowing us to download a Centrelink statement. The Multiple Consent Authority form (MCA) was introduced in 2014 to make the rent process more convenient for tenants.

What happens when it is time to review your rent

Our rent review process depends on obtaining your income details within a specific timeframe and there are three main ways we can do this:

- 1 We look up your Centrelink statement if you have given permission for us to do so.

We then calculate your rent. We will notify you of the new amount so that you can make sure your payments are changed by the due date.

- 2 We may ask you for more information if your income is not clear from your Centrelink statement.

Sometimes, after downloading your statement, we realize that we need more information. In this case, we will set your rent at the maximum amount and give you a starting date for the change however, don't be alarmed by this. We will also let you know what extra information we need, and after you provide this, we will calculate your subsidy and notify you of the reduced amount.

Supplying the missing details by the due date means that you will avoid having to pay any rent at the maximum amount, so it is important to respond straight away.



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3 We may notify you straight away that we need you to supply your income details to us.

In this case, we will set your rent at the maximum amount and give you a starting date for the change, however, don't be alarmed by this. We will also let you know what extra information we need, and when you provide this, we will calculate your subsidy and notify you of the reduced amount.

Supplying the missing details by the due date means that you will avoid having to pay any rent at the maximum amount, so it is important to respond straight away.

In all cases we will send you a Household Declaration for you to complete and return to us.

It is very important to note that if you are late returning your income details to us, and the maximum rent begins to be charged, no backdating will apply and any reduction in rent will only apply from the next rent charge date.

What we need if we request that you send income details to us

Sometimes we ask for more information because your Centrelink statement may show that you have some income that is not regular. Sometimes we do not have authorisation for downloading a statement, and sometimes the statement is not accessible, even though you have given permission.

In either case, the types of documents we will require are listed below:

- A completed and signed Household Declaration.
- All MCA forms allowing Foundation Housing to download Centrelink Statements, or full Centrelink Income Statements if you have not given permission for us to download then directly.
- If you receive a pension from Veterans' Affairs, we need a Full Statement of Income and Assets.
- All income details as outlined on the Household Declaration, for all members of your household.
- If you work, we need payslips for at least the preceding four weeks.*

** If your income is of a seasonal nature (for example if you only work during school term or if your hours change at times such as at Christmas) you may submit, or be asked to submit, payslips that cover a longer period. This will ensure that we get the most accurate income information.*

If you are late returning your details, or if we have to ask for more documents, there will be no backdating of any maximum rate that has already commenced.

If you need to know more, please contact your Housing Coordinator, who will be happy to help you.