

# How we review your rent

This information sheet explains the process we use to review the rent we charge. It also explains why giving us permission to access your Centrelink statements can make the process simpler for you.

## Authorisation Form and what you can give us permission for

We will give you an Authorisation Form which you can use to give us permission to deal directly with Centrelink for three separate things. You can give us permission for any combination of these things; you don't have to give permission for all of them. Giving Foundation Housing authorisation for all three options means you won't have to deal directly with Centrelink about your rent. The most helpful option is the second one as this allows us to download your Centrelink statement so we can work out how much rent to charge you.

- 1 The first option allows us to tell Centrelink about your accommodation so they can automatically adjust your rent assistance.
- 2 The second option allows us to download a Centrelink statement for you. This means you do not have to ask Centrelink for one yourself and then send it to us.
- 3 The third option allows us to adjust your Centrepay if your rent changes. We will always tell you if we make any changes.

Authorising us to deal with Centrelink directly using any of these options saves you the time and effort of having to go to Centrelink yourself. It also ensures you are always paying the correct amount of rent, and avoid paying too much rent because we didn't have all the information we needed.

## What happens when it is time to review your rent

Our rent review process depends on us having the details of your income by a deadline, and there are two main ways we can get the details we need.

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

We then simply work out your rent. We will tell you the new amount so you can make sure you change your payments by the due date.

- We may ask you for more information if your income is not clear from your Centrelink statement, or if you have other income such as wages.

Sometimes, after downloading your statement, we realise that we need more information. Sometimes we can't download a statement for you. If you work or receive other income we need you to send your income details in to us.

We will set your rent at the maximum amount and give you a starting date for the change. Don't be alarmed by this.

We will let you know what extra information we need, and after you send this in, we will work out how much your rent should be and tell you the new amount.

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**Sending us the information we need 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.**

It is very important to remember that if you are late returning your income details to us, and the maximum rent starts, we cannot backdate the result of our rent review and any reduction in rent will only apply from the next rent charge.

## **What we need if we ask you to send income details to us**

If we ask for details of your income, these are the kinds of documents we need.

- An Authorisation Form allowing us to download Centrelink statements, or a current Centrelink income statement if you do not want to give us permission to download them.
- If you receive a pension from Veterans' Affairs we need a full statement of your income and assets. It is important to explain this when you ask the Department of Veterans' Affairs for the necessary paperwork because staff there are used to providing a different document for Housing Authority tenants. You can also give us permission to contact the Department of Veterans' Affairs on your behalf and ask them to send you the correct paperwork.
- If you work, we need payslips for at least the last four weeks.

If your income is seasonal (for example, if you only work during the school term or if your hours change at times such as at Christmas) you may send in, or we may ask you to send in, payslips that cover a longer period of time. This means we will be able to use the most accurate information about your income.

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



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