



Procedure

Accommodation assistance

Policy Statement

Queensland Health have established a Rural and Remote Incentive Scheme to attract employees to isolated areas across Queensland. As part of this scheme, the provision of accommodation assistance is provided to eligible employees appointed or transferred to approved locations, including Central West Hospital and Health Service (CWHHS).

1. Purpose

The intent of the procedure is to outline the application of this procedure (i.e. Accommodation Assistance – Rural and Remote Incentive Policy (D5)) at CWHHS. Specifically, it will set the expectations of this procedure through the following areas, for the provision of accommodation:

- Eligibility roles and responsibilities and
- Provision of accommodation.

2. In Scope

- Management and related processes for the provision of residential accommodation owned by the state.
- Payment of rental assistance.

3. Out of Scope

- Management and related processes for privately rented residential accommodation.

4. Principles

4.1 Eligibility

In accordance with the Queensland Health Accommodation Assistance – Rural and Remote Incentive Policy (D5), the eligibility criteria are based on the approved locations provided as part of this procedure.

4.2 Criteria

CWHHS has set out the criteria for accommodation assistance to ensure consistent application of the D5 Policy, ensuring equitable provisions exist for all CWHHS staff in order to maximise



retention of skills and capability within the health service. The following table outlines the proposed accommodation eligibility under the Accommodation Assistance Standard for each role within CWHHS.

Where employees are not entitled to housing under an award instrument, the HSCE may exercise discretionary power to supply subsidised housing. The HHS recognises that accommodation assistance may be required due to the remote location of the HHS's facilities and is used as a key recruitment and retention strategy to attract staff to the health service if:

- Relocating from outside the CWHHS to take up work with the HHS or
- Relocation from within the CWHHS region to take up work at another HHS community.

In **all other cases**, a business case must be prepared to demonstrate that there is an operational requirement that warrants the eligibility for housing. Incentives such as housing must always be needs-based and offered as part of a recruitment and retention strategy. The provision of housing assistance will be subject to funding and physical housing stock availability. The business case must be prepared by the relevant Line Manager in conjunction with their Executive Director or General Manager and be approved by the HSCE prior to advertising a vacancy.

Table One – Accommodation Assistance Schedule

| Role | Status | | |
|--|----------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| | Single | Couple | Family |
| Management (A08, A07) Senior Medical Officers (Level 13+)^ Resident Medical Officer Nurse Grade 7 – 12* Health Practitioner Grade 4 – 7+ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers (Level HW8-HW9) Operational Officers (OO8 – OO10)[∞] | Duplex/ Townhouse | Duplex/ Townhouse | House |
| Nurse Grade 1 – 6* Health Practitioner Grade 1 – 3+ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers (Level HW4-HW7) Operational Officers (OO4 – OO7)[∞] Administrative Officers (AO4 – AO6)^l | Quarters | Duplex/ Townhouse | House |
| Other non-locally based personnel | \$82.50/ week | \$82.50/ week | \$82.50/ week |

- ^ Medical Officer levels are based on the Medical Officers' (Queensland Health) Certified Agreement (No. 4) 2015
- * Nursing grades are based on the Nurses and Midwives (Queensland Health and Department of Education and Training) Certified Agreement (EB9) 2016



- ⁺ Health Practitioner grades are based on the Health Practitioners and Dental Officers (Queensland Health Certified Agreement (No. 2) 2016
- [∞] Operational Officer levels based on Hospital and Health Service General Staff
- ^a Executive Management accommodation assistance arrangements – refer to the Health Service Chief Executive.

Accommodation conditions

Line managers are required to consult with the facility Business Manager prior to advertising a vacancy and complete the housing request form. The Form is available from Business Managers.

If there is no suitable accommodation available for the new employee, then the rental assistance of \$82.50 per week will be provided. After three years, the rental subsidy allowance of \$82.50 per week is to cease.

CWHHS accommodation will not be available to staff members who are casual, own a residence in the location of employment or have access to public or private housing through other organisations.

No compensation will be made to employees who elect of their own volition to reside in their own accommodation where CWHHS accommodation is provided. The provision of housing is linked to recruitment requirements.

Accommodation rental charges are to apply for employees identified in Table One who have had the accommodation charge waived. After 18 months, the rental charge will be payable at 50% of market value and then at three years, the rental charge will be 80%.

4.3 Provision of furniture

Employees appointed to a position permanently will not be provided with furnished accommodation unless a brief is completed to an Executive or delegate to validate reasons. Primary Health Centres are exempt and may be provided with furniture. If furniture is provided, it will not be replaced - it is the responsibility of the tenant to purchase their own furniture. Exemptions are fixtures e.g. stove, air conditioners.

Furnished accommodation will be provided for short term, temporary staff up to 12 months.



4.4 Tenancy during periods of leave

Staff residing in CWHHS accommodation may be required to relinquish their accommodation when taking paid leave, for greater than twenty-six (26) weeks.

Employees on unpaid leave greater than three (3) months are required to surrender their accommodation unless otherwise agreed in writing, by the HSCE.

If an employee vacates a tenancy, it is the responsibility of the employee to make storage or removal arrangements for their belongings.

4.5 Abandonment of employment

Abandonment of employment will immediately terminate the tenancy agreement. The CWHHS reserves the right to remove the employee's contents and store in accordance with the Act.

After three (3) months, property will be considered abandoned and the CWHHS reserves the right to dispose of property to cover costs of any removal and storage expenses incurred.

4.6 Secondments

Employees who do not reside in their allocated quarters/premises or temporarily vacate their allocated quarters/premises for longer than three (3) months due to living in other accommodation may be asked to surrender their accommodation. Individual secondments will be assessed on case by case basis, including storage arrangements.

4.7 Purchase of private dwellings

If an employee, or partner of an employee, purchases a private dwelling within fifty (50) kilometres of the employment centre, they must advise the HSCE within one month of the purchase. In situ tenants must also advise the HSCE within one month of the commencement of this Policy if they, or their partner, own a private dwelling in the employment centre. The employee will be required to show cause why their tenancy should not be terminated within thirty (30) days of the notice in writing.

4.8 Utilities – electricity etc

Employees in staff quarters or shared tenancies will continue to receive subsidised utilities, all other tenants in duplex or house accommodation are required to pay their own electricity, gas, phone. The Primary Health Centres in the Western Hub will be provided with subsidised electricity.

WiFi arrangements are at the tenant's own cost unless CWHHS WiFi is available.

4.9 Changes in circumstances

Changes to an employee's status (e.g. single, couple, separated) and the resulting requirement for an upgrade/downgrade in accommodation/property type are required to be discussed and agreed by Management, prior to endorsement of this procedure.

Employees are not automatically entitled to an upgrade of accommodation when personal circumstances change due to a new partner or new children. However, employees may request a change in housing, setting out their circumstances and their housing needs, through their relevant Line Manager in conjunction with their Executive Director or General Manager. Any change in housing granted will be made in line with the housing allocation principles described above.



Where there has been a change in the number of family occupying the tenancy due to separation or a change to dependants' status, the employee must inform their Line Manager immediately and this may result in a change of allocation.

Employees seconded to another health service or location for more than six months may be required to relinquish their accommodation.

4.10 Relocations

The allocation of a residence at the commencement of employment does not guarantee a permanent entitlement to that residence. Employees may be required to be relocated due to operational requirements such as changes in demand for types of accommodation, the availability of housing stock, or the affordability of private lease arrangements.

Where an employee is relocated due to operational requirements, every effort will be made to minimise the impact to the employee and the CWHHS will cover the cost of the relocation, including packing boxes and provide assistance to move belongings. Notification of a requirement to relocate will be provided in writing to the employee. Tenants in sole tenancies must be given at least two months' notice prior to the required relocation date. Tenants in shared tenancies will be given at least 30 days' notice. The employee will be allocated two (2) working days within those timeframes to affect the move.

4.11 Cleaning and damage restitution fee

All tenants will be required to sign a Payroll Deduction Form when receiving the key. If damage is found upon the exit inspection or a commercial / pet / smoke damage clean is required, the Payroll Deduction Form will be sent to payroll for processing in the next pay cycle for the cost of the commercial cleaning and/or repairs to any damage.

4.12 Garden maintenance

Tenants in sole tenancies will be required to arrange for the maintenance of the lawns and gardens, including any associated fees for dumping. Storage is provided at all tenancies which can be used to store equipment. It will be the responsibility of the tenant to ensure they store fuel safely. Cars are not to be parked on any grassed areas.

CWHHS will be responsible for maintaining lawns and garden edging for on campus accommodation or off campus quarters accommodation.

4.13 Insurance

CWHHS does not insure tenants/employee's possessions and suitable coverage is a matter for each individual tenant/employee.

4.14 Health Service Chief Executive Authority

The HSCE has the authority to approve employee housing allocations that are not within the scope of this Policy, including consideration of housing related to part-time positions, temporary staff or visiting staff.



4.15 Repairs/Faults/Complaints

Repairs and faults should be reported to the Hub Business Manager.

Complaints will be managed as per the CWHHS Complaints Process Guide, noting in the first instance the complaint is to be lodged with the Hub Business Manager. Any complaints which are of an HR nature will be referred back to the Line Manager.

4.16 Transition of existing provisions

Previous accommodation assistance provided to employees will continue until such time as they exit CWHHS employment and/or no longer require the accommodation provided (i.e. relocation to private premises within the health service). In particular, the following provisions will be phased out and will no longer be provided to any new CWHHS employees:

- Accommodation charges waived for up to for 18 months
- A rental rate of \$165 per fortnight payable after 18 months and
- Electricity costs.

5. Related policies and procedures

- Departmental Policy D5 - Accommodation Assistance – Rural and Remote Incentive
- Departmental Policy C2 – Remote Area Nursing Incentive Package (RANIP)
- Public Service Commission Directive 11/11 - Transfer and Appointment Expenses.
- Supporting documents

6. Legislative or other authority

- Medical Officers' (Queensland Health) Certified Agreement (No. 4) 2015
- Nurses and Midwives (Queensland Health and Department of Education and Training) Certified Agreement (EB9) 2016
- Health Practitioners and Dental Officers (Queensland Health Certified Agreement [No. 2] 2016
- Queensland Public Health Sector Certified Agreement (No. 9) 2016

7. RACIE Matrix

Table 1 RACIE Matrix

| Role | Name | CWHHS position |
|--------------------|--|------------------------------|
| Responsible | Recommends all new and changed accommodation requests for Health Service Chief Executive (HSCE) approval | Executive Director Workforce |



| Role | Name | CWHHS position |
|--------------------|---|--|
| | Confirms approved budget exists for recruitment and selection requirements | Governance and Information Management (EDWGIM) |
| Responsible | <p>Maintains premises to expected standards of accommodation provider (i.e. Queensland Health, Government Employee Housing or private lease arrangement)</p> <p>Immediately notifies CWHHS Business Manager or Property Agent of any maintenance issue</p> <p>CWHHS will recover bond/security deposit</p> <p>Provides a minimum of two weeks' notice period for entry and exiting of accommodation</p> | Employee |
| Accountable | <p>Approve all new and changed accommodation requests</p> <p>Approves all recruitment and selection requests</p> <p>Provides oversight over CWHHS Accommodation Fleet</p> | HSCE |
| Consulted | <p>Provides recommendation of all recruitment and selection requirements for HSCE sign-off</p> <p>Provides recommendation of all accommodation requests</p> <p>Facilitates the provision of accommodation assistance as part of CWHHS Applicant Kits and other employee information</p> <p>Provides oversight of current employee entitlements and consistency with the Department of Health policy, including accommodation</p> | EDWGIM |
| Consulted | <p>Provides a central point of contact for all accommodation matters within their area of responsibility in CWHHS</p> <p>Provides resolution for any unresolved accommodation and/or property disputes between employees, CWHHS and Accommodation Providers</p> <p>Provides CWHHS Management oversight of the accommodation fleet including facilitating accommodation/property performance reporting within their area of responsibility</p> | Business Managers |
| Consulted | <p>Identifies the need for resource requirements and facilitates the recruitment and selection for their respective area</p> <p>Identifies and seeks approval to recruit (including accommodation provision)</p> | Line Managers |



| Role | Name | CWHHS position |
|-----------------|--|---|
| | Facilitates with the relevant Business Manager the sourcing of property for commencing employees | |
| Informed | Provides support to Line Managers in the form of sourcing accommodation for commencing staff, once HSCE approval is obtained | Business Managers |
| Endorsed | Endorses procedure | Executive Leadership Team (ELT) members |

8. Definition of Terms

Table 2 Definition of terms

| Term | Definition |
|-------------------------|---|
| Quarters | Property that is part of existing CWHHS facilities, consisting of single and/or shared accommodation |
| Duplex/Townhouse | Typically, self-contained accommodation for single and/or couples and is sourced through either Government Employee Housing or the private rental market |
| House | Ranging from two to four bedrooms and is sourced through either GEH or the private rental market |
| Utilities | Employees are responsible for the payment of utilities costs. In instances where individual metering of properties is not possible (e.g. quarters) the cost of utilities will be met by CWHHS |
| Telephone/internet | Where there is no available mobile phone network, CWHHS will meet the cost of telephone/internet connection. All other instances are the responsibility of the employee |
| Accommodation allowance | \$82.50 per week for the following employees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Those categorised with the role of 'Other – not locally based' Those who decide to enter into private lease arrangements |
| Single | Single persons living alone - that is, they do not have a partner or dependants living with them |
| Couple | Two people who are in a relationship and live together without dependants |
| Family | Family refers to a single or couple who have dependants living with them |
| Pets | Pets do not change the level of eligibility for an employee, however, where accommodation is unable to be provided (e.g. where a property does not accept pets), the employee is able to be provided with the rental assistance allowance |



| Term | Definition |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Medical Officer | As per the Medical Officers' (Queensland Health) Certified Agreement (No. 4) 2015 |
| Nursing levels | As per the Nurses and Midwives (Queensland Health and Department of Education and Training) Certified Agreement (EB9) 2016 |
| Health Practitioner levels | As per the Health Practitioners and Dental Officers (Queensland Health Certified Agreement (No. 2) 2016 |
| Administrative Officer levels | As per the Queensland Public Health Sector Certified Agreement (No. 9) 2016 |
| Operational Officer levels | As per the Queensland Public Health Sector Certified Agreement (No. 9) 2016 |
| Executive Management levels | Positions that report to HSCE. (e.g., Executive Director Medical Services, Executive Director Nursing and Midwifery Services, Executive Director Finance, Infrastructure and Support Services, Executive Director Workforce, Governance and Information Management, General Manager) |

9. Policy revision and approval history

Table3 Policy revision and approval history

| Custodian | Executive Director Workforce Governance and Information Management | | | |
|--------------------|--|------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Author | Executive Director Workforce Governance and Information Management | | | |
| Approval authority | Executive Leadership Team (ELT) | | | |
| Keywords | Accommodation, housing, residential, rental, retention, assistance, incentive, attraction, transfer, employee, electricity, furniture, quarters, tenancies, subsidised, tenant, recruitment. | | | |
| Version | Approved | Effective | Comment | Date reviewed |
| 1 | | 01/12/2018 | Endorsed by ELT | 31/01/2019 |
| 2 | | 2/11/2020 | | |

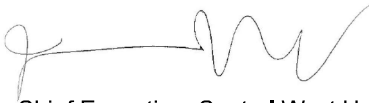
10. Audit strategy

Table 4 Audit strategy

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Level of risk/risk rating | Medium |
| Audit strategy | Audit of random samples |
| Audit tool | Applicant Kit, Request for Accommodation Form, Accommodation Agreement |
| Audit frequency | Annual |
| Audit responsibility | Executive Director Workforce Governance and Information Management |



Key elements/ indicators/outcomes Successful recruitment of staff in Central West Hospital and Health Service

Name: Jane Hancock
Signature: 
Role/Designation: Chief Executive, Central West Hospital and Health Service
Date: 3/11/2020

11. Appendices

Appendix A - Accommodation Process

12. Risk assessment

Table 5 Risk assessment

| | | Consequence | | | | |
|------------|----------|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|----------------|
| | | Negligible | Minor | Moderate | Major | Extreme |
| Likelihood | | Medium (7) | Medium (11) | High (17) | Very High (23) | Very High (25) |
| | Likely | Medium (6) | Medium (10) | High (16) | High (20) | Very High (24) |
| | Possible | Low (3) | Medium (9) | High (15) | High (18) | High (22) |
| | Unlikely | Low (2) | Medium (8) | Medium (12) | Medium (14) | High (21) |
| | Rare | Low (1) | Low (4) | Low (5) | Medium (13) | High (19) |

Appendix A - Accommodation Process

The following workflow provides an overview of the requirements of the accommodation assistance applied to CWHHS employees. In particular, it articulates the need to facilitate the accommodation request form and approval requirements within the existing recruitment and selection process (refer to the green textboxes).

