

Priority Housing

What is priority housing?

Priority housing is considered a need for housing to people who are experiencing urgent and extreme hardship; such as homelessness, serious medical conditions or disability, or social problems that affect their ability to find housing.

Priority housing is not considered crisis or emergency accommodation. However the Department will offer referrals to other organisations that will not prevent an application for priority housing.

Who can apply?

Any eligible person for public housing experiencing one or more of, but not limiting to, the following categories can apply for priority housing:

- homelessness or risk of homelessness;
- have serious medical or social problems; or
- domestic or family violence.

If your application for priority housing is approved, housing may be offered 'out of turn' to your household. The Department is not able to provide an exact timeframes of when an offer for public housing will be made.

How do I apply?

Step 1: check you are eligible for public housing

To be eligible for priority housing you must first meet the qualifying criteria for public housing. Further information can be found within the 'Eligibility criteria for Public Housing' factsheet.

Step 2: fill in the form and collect supporting documentation

You will need to complete the Application for Public Housing form; including 'Part D - Request for priority housing or transfer'.

In order for the Department to assess your request for priority housing, you will also need to demonstrate an urgent need for priority through supporting documents. It is recommended that your supporting document/s is provided by a third party; such as a treating doctor and/or specialist, support agency.

Step 3: submit your application to your local Department of Housing office

Once you have completed and collected your application form and any supporting documents, submit your application to your local Housing office.

Housing staff will be able to advise you of whether you have completed your form correctly or if you are required to provide any other documents.

You may be asked to attend an appointment to go through the information you have provided, this will assist with assessing your request for priority housing.

Step 4: after your application has been submitted

Your application will be reviewed to make sure you are eligible for priority housing. If your application is approved you will be sent a letter confirming this.

All applications that are not approved are automatically reviewed a second time before a letter is sent to you informing of the outcome. The letter will tell you how to appeal the decision if you think it is wrong. You can ask to remain on the general housing wait list and you will be offered accommodation when it is available.

If you require help at any stage with completing your Application for Public Housing you may request assistance from a support person. Alternatively, staff may be able to arrange a referral for services or an interpreter, where required.

Where can I get immediate accommodation?

The ShelterMe website offers an online directory with information about accommodation options and support services across the NT including:

- crisis
- transitional
- short term
- low cost options
- supported accommodation, and
- other services.

Other options include applying for an interest free bond assistance loan to get into a private rental accommodation. You can also look in the Yellow Pages for hostels, boarding houses or motels in your area.

Where can I get more information?

For further information contact the Department of Housing and Community Development:

Greater Darwin	(08) 8999 8814
Nhulunbuy	(08) 8987 0533
Tennant Creek	(08) 8962 4497
Katherine	(08) 8973 8513
Alice Springs	(08) 8951 5344
Palmerston	(08) 8999 4767

Visit www.housing.nt.gov.au