



Tenant Handbook

Tenant Helpline **1800 688 000**

24/7 Maintenance Hotline **1800 688 000**

Welcome

We welcome you to Believe Housing Australia. We will support you to feel comfortable and at home in your new community. This handbook has lots of information that you'll want to know about your new home. Please contact us if you have any questions.

Our locations

Believe Housing Australia

Kaurna Country
491-499 South Road
Regency Park SA 5010

Elizabeth

Kaurna Country
Elizabeth Clock Tower
10 Playford Boulevard
Elizabeth SA 5112

Mount Gambier

Boandik Country
173 Commercial St West
Mount Gambier SA 5290

Berri Office

First Peoples of the
River Murray and Mallee Country
11 Cooper Street
Berri SA 5343



About us

Believe Housing Australia is a nationally accredited community housing provider with more than 20 years' experience in delivering safe and secure social and affordable housing, and tenancy services. We believe in safe and secure housing for all.

For us, housing is about more than just providing a roof over your head. Our dedicated staff are committed to understanding your needs and working with you to create a safe and secure home and connection to your community.

Believe Housing Australia (formerly AnglicareSA Housing) remains part of the AnglicareSA family, which means our tenants have access to a wide range of support services.

Believe Housing Australia provides:

- tenancy support
- affordable rentals
- a path to supported and independent home ownership
- crisis and supported accommodation
- disability housing including Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA)
- social and community housing
- culturally respectful services.

At Believe Housing Australia, we understand that housing is essential for people to live a full life. Having a place to call home enables you to believe in a better future, find your sense of belonging, and become all that you want to be.

Believe Housing Australia acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands on which we operate. We express our gratitude in the sharing of this land; our sorrow for the personal, spiritual and cultural costs of that sharing; and our hope that we may walk together in harmony in the spirit of Reconciliation.

If you need more information as you work through this handbook, please call us on **1800 688 000**, email us at enquiry@believehousing.org.au or visit our website at believehousing.org.au.

Believe. Belong. Become.



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Your tenancy: rights and expectations

Your tenancy agreement (or lease) is the legal contract that you signed. It lists a number of rights and responsibilities of Believe Housing Australia as the landlord and you as the tenant (please refer to your tenancy agreement for details). Here is a summary:

What you can expect from us as your landlord

We will:

- be fair, honest and respectful
- ensure your home is clean and in good condition when you move in
- carry out regular maintenance as required
- respond to your maintenance requests in line with our maintenance guidelines
- respect your privacy and let you know if we need to visit
- review the rent in accordance with the annexure attached to your lease agreement
- provide opportunities for you to be involved in your community
- keep you informed and consult with you on important issues
- support you to make this your home.

What we expect from you as our tenant

We expect you to:

- pay your rent on time
- keep your home clean and tidy and treat it with care
- keep your yard mowed, weeded and free of rubbish
- ask us for written permission to keep a pet before you bring it home
- talk to us before you make any repairs, alterations or renovations
- tell us about any change in your household income
- only allow the people listed on your tenancy agreement to live in your house
- have your property clean and tidy for our regular inspections
- be a good neighbour—consider your neighbours and respect their right to live in peace.

As tenants, you or your neighbours are legally able to complain and request a hearing against disruptive neighbours at the South Australian Civil & Administrative Tribunal.



Rent and water

How much do I pay for rent?

As a community housing provider, Believe Housing Australia keeps its rental rates as affordable as possible while ensuring we can provide good quality housing that is well maintained.

Your rent charge will be whichever is lower of these:

- a percentage of the property's 'market rate' (Ceiling Rent), or
- up to 30% of your total household income PLUS any Commonwealth Rent Assistance you receive (income based rent).

Before you move in, you will need to pay the bond and the first two weeks rent. After that, you will always pay two weeks rent in advance (every fortnight from the lease start date).

Please ask us for our **Rent Fact Sheet** and/or **Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) Fact Sheet** if you would like more information.

Paying your rent

It is your responsibility to pay your rent on time.

Here are ways you can pay:

- through Centrepay deductions (Centrelink pays your rent directly to us)
- at any branch of the ANZ Bank (ask us for a deposit book) by posting a money order to our office
Believe Housing Australia
491-499 South Road
Regency Park SA 5010
- in person by visiting our Regency Park or Elizabeth offices
- over the phone **1800 688 000** with Reception or your Income Financial Inclusion Officer.

We are always happy to chat to you about your rent, please call our office on **1800 688 000**.

How much for water?

Your water supply will be charged according to the terms of your tenancy agreement. We will send you a water invoice every quarter and you will have 14 days to pay it.

Struggling to pay?

If your circumstances change and you are unable to pay your rent or your water invoice, please contact us immediately. You are part of our community and we will work with you to assist you in any way we can to sustain your tenancy.

If you fall behind in your rent or water payments and your Tenancy Officer hasn't heard from you, under the terms of your tenancy agreement we may be required to take the matter to the South Australian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (SACAT).

Rent reviews

We will review your rent regularly in accordance with the annexure attached to your tenancy agreement. We will send you Rent Review forms and ask you to tell us how much each person living in your home earns. You will need to send us proof of income for all occupants of the house. This could be a letter from Centrelink, pay slips or your last taxation notice.

If you are receiving a CRA payment, you will need to advise Centrelink of any changes to your income or rent costs.

If you do not provide your proof of income, we will be required to charge Ceiling Rent, which is a percentage of the property's 'market rate' and a higher rental rate.



Property inspections

We will carry out an inspection with you when you move in (and out) of the property.

We will also inspect the property regularly and will give you seven to 14 days notice in writing before the inspection date. This is an opportunity to see how you are going and to inspect the property to ensure it is in good order.

Here is a list of things to do before we arrive:

1. Ensure the house is clean, including removing marks from walls, doors and floors.
2. Clean the stove top, grill and oven (inside and out) and wipe over cupboard fronts and bench tops.
3. Clean the shower alcove, floor and wall tiles, basin and bath. Remove any mould or soap scum. You can avoid mould build-up by always using the exhaust fan and opening the window when using the shower or bath.
4. Clean the exhaust fans (the covers come off for cleaning).
5. Remove all rubbish and any old furniture from inside and outside the home.
6. Mow the lawns and weed any garden beds.

Please ask us if you have any questions.
We can provide you with a **Property Inspections Fact Sheet** which provides more information.



We may not provide

The annexure attached to your tenancy agreement clearly lists anything not included in your lease.

These items are not included:

- air conditioners
- antennas
- ceiling fans
- dishwashers
- floor coverings
- garden sheds
- internal and external blinds and curtains
- light fittings
- rain water tanks, other than where the tank is the only source of water for the premises
- refrigerators
- spa bath motors
- swimming pools and associated plant or equipment
- washing machines
- waste disposal units
- window treatments.



Pets

We know that pets are important—they can be an important part of the family. You will need to ask us first if you would like to have a pet in your home as there are a number of things that need to be considered.

Things to consider

- whether the property is suitable
- the type of pet/s
- local council regulations
- any possible impact on your neighbours or your community

If your request is approved, pets will need to be listed on a Pet Permission form which we will ask you to sign.

By signing this form, you agree to:

- pay for the repair of any damage caused by your pet/s
- remove all faeces from your gardens and community grounds regularly (and dispose of them properly)
- be respectful of your neighbours and make sure your pets do not worry or disturb them.

Please ask your Tenancy Officer or contact us to find out how to apply to keep a pet at your property. We have a **Pets Fact Sheet** which provides more information.



Repairs and maintenance

If there is something that needs to be repaired, inside or outside your home, please let us know as soon as possible. We will arrange for the repairs to be carried out. We will give your details to the contractor who will then make a time with you to come to your home.

Numbers to call

Believe Housing Australia
24/7 Maintenance Hotline
1800 688 000

Other useful numbers:

Electricity SA Power Networks—131 366
AGL—131 245

Water SA Water—1300 883 121

Gas Australian Gas Networks
—1800 427 532
AGL—131 245

The response time will depend on the repair required. If it is an emergency, we will have someone there within four hours. Here are some examples of the different types of problems you may have and when you can expect them to be fixed.

Emergency (within 4 hours)

Examples:

- burst water pipe
- dangerous storm/fire damage/flooding
- gas leak or explosion
- completely blocked or broken sewer system
- dangerous electrical fault
- broken door locks or windows
- no light, power, gas or water.

Urgent (within 24 hours)

Examples:

- electrical and gas safety checks
- partially blocked pipes or drains that are a health and safety risk
- leaking toilets, taps, pipes or roof
- faulty smoke detectors
- broken or damaged asbestos
- problem with water/ hot water
- problem with cooking, heating, cooling or washing appliances
- broken or damaged asbestos.

Routine (within 10 working days)

Routine calls are anything else that's not urgent. If it's normal wear and tear, we will pay for it.

If you or your visitors cause the damage, we will ask you to pay for it.

Repairs and maintenance tips

Before you call us, please read the tips below:

Problem	What you can do
Gas leaks	Turn off the gas supply at the mains (usually on the outside wall at the front or side of the house). Phone us on 1800 688 000 .
Electric faults or shocks	Turn off electricity at the mains (usually in the hallway or outside on the front or side wall of the house) and flip switches to off. Phone us on 1800 688 000 .
No electricity	Check to see if the circuit breakers (in the mains box) have tripped. Flip switches off and then on again. Make sure the safety switch (in the mains box) has not tripped. Flip switches off and then on again. <ul style="list-style-type: none">– One of your appliances may be the cause. Unplug all of your appliances including the fridge—flip the switches back to the ‘on’ position, if switches remain on then plug your appliances in one at a time until the switch goes off—you have now found the faulty appliance.– If your appliance is the problem it’s dangerous, please stop using the appliance immediately.– If an electrician needs to come to fix your power, you may have to pay the cost if your appliance was the cause of the problem. Check with your electricity supplier (phone or website) to see if they’ve turned off the power in your area. If you still have no power, phone us on 1800 688 000 .
Burst water pipes	Turn off water supply at the mains water meter (usually located in front garden). Phone us on 1800 688 000 .
No gas	Check with your supplier (phone or website) to see if they’ve turned off the gas supply to your area or your house for some reason. If your supplier hasn’t turned off your gas, phone us on 1800 688 000 .
No hot water	Has the water heater pilot light blown out? Check the instructions on the hot water service on how to relight the pilot light. If the pilot light is still alight, it could be that you have used all your hot water for the day. If you still don’t have hot water next morning, phone us on 1800 688 000 .
Broken window	Phone us on 1800 688 000 .

Maintenance responsibilities

We are responsible for maintaining the property you live in and keeping it in a reasonable state of repair. Our program includes regular planned maintenance as well as responding to maintenance problems as they arise.

We want to hear from you if you are concerned with the quality of any repair work or the way it was done. Please let us know if you have not heard from our Maintenance Team within a reasonable time after you have put in a maintenance request.

You are responsible for any maintenance and repair not considered normal wear and tear, such as:

- repairing damaged gates, fences, doors, doorframes, door locks and walls
- repairing fly screens and screen doors
- replacing light globes

- replacing plugs for kitchen, bathroom, laundry sinks and baths
- replacing lost keys
- mowing lawns and maintaining garden areas
- where the property has been damaged accidentally or maliciously by you or someone in your house, this includes:
 - broken windows
 - blocked drains caused by toys, nappies or other inappropriate/foreign objects.

We will pay for the repair of damage resulting from a break-in only if you report it to the police and advise us of the police report number. Otherwise, you are responsible for replacement and repairs for any damage caused by vandalism or forced entry to the property.



Rubbish

Please dispose of all rubbish in the bins provided and put your wheelie bins out in time to be emptied on your council's collection day.

Councils provide more than one bin (recycling, green waste, general waste) and they are emptied on different days.

Weekly rubbish collection times vary from area to area—please contact your local council for information about what day you need to put the bin/s out and which bin/s you put out.

If you have other big items to get rid of, like broken furniture or mattresses, please contact your Tenancy Officer for information. Please do not put these items on the kerb—the council will only remove rubbish that is inside your wheelie bin.

If you do not have a bin when you move into your home, please ask your local council. Let us know if the council will not provide a bin and we will purchase one on your behalf. If you move out, you need to leave the bin/s at the property.



If you want to make a change

You may decide that you would like to pay for an improvement to your Believe Housing Australia home.

This could be something like:

- an air conditioner
- internal decorating such as painting or new flooring
- fencing
- a pergola
- a satellite dish or TV antenna
- a security screen
- an alarm.

You will need our written permission to do this. You are welcome to put in a written request to us and we will consider it carefully. Please call us or talk to your Tenancy Officer about the information you will need to provide in your request to us.

We can provide you with a **Property Modification Fact Sheet** for more information about this.



Visitors

This is your home and you are welcome to have your family and friends visit. Of course, you wouldn't expect them to stay for an unlimited length of time.

When an extra person is visiting you:

- if their usual place of residence is Australia, they can stay for up to four weeks with no adjustment to the rent
- if their usual place of residence is outside of Australia, they can stay for up to 12 weeks with no additional rent charged.

Only you, your children and the people named on your tenancy application can live permanently in your Believe Housing Australia house. Sometimes there are special circumstances where exceptions can be made—please ask us. You will need our written approval before anyone else can live permanently in your home as Community Housing Providers, under the Residential Tenancies Act, have the right to prohibit subletting.



If you go away

If you are going to be away from your home for more than six weeks, please let us know as soon as you can. We have to advise our insurance company if a property is going to be vacant, otherwise they will not cover us if something happens to the property in that time.

Don't forget to make arrangements to pay your rent while you are away. It's also a good idea to leave our phone number with a family member, or trusted friend or neighbour, and ask them to contact us in an emergency.

Cultural obligations for First Nations people

We understand that cultural tradition is vital to Aboriginal identity and some First Nations tenants may have obligations and responsibilities within their communities that require them to leave their home for unexpected periods of time.

Through our Aboriginal Housing strategy, we have developed a process to help support you during these times. Please contact your Tenancy Officer for more information.





Moving out

If you decide to move out, you must let us know as soon as you can—if possible, at least three weeks beforehand. You cannot allow anyone else to live in the property if you move out. Sub-letting of the whole or part of a Believe Housing Australia property is not permitted.

When you give notice, we will arrange for the Tenancy Officer to carry out a final inspection with you (we will send you a final inspection guide so you will know what is required).

You need to leave your home and garden in a clean and tidy state. Take away all your personal items and remove all rubbish from the property. You are not responsible for reasonable wear and tear but we will have to charge you if we need to employ a cleaner, remove rubbish or repair damage. This cost will be claimed from your bond.

Things to do

- clean the house
- remove all your belongings and all furniture
- remove all rubbish
- repair any damage
- cancel all utilities (electricity, gas, landline telephone)
- return the keys (your rent finishes when the keys are returned)
- attend the final inspection at the appointed time
- sign your bond refund form

Places to notify

- Centrelink
- post office (to forward mail)
- electoral office
- Department of Transport (Motor Registration)
- insurance and superannuation company
- bank
- doctor, dentist, health services
- department stores, debtors, etc.
- library, school, community centre

Feedback, suggestions, complaints

We welcome feedback and suggestions for improving Believe Housing Australia services. We always want to know how we're going, what we're doing well and what we could do better.

You have the right to question or request information about:

- contact with the staff
- access to our services
- the standard of the service received
- the information we provide.

If you have feedback or suggestions, please speak to your Tenancy Officer.

We will respond quickly, fairly and politely –we promise there will be no penalty for anyone expressing their views reasonably.

If you have an issue that you feel has not been resolved to your satisfaction, you are welcome to write to the Manager of Tenancy Services, explaining the issue in detail.

Making a complaint

You have the right to make a complaint about our service, our staff or Believe Housing Australia decisions.

As the first step, please contact us to raise the issue. Depending on the nature of the complaint, it may need to be provided in writing.

We have complaint and grievance procedures in place and will investigate and respond to your complaint as quickly and thoroughly as possible.

Thank you

Thanks for taking the time to read our Tenant Handbook. We look forward to working with you as a tenant of Believe Housing Australia.

As a Believe Housing Australia tenant you have the right:

- to be treated with respect
- to know that your suggestions and feedback will be heard
- to receive services without discrimination
- to have confidential discussions with any housing staff on services provided
- to receive information and options
- to make your own decisions
- to have your privacy respected
- to decide which of our additional services you wish to use and how you would like us to assist you
- to request a copy of your file.



