

## ALTERATIONS AND MODIFICATIONS POLICY

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to explain how St Kilda Community Housing (SCH) manages requests for property alterations and modifications

### Scope

This policy applies to all properties managed and owned by SCH.

### Policy Statement

SCH is committed to ensuring that:

- Having a disability is not a barrier to renting with SCH
- The processes in assessing requests for modifications are fair, transparent and equitable
- Residents can remain in their current property for as long as reasonably possible.

SCH does, however, recognise that there are some constraints over which SCH has little or no control, including, but not limited to:

- The age of the properties
- The size of the properties. For example, when a property is more than single storey.
- The property has heritage protections
- The ownership of the property.

Where such constraints may prohibit alterations or modifications for a resident, SCH will assist that resident to find an appropriate alternative property, either with SCH or with another social housing provider.

### Resident Rights and Obligations

Under the ***Residential Tenancies Act 1997***, a resident may not install any fixtures or make any modifications without having first obtained the consent of SCH. All residents are encouraged to discuss any proposed modifications or alterations first with their Housing Manager. All requests must be submitted on the SCH **Property Modification Request Form**.

In addition to obtaining consent, a resident making modifications must:

- Pay for the cost of any modifications. Where the modifications relate to a disability, SCH may assist a resident in obtaining funding or grants for modifications from organisations such as the NDIS or the Victorian Aids and Equipment Program. SCH may also choose to waive costs where they are considered to be reasonable adjustments.



- Reverse the changes made at the end of their tenancy and return the property to its original condition.
- Provide evidence that the modifications meet applicable standards and were undertaken by licensed tradespeople.

**SCH Obligations**

SCH may not reasonably refuse consent to any alterations under the provisions of section 55 of the **Equal Opportunity Act 2010** that have been required by an accredited occupational therapist or other prescribed practitioner, such as a GP.

SCH will not approve modifications when they:

- Involve major internal or external changes to the property
- Cannot be maintained or removed easily
- Are contrary to SCH’s contractual, legal and regulatory obligations.

SCH has an obligation to provide reasonable adjustments to support a resident with a disability. Such reasonable adjustments may include:

- Handrails or grab rails
- Lever taps
- Handheld showers
- Specialist alarm systems for people with hearing impairments
- Minor entry ramps
- Vinyl floor covering

**Legislation and Standards**

Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic)

Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)

Victorian Housing Registrar Performance Standards for Registered Housing Agencies.

Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cwth)

**Version control**

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