



## **7.24 Mutual exchange**

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all St George Community Housing (SGCH) tenants.

### **What is mutual exchange?**

Mutual exchange is where two SGCH tenants choose to swap properties. Mutual exchange allows tenants to move to a different location or find a property that better suits their needs.

### **Guiding principles**

- SGCH will not be involved in negotiating a mutual exchange.
- Tenants who register their interest in exchanging are not obligated to proceed with a mutual exchange and can have their property removed from the list at any time.
- SGCH will assess requests for mutual exchange in accordance with the criteria.

### **Registering properties for mutual exchange**

Tenants may register their interest for mutual exchange by contacting our office. Mutual exchange lists will be advertised using the following methods:

- The notice board in the reception area of SGCH's offices
- SGCH's website

### **Requests for mutual exchange**

If tenants agree to a mutual exchange they must request approval from SGCH prior to exchanging properties. Approval can be requested by completing a Mutual Exchange Request form. This form can be located on our website or by contacting our office.

Exchanging properties without approval is a breach of the Residential Tenancy Agreement.

### **Assessing requests for mutual exchange**

Requests for mutual exchange will be assessed against the criteria below by a Housing Manager. A Team Leader or Manager will sign off on all mutual exchange requests.

### **Criteria for approving a mutual exchange**

SGCH will approve a mutual exchange if:

- Both tenants agree to the exchange in writing.
- The rent, water and debt of both tenants are paid up to date.
- The exchange will not create under/over occupancy in either property.
- Both properties are returned to original condition, allowing for fair wear and tear.

- Both tenants meet the current income eligibility, except if the tenant/household member has a medical condition or disability which means their current housing is no longer suitable.
- Both tenants agree to accept the type of lease and specific program conditions relevant to the exchange properties.

Generally, SGCH will not approve a mutual exchange if:

- Major modifications have been made to the property to meet the needs of the tenant.
- The exchanging tenant is not eligible for the program under which the exchange property is provided e.g. Seniors Living, affordable housing.
- The tenant would lose an advantage gained from a previous transfer.
- The exchange property is not suitable for the tenant.

### **SGCH standards in responding to requests for mutual exchange**

The process of assessing and responding to requests for mutual exchange will take no longer than 28 days from the date of receipt. If a delay is likely to occur, SGCH will notify the tenants of the expected timeframe and the reasons for this.

All requests will be responded to in writing.

### **What happens after a mutual exchange is approved by SGCH?**

SGCH will arrange to sign new Residential Tenancy Agreements with both tenants. The original condition reports will be transferred to the new tenancies. Both tenants will need to accept the in-going condition outlined in this report as part of the new lease agreement they will be signing for the exchanged properties.

Mutual exchange may only occur on a SGCH work day.

Tenants are responsible for arranging removalists/moving their belongings and exchanging keys.

### **Related documents/resources**

- Policy - Transfer