

Social housing reform: big changes afoot

Ned Cutcher
Policy Officer

The not-for-profit housing sector is currently enjoying unprecedented growth. In addition to almost 9,000 new properties being added to the system by 2012, there are three current reforms driving this growth.

These reforms are the introduction of a Registrar of Community Housing and a new regulatory framework including:

- the Property Transfer Program, where management of properties is transferred from Housing NSW to community housing providers (CHPs)
- a proposed law to give CHPs ownership of the houses they manage on behalf of the government.

These reforms were set in motion before the implementation of the Federal Government's Nation Building Economic Stimulus Plan, which sees the demolition and redevelopment of numerous government-owned houses.

Quite aside from an influx of new housing, the sector-wide impact of stimulus money cannot be overstated. The combination of increased activity (including mass

tenant relocation), the ability of the government to self-approve development, and the need to make use of federal funding before it disappears, has led to a new public awareness and interest in the highly stigmatised social housing sector.

Given the speed with which the sector is currently moving, it is important to understand what's really going on.

Registration of providers

In May 2009, the Registrar for Community Housing was established. Any CHP who receives government assistance must now apply for registration. Providers have been given a two-year timeframe to complete the registration process.

Registered CHPs will need to comply with a new regulatory code (provided by the Housing Regulation 2009). The code establishes eight specific performance areas, designed to ensure the accountability, responsibility and viability of providers.

Registration, and thus government assistance, can be cancelled if a provider fails to comply with the code. Complaints about a registered CHP can be made to the registrar, who has broad discretion to ensure that the operations of CHPs are "satisfactory".

Transfer of management

The Property Transfer Program sees the implementation of the NSW Government's plan to grow



Photo by Patrycja Arvidssen

the community housing sector from 13,000 to 30,000 properties over ten years.

Registered providers are selected to manage government-owned properties previously under the management of Housing NSW. In 2009 the target of 1,000 property transfers was set, with a total of 1,258 transfers completed by the end of the year. This year, the target doubles to 2,000 transfers.

Under the program, tenants are offered the choice of staying in their home and embracing a CHP as their new landlord, or retaining Housing NSW as their landlord. In the latter case, tenants are not guaranteed they will be able to stay in their homes – and a tenant refusing to relocate could have their tenancy agreement terminated.

Faced with the choice of new landlord or new home, either way tenants are asked to sign a new tenancy agreement. The new one won't be on the same terms as the existing one, though, because the government's housing policies have changed over the years.

Whereas some long-standing public housing tenants will be on continuing agreements, these days tenants are only offered fixed-term tenancies.

Housing NSW's Community Housing Division (CHD) suggests that tenants accepting the transfer of management will have nothing to worry about because CHPs are required to allow tenancies to continue indefinitely as long as the terms of the tenancy continue to be met. This will depend on the various providers who take over management of tenancies and their ability to adhere to policy.

This raises a concern: tenants of Housing NSW can complain to the NSW Ombudsman about unfair conduct but tenants of a CHP cannot. Complaints can instead be made to the CHD (which may itself come under the Ombudsman's coverage) or the Registrar of Community Housing.

Presumably, this is where the new regulatory regime will come into the picture for tenants – but it remains to be seen how effective the registrar will be at regulating

the practices of CHPs and responding to complaints from tenants.

Transfer of ownership

The final piece of the puzzle is the Housing Amendment (Community Housing Providers) Bill 2009, which is currently before Parliament. The object of this Bill is to give eligible CHPs the means to support their own growth, while ensuring the government does not lose control of resources if such a provider fails.

The Bill will do two things. First, it will tidy up the existing registration regime by imposing a process for faltering providers to help get their affairs in order. Second, it will allow the government to give property rights to CHPs.

Ultimately, the government will retain ownership of properties, and providers will require permission before dealing in any government-owned land. But CHPs will soon enjoy the benefits of ownership – not just the liabilities of management – as they will be entrusted with full property rights and obligations as if they owned their government-provided properties themselves.

With such big changes afoot, no doubt the registrar will be kept on its toes. But enabling providers to facilitate their own capital growth, and minimising the reliance on head leasing from private landlords, is indeed a positive step for the not-for-profit housing sector to take. It is one that should be met with cautious optimism.



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View from the Housing Appeals Committee

Lynden Esdaile

Lynden has headed the Housing Appeals Committee (HAC) since its inception in 1995. This is an edited version of an address she gave to the Tenants Advice and Advocacy network meeting in November 2009.

Social housing in New South Wales is changing and these changes will have a significant impact on tenants and applicants for social housing in future and will therefore change the way advocates work with the public and community housing sectors. In the next decade, the social housing sector will look very different.

Housing NSW (HNSW) has always been a very large housing provider by world standards, however it is now in the process of transferring a significant amount of its housing stock to community housing providers (CHPs). There will be a substantial movement of housing in the next five to ten years with 30,000 properties planned for transfer by 2016 or before.

A number of these will be tenanted properties and some will be new housing built under the Commonwealth's Nation Building Economic Stimulus Plan. This expands the social housing options for low-income tenants but will also bring some



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complexities for housing clients and their advocates.

The stimulus spending provides some unexpected and much needed new funding for social housing with about 6,000 new social housing homes to be built by mid 2012.

Tenant relocations

As well as the strict timeframes, the Commonwealth has imposed a modest average dwelling construction cost across the country, including land costs. This has meant that HNSW has been relocating some existing tenants in order to demolish their older properties and re-use the land to build rather than acquiring and building on vacant land.

New South Wales will not be able to meet the required price average by building on new or greenfield sites as the land is too expensive and the timeframes for purchase of land would be too long. As a result, many hundreds of HNSW tenants have been asked to relocate, and many of these have already done so.

It is surprising to us at the HAC how few problems there have been in the relocation of these tenants, even though it has had to be done quickly.

HNSW Relocation Officers have been given the scope to problem-solve in seeking appropriate alternative housing for tenants they need to relocate. It is educational to see how this flexibility for staff has led to such a high level of success in this difficult process.

Often these tenants have been long-term occupants of a home to which they are very attached and it can therefore be a highly emotional time for them. Some have found it very difficult to contemplate moving.

At the HAC we have had a number of enquiries from anxious tenants but have not seen any appeals and there have been no decisions to use the HNSW powers to seek termination of tenancy because the tenant has declined offers of alternative housing. This is quite an achievement which perhaps demonstrates that you don't need



Photo by Patrycja Arvidssen

legislation as much as you need good case management.

More flexibility

In any relocation process there is more flexibility about finding alternative housing solutions than with a normal transfer. The housing provider is very motivated to meet their timeframes. This means tenant advocates should advise tenants to keep talking to housing provider staff about their options, and they should appeal the suitability of offers if they decide to refuse them, unless that offer is not counted as a reasonable offer.

Advocates should note that while a tenant can appeal about the offers made, they cannot effectively appeal a decision to relocate them where the site is to be redeveloped as HNSW as the power to reuse its assets in this way. It can be hard but for many it can lead to some improved housing outcomes, particularly as new housing stock is being built.

Whole-of-area transfers

In some areas, the transfer to community housing is happening

in whole locations, where HNSW is ceasing their management role in some areas and transferring all to community housing.

In Mudgee, one of the first transfer areas, tenants had the choice of staying with HNSW as their landlord or moving to community housing. Some tenants feel safer with the government as their landlord, but increasingly tenants are finding the transfer to a community housing provider is not negative, although some find it hard to understand the different rent policies between public and community housing.

There are now an increasing number of places where 'whole-of-area transfers' are underway and we can expect this to expand as rationalisation of housing management occurs across New South Wales.

Single waiting list

Another significant change in social housing is the move to a Common Access System – a single waiting list for social housing being developed between HNSW and community housing providers. Such a system is long overdue

and will ultimately be of benefit to tenants as they will have increased potential mobility and equity of entitlements. There will be a common application form and in some matters CHP and HNSW policies will be the same.

There are still questions about how much a CHP will be able to retain separate local policies and how much they will ultimately align with HNSW. At present, the system is cumbersome for clients and they have to go to every different housing provider to make a separate application for assistance and to be assessed. They also need to actively seek to be listed for community housing as well as HNSW. This will no longer be the case and there will be a single entry-point system.

The common access process is intended to start in late April 2010 with a stage-one pilot. For tenants, transfers between HNSW and CHP properties should also be possible under the system so tenants can potentially have greater access to appropriate housing.

To date, there has been a problem in that a person who lives in community housing who needs to transfer for medical reasons is often limited by the lack of a housing alternative within the limited stock of the housing provider. They will soon be able to transfer between housing providers with the common waiting list system.

Decision-making

There are a number of questions, however, about process of

decision-making and appeals in this new system, some of which are still to be worked out. This will affect decisions about entitlements, eligibility, offers, relocations or transfer.

It will be important for advocates to establish who is the landlord or who is the decision-maker in key issues and what policies they are using to make the decisions. Our experience is that sometimes tenants do not know the name of their housing provider and won't know if they are subject to different policies.

An example can be the 'no pets' policy where HNSW tends to allow pets while some CHPs do not. This can be a major issue for tenants and affect the decisions they make about offers, transfer requests and suitability of housing.

Whose policies apply?

An issue of concern for the HAC in procedural fairness terms is that a person can be subject to decisions by different organisations and may not understand the implications of that.

For example, under the HNSW 'two offer' policy a person has to prove that an offer is not reasonable for their needs or it is 'counted' as an offer. Under the new system, offers may be made by a CHP or HNSW. The questions then are:

Who will decide if a transfer offer is unreasonable and against what criteria? What if the CHP has different policy criteria for

determining a 'reasonable offer'? Who will make the decision to remove the client from the Housing Register if they do not accept two offers deemed to be reasonable?

The question here is the transparency, consistency and fairness of the process. At the HAC we can see a very important role for us in ensuring that clients have fair review in these processes. Advocates should ensure their clients appeal on these issues if they have any concerns about the decisions made.

Privacy and transparency

Other issues for tenants and applicants with the change of social housing process include issues around information exchange, privacy and transparency:

Does or should freedom of information requirements cover CHPs? Can tenants expect their privacy to be protected in communications between HNSW, CHPs and support providers? What kind of information will be available? Who makes the decision about entitlements and how transparent is this process? Will a client know when a decision has been made (e.g. not to give them a high priority or change their entitlements)? Will all decisions be in writing?

It is crucial that advocates insist that clients receive all decisions in writing. Written decisions should clearly say what the decision is and what it means. If there is an unreasonable delay in the decision making or first level appeal

process, clients can approach the HAC secretariat and we can try to expedite those processes.

Better policies

The policies of HNSW and more than one CHP may be relevant in considering an appeal. It is important that advocates know or find out the different policies to make the case for the client.

At the HAC we will consider all housing provider policies and we hope that over time policies become more robust and transparent across all housing providers. We work hard providing advice to CHPs and HNSW on policy and procedural improvements and we are involved in commenting on many aspects of policy and procedural change emanating from the new systems described above.

Overall we expect the changes to social housing in New South Wales will provide many benefits to tenants and applicants for housing and bring a greater sophistication and diversity to the housing sector. While these changes are happening we all must ensure that there is a strong client focus and commitment to fairness and transparency at all levels. ■

About the HAC

The HAC is an independent agency that can review decisions of social housing providers.

Contact details:

- www.hac.nsw.gov.au
- phone 02 8741 2555
- free call 1800 629 794

Final outcomes for Rosemeadow tenants

Ken Beilby
Litigation Solicitor

After a neighbourhood altercation at Rosemeadow in January 2009, Housing NSW took action to end the tenancies of people who were not themselves involved. The TU has been assisting nine of these tenants to defend their tenancies. (See our October 2009 issue.)



Housing NSW's Good Neighbour Policy shows the way
Photo by Patrycja Arvidssen

After nearly a year of litigation, the final outcomes of all of the matters are known. Of the TU's clients:

- one agreed to move out in accordance with Housing NSW's notice of termination and this agreement was made into a formal tribunal order
- four agreed to abide by the terms and conditions of their tenancy agreements – three of these admitted to breaching their agreements and one did not admit any breach
- two won their matters in the Consumer, Trader and Tenancy Tribunal with the dismissal of Housing NSW's applications.

In the final two matters, the tribunal made orders to terminate the tenancies. One of these matters was then appealed to the District Court where the TU acted as instructing solicitor. However, the appeal was discontinued

after Housing NSW made a very generous offer to rehouse the tenant in the location of her choosing if she stopped litigation.

A great deal of time, effort and resources went into this litigation: legal representation for Housing NSW, the time of the TU and our barrister in the District Court appeal. We do not assert any impropriety or professional misconduct on the part of the counsel or solicitor for Housing NSW; both acted with integrity and in accordance with law.

However, the motivations of Housing NSW in trying to remove these tenants from their homes in this manner can only be guessed at. What is apparent is that the strength of their legal arguments, in our view, were low and an incorrect interpretation of the relevant law. It is also difficult

to see what broader strategic purpose was served by mounting this litigation.

There is a real question of public policy here. The case for expending precious public resources on litigation to try and remove social housing tenants from their homes needs to be overwhelming. This is especially so when more effective means are available to resolve such issues. Nothing that was achieved through this litigation could not have been better handled through good case management and negotiation between the landlord, tenant and tenant advocate.

Housing NSW's Good Neighbour Policy shows the way. Its aims are:

- harmonious living environments for public housing tenants

- a high quality of life for tenants
- access to support services and/or advocates for tenants with special needs
- stable communities with residents involved in their neighbourhood
- greater integration of public housing into the general community
- improved management of large estates in partnership with relevant external agencies
- improved landlord management practices. ■

The importance of secure housing

Julie Foreman, Learning and Development Coordinator

To coincide with the release of the draft Residential Tenancies Bill 2009 (see our December 2009 issue), the TU held a series of meetings introducing tenants to NSW MPs and an event at Parliament House on 26 November 2009. These events began on International Tenants Day and ended during Social Inclusion Week.

The focus of these activities was on security of tenure as a basis for

participation in social and economic life. The prospect of being evicted without a reason hangs over all tenants and diminishes their peace of mind and sense of security. People shared stories on how social housing had a positive impact on their lives, the insecurity of private rental and the appalling conditions in boarding houses.

Ninety people attended the Parliament House event, including representatives from government departments and non-government organisations, tenants, and MPs from all major political parties.

Representatives from Street Care, an advocacy group of people who have experienced homelessness, made a compelling case for the regulation of boarding houses, which are currently not covered by tenancy law.

Tenants spoke about how their lives were changed by having secure public housing and emphasized the insecurity of private rental. Penny Sharpe MLC included extracts from their stories in a speech to Parliament.

These events raised awareness among 15 MPs of the need for continued law reform to improve security of tenure. The TU will continue to develop relationships and maintain discussions with lawmakers.

The Parliament House event was co-hosted by Penny Sharpe MLC, Greg Pearce MLC, Sylvia Hale MLC, Trevor Khan MLC and supported by Shelter NSW, Council of Social Service of NSW, Vincentian Social Action Centre, Community Legal Centres NSW, Homelessness NSW, local tenant resource bodies, Welfare Rights Centre (Sydney), Homeless Persons Legal Service, Street Care and the Tenants Advice and Advocacy network. ■



*AJ, an advocate from Street Care, speaks at Parliament House
Photo by Patrycja Arvidssen*

Interagency agreement fails people with mental illness

In December 2009, NSW Ombudsman, Bruce Barbour, tabled a special report to Parliament about his investigation into the Joint Guarantee of Service for People with Mental Health Problems and Disorders Living in Aboriginal, Community and Public Housing (the JGOS).

The JGOS is an interagency agreement that aims to prevent people with mental illness from becoming homeless by helping them to access and sustain social housing.

The investigation found that the implementation of the JGOS has been ineffective and has failed to achieve systemic improvements. The report details the reasons for this failure and outlines three key areas where reform is urgently needed:

- discharge planning for mentally ill people leaving hospital
- the ability of government and non-government service providers to exchange information about clients when their safety, welfare or wellbeing is at risk
- the availability of supported accommodation for people with a mental illness and other complex needs.

"People with a mental illness are particularly vulnerable after



Photo by Patrycja Arvidssen

being discharged from hospital", said the Ombudsman. "Poor communication and planning can result in individuals becoming homeless when they are entitled to support."

Confusion on the part of workers about when they can share information about clients may lead to a failure to do so, inadvertently placing the wellbeing of individuals at risk.

"There needs to be a simple and practical system in place that enables agencies to exchange information about vulnerable people when necessary for their safety or welfare", the Ombudsman said.

While a recent injection of state and federal government funding has seen an increase in the amount of social housing, there is still a shortage of supported accommodation for people with a mental illness who need extra help to live independently.

"While the evidence shows that programs like HASI (Housing Accommodation Support Initiative) work", said the Ombudsman, "there are simply not enough places to accommodate the level of need."

The Ombudsman said the recommendations contained in his report are designed to ensure that people with a mental illness receive the support they need to secure safe housing.

"It is critical that policies and programs aimed at assisting vulnerable people are effective. Otherwise, individuals can – and too often do – fall through the cracks". ■

The complete report can be downloaded from

www.ombo.nsw.gov.au/show.asp?id=581

or phone 9286 1072 for a copy.

Refund of reservation fees



I paid a holding deposit of two weeks rent when applying for a tenancy. Two

weeks later the agent offered me the place at a higher rent. I said "no" and demanded my money back, but they refused because I had "declined their offer of a tenancy". Is this right? What can I do?



The amount you paid is called a reservation fee. It is subject to rules in the Residential

Tenancies Regulation 2006. In your case, you should get all the money back because the agent did not offer you the place at the rent you applied for. This means that the landlord declined your application.

Their different offer is a separate transaction. It is not related to the application you made and so you should get the whole amount back.

I suggest that you write a letter of demand to the agent giving them a deadline for payment. A week to ten days should do.

If they fail to meet the deadline, then you may apply to the Consumer, Trader and Tenancy Tribunal for an order that the reservation fee be repaid to you. The time limit for this application is six years, but do not delay.

At the tribunal, you should have (if possible) the receipt for the reservation fee, any letters or e-mails between you and the agent, your copy of the application for tenancy and a copy of the advertisement you acted on. Ask any witnesses of relevant conversations to write you a statutory declaration of what happened and who said what to whom, when and where.

The Regulation requires that receipts for reservation fees be in a particular form that lays out the rules for reservation fees. A landlord or agent should not ask for or take a reservation fee if the premises are occupied at the time by a tenant, the landlord or another person. The fee may not be greater than one weeks rent for the premises.

If a reservation fee is properly taken and then the prospective tenant declines an offer of the

tenancy agreement, then the agent or landlord may keep a proportion of the fee. The proportion is based on the lost time/rent of the reservations period (usually seven days).

So, if after four days the tenant declines, then four sevenths of the fee may be withheld and only three sevenths will be returned to the tenant. ■

Grant Arbuthnot, Principal Legal Officer

If you have any further questions, contact your local Tenants Advice and Advocacy Service.

See the back page for phone numbers or use the postcode search on the Tenants NSW website at <www.tenants.org.au> to find your local service.



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Draft Bill update

Ned Cutcher
Policy Officer

Here is a brief update on the TU's take on the draft Residential Tenancies Bill 2009.

The good

Residential tenancy databases

Finally: the draft Bill proposes legislated rules about residential tenant databases that will apply to landlords, agents and database operators.

It will oversee how listings occur and how to find out about a listing, and provides for the resolution of disputes. Given the importance of this reform, it is vital that the legislation gets it right.

Co-tenants

Under current laws, a departing co-tenant cannot end their liability for rent and other costs, while other co-tenants remain.

The draft Bill would allow the termination of a co-tenancy, and the severance of liabilities, by giving notice to the landlord and remaining co-tenants.

Domestic violence

Where a final Apprehended Violence Order excludes a violent co-tenant from their premises,

the draft Bill would automatically terminate their tenancy. The tenancies of other co-tenants would remain on foot.

This proposal will enable the rental liabilities of victims and perpetrators of domestic violence to be severed.

Rent arrears

While landlords would be able to commence termination proceedings more quickly, tenants would be assured that if they pay their arrears, their tenancy will be saved – even if the Consumer, Trader and Tenancy Tribunal (CTTT) has already ordered termination.

Tenants facing eviction for arrears would not be tempted to keep their money for a new bond, and landlords would be better equipped to recover arrears.

Break fees

Tenants who move out during the fixed term of a tenancy would be liable to compensate the landlord with a predetermined 'break fee'. This is much less complicated than the current 'breach-loss-mitigation' model.

The proposal is controversial – the draft Bill seems to create a statutory right for tenants to unilaterally end a fixed-term tenancy. It should simply seek to codify the manner in which appropriate compensation is calculated. It would be unfortunate if this reform is abandoned on account of this controversy.

Terminations by tenants

Tenants would be able to end a tenancy with no penalty if they are offered a social housing tenancy



Photo by Patrycja Arvidssen

or take up residence in an aged-care facility, during their fixed term.

The bad

Access to premises for sale

The Bill envisages landlords and tenants making agreements about days and times to show a property to prospective purchasers.

But any negotiations would be undermined, by giving landlords access on 24 hours notice without limiting the number of visits, as well as fines of up to \$2,200 for tenants who refuse to give 'reasonable' access.

Agreements will only happen when landlords' rights of access are restricted and they have a reason to negotiate for more. These proposals are a step backwards and will lead to more disputes between landlords and tenants.

Uncollected goods

The time allowed for collecting goods at the end of a tenancy would be decreased to just 14 days before a landlord can dispose of them.

The draft Bill would give a former tenant a right to compensation if the landlord disposes of goods

unlawfully – but given the options for a landlord to dispose of goods may include giving them away, this could well be meaningless.

Unfinished business

Terminations 'without grounds'

Renting in New South Wales will remain unnecessarily insecure, as landlords would retain their current ability to end tenancies 'without grounds'.

Notice periods would be increased, but the CTTT would lose its discretion to take 'circumstances of the case' into account during termination proceedings.

Under these proposals, termination notices without grounds will always end a tenancy. The law should be trying to discourage landlords from using notices without grounds, not making them more attractive.

Exclusions

Those renters who are kept out of the current Act – particularly boarders and lodgers – continue to be excluded by the draft Bill.

These exclusions highlight the urgent need for occupancy legislation that covers all marginal rental housing in New South Wales. ■

CONFERENCE

'Estates in the balance: best practice in redevelopment and regeneration of public housing estates'

A Shelter NSW conference

Thursday 17 June 2010
9:00am to 4:00pm

Auditorium, NSW Teachers Federation conference centre,
37 Reservoir St, Surry Hills

This conference will focus on best practice in redevelopment and regeneration, before, during and after redevelopment and regeneration of public housing estates.

It will cover the resettlement and rehousing of current tenants, community engagement, social mix and tenure mix, poverty and social exclusion, and design and density.

Speakers include:

- the Hon. David Borger MP, NSW Minister for Housing
- Simon Pinnegar, Deputy Director, and team from the City Futures Research Centre, University of New South Wales
- Dr Kathy Arthurson, Senior Research Fellow, Faculty of Health Sciences, School of Medicine, Flinders University, Adelaide.

Registrations are open until Friday 11 June. An 'early bird' rate applies to registrations received before Friday 28 May:

<www.sheltersnsw.org.au/docs/fly10conference-rego.html>.

For more information, please contact Yana Myronenko:

- phone (02) 9267 5733 ext 13
- admin@sheltersnsw.org.au

The TU's **submission** on the draft Bill is on the Tenants NSW website at <www.tenants.org.au/publish/tenancy-law-reform>.

For more **commentary** on the draft Bill, visit the TU blog, The Brown Couch at <<http://tunswblog.blogspot.com>>.

JOIN THE TENANTS' UNION

Support us in our work for safe, secure and affordable rental housing for people in New South Wales

Membership application (tax invoice)

I would like to apply for membership of the Tenants' Union of NSW Co-operative Limited (ABN 88 984 223 164)

First name

Last name

Position (organisations only)

Organisation

Postal address

Suburb

State

Postcode

E-mail

Phone (W)

Phone (H)

Membership type:

- ☐ tenant ☐ tenant organisation
☐ non-tenant ☐ non-tenant organisation
☐ other (please specify):

Fees: (all include GST) • unwaged \$8.00
• waged \$16.00 • organisation \$32.00

Annual fee runs 1 January–31 December.
New members can pay half fees after 30 June.
First membership fee covers cost of share.

Payment: Please enclose a cheque/money order made out to the Tenants' Union of NSW for:

Membership \$

Donation \$

Total \$

I am over 18 years of age. I support the objectives of the Tenants' Union of NSW.

Signed

Date

Return with payment to Tenants' Union of NSW
Suite 201, 55 Holt St, Surry Hills NSW 2010

CONTACTS

NSW Tenants Advice and Advocacy Services



Inner Sydney	9698 5975
Inner Western Sydney	9559 2899
Southern Sydney	9787 4679
South Western Sydney	1800 631 993 4628 1678
Eastern Sydney	9386 9147
Western Sydney	8833 0911
Northern Sydney	9884 9605
North Western Sydney	1800 625 956 9413 2677
Blue Mountains	1300 363 967
Central Coast	4353 5515
Hunter	1800 654 504 4969 7666
Illawarra and South Coast	1800 807 225 4274 3475
Mid North Coast	1800 777 722 6583 9866
Northern Rivers	1800 649 135 6621 1022
North Western NSW	1800 836 268 6772 4698
South Western NSW	1800 642 609

Aboriginal services

Greater Sydney	9569 0222
Western NSW	1800 810 233
Southern NSW	1800 672 185 4472 9363
Northern NSW	1800 248 913 6643 4426

Tenants NSW website www.tenants.org.au



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Tenants' Union of NSW

The Tenants' Union of NSW is a specialist community legal centre that has been active in promoting the rights of over 1.5 million tenants in New South Wales since 1976.

The Tenants' Union is also the peak resourcing body for the NSW Tenants Advice and Advocacy Program.

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