

# Asset Maintenance Policy

## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to enable HousingFirst to:

- Deliver a maintenance service which takes into account the quality of life of tenants
- Ensure that properties meet acceptable standards
- Protect the value of assets
- Use available resources effectively and efficiently.

## Scope

This policy applies to all properties owned, controlled or managed by HousingFirst. The Asset Maintenance Policy covers the three main areas of Asset Maintenance, being:

1. Responsive Maintenance
2. Cyclical or Planned Maintenance
3. Vacated Maintenance.

## Policy Statement

### General

HousingFirst is committed to providing tenants with accommodation that is secure, safe, in good repair and of an acceptable standard through:

- Adherence to industry standards and building regulations
- Efficient, effective, reliable and timely responses to maintenance requests
- Appropriate information to tenants regarding responsibilities, procedures, rights, feedback and complaints
- Monitoring repairs and maintenance services
- Compliance with the legal requirements of the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic)*.

HousingFirst shall provide housing that is appropriate and meets specific requirements through:

- Ensuring accommodation is well planned in areas of design, location and proximity to services
- Incorporation of adaptable elements within the design
- Incorporation of environmentally sustainable development objectives
- Incorporation of HousingFirst Design Guidelines

To facilitate the achievement of the above policy areas the following are to be established:

- Individual property files that record maintenance works undertaken and include site and elevation plans, property service plans and information relating to fixtures, fittings and finishes
- Annual budgets for responsive and cyclical maintenance and capital works
- Financial systems which efficiently monitor budget allocations, outgoings and property revenue.

### Responsive maintenance

Responsive maintenance is the day to day maintenance or repair work that are not regularly scheduled. These works are usually in response to a request by a tenant or are required as a result of an event such as emergency, weather or other one-off occurrences.

All responsive repairs will be undertaken within the response times outlined below:

Category	Example	Response time
Urgent	Burst water service Blocked or broken toilet system Serious roof leak Dangerous electrical fault Gas leak Flooding or serious flood damage	24 hours
Priority	Broken light Leaking tap	7 days
Normal	Repair to clothesline Internal doors that won't close	14 days

### Tenant Caused Damage

Where the repairs required are due to damage caused by the tenant or visitor due to lack of care and not through fair wear and tear, e.g. broken glass in windows, holes in walls, HousingFirst will:

- For urgent repairs HousingFirst will arrange the works to be done as per the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic)* within 24 hours and inform the tenant that this may be a tenant charge as per the Tenant Charge Policy
- Non urgent repairs will be quoted on first, and the tenant will have 14 days to rectify the damage. If the tenant has not repaired the damaged within 14 days HousingFirst may breach the tenant, complete the works and forward the costs onto the tenant.

### After Hours Maintenance Emergencies

After hours is defined as the hours outside of normal offices of 9am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday as well as weekends and public holidays. HousingFirst operate an after hours service for emergency and urgent repairs and events that require attention outside of normal office hours.

## Cyclical or planned maintenance

Cyclical maintenance is the planned renewal and/or replacement of building components, appliances, fixtures, fittings and surfaces based on the life span and actual condition of the property.

HousingFirst maintains a 40-year Asset Management Program that determines projected cyclical maintenance works and estimated costs based on:

- An assessment of the building fabric, structure and condition of the property
- Realistic estimates of fair wear and tear to the property
- Annual property audits (condition inspections)
- Current material and labour costs (CPI adjusted annually).

## Contracted Cyclical Maintenance

Programmed cyclical maintenance is often contracted and undertaken as scheduled throughout the year. It is HousingFirst's practice to:

- Maintain a comprehensive register of reputable and reliable contractors
- Select contractors based on their qualifications, experience, appropriate insurances, licences and availability and cost
- Appoint contractors in line with the Procurement Policy
- Review contractors based on feedback received from tenants, and quality and cost of works
- Ensure access to properties is in accordance with the Contractor Code of Conduct and in accordance with the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic)*
- Monitor the progress of large jobs and assess the quality of completed works
- Obtain feedback from tenants regarding their satisfaction with the service and conduct of the contractor.

## Capital Works

Capital Works increases the capital value of the asset. It may include restumping/roofing/plumbing/wiring and/or extensions, and new kitchens/bathrooms/laundries.

For major upgrades and renovations, careful consideration is given to the particular housing needs of the tenant group and take into account where possible, current problems, weaknesses, faults and deficiencies of the property.

Current or future tenants of the property may be provided with the opportunity to be involved in the property renovations and with the selection of colour schemes, fixtures and fittings where practical.

Inspection of the property and scope of works is determined by HousingFirst's Asset Manager. It is important that any works undertaken is undertaken in line with the Procurement Policy, Delegation Policy and appropriate building and housing regulations.

A schedule of works and estimated cost is then developed and the procedure to appoint Contractors using the Standard Form of Contract is then followed.

### **Annual Property Audits**

HousingFirst conducts annual property audits to ensure up to date property condition records. The audits inform cyclical maintenance schedules and annual budgets for the following financial year. Tenants will be given notice of the Annual Property Audit as per the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic)*.

### **Vacated maintenance**

Vacated Maintenance is the maintenance or repair works that are completed on vacant properties prior to re-letting.

To determine the maintenance works required, an inspection of the property is undertaken. This is usually done one working day before the tenant is due to vacate or on the same day that they vacate the property.

Vacated Maintenance is undertaken to ensure:

- The property is in a clean condition
- The property is of an acceptable standard for re-letting
- There are no health or safety risks in the property
- The property is secure.
- All utility services such as gas, electricity and water are also checked to ensure they are in a safe working condition.

Maintenance works to repair minor damage to the property are undertaken immediately. Items which have been subjected to wear and tear, are in poor condition and are scheduled in the current annual Cyclical Maintenance Program will also be undertaken while the property is vacant. Other works will be scheduled for future cyclical maintenance or capital upgrade. It is anticipated that all vacated maintenance repairs be carried out within -10 days to minimise loss of rent on the property.

Should maintenance works be required to repair damage to the property resulting from deliberate and/or neglectful behaviour of the tenant, HousingFirst can, in accordance with the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic)*, commence action to recover the costs of the works from the tenant.

### **Related information**

HousingFirst Strategic Asset Management Plan

HousingFirst Procurement Policy

HousingFirst Delegation Policy

HousingFirst Delegation Schedule

HousingFirst Code of Conduct (Contractors)

HousingFirst Tenant Recharge Policy

[Residential Tenancies Act 1997 \(Vic\)](#)

[Housing Act 1983 \(Vic\)](#)

[Victorian Housing Registrar Performance Standard 2 \(Housing Assets\)](#)

## Transparency and accessibility

This policy is available at [www.housingfirst.org.au](http://www.housingfirst.org.au)

## Version control

Version	1	Review frequency	24 months
Approved	April 2019	Review date	April 2021