



**CENTACARE**  
**evolve**  
HOUSING

# TENANT HANDBOOK



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# Who is Centacare Evolve Housing?

Centacare Evolve Housing is a not-for-profit community housing provider that is community minded and community driven.

Congratulations on your new rental, and welcome to Centacare Evolve Housing.

Centacare Evolve Housing (CEH) believes in the important principle that everyone has a right to safe, secure, stable and affordable accommodation.

To that end, CEH is contracted through the Tasmanian Government’s Better Housing Futures program to manage all of the Housing Tasmania properties within the Bridgewater, Gagebrook and Herdsmans Cove area. Under this agreement, CEH is responsible for managing tenancies, maintaining and upgrading housing stock, and redeveloping sites to help improve the quality of life for residents.

Centacare Evolve Housing is more than it first seems.

CEH is primarily a housing provider, but as part of the CatholicCare group (formally Centacare) CEH is able to link people into a large range of additional services if required – including children’s services, parenting support, counselling, tenancy support, family violence support, or other housing support services.

Your Tenancy Officer will be your main contact point with us and will help you get established. They will contact you periodically to arrange property inspections and check how things are going, so let them know if you have any questions.

Your Tenancy Officer name:	
Your Tenancy Officer contact number:	

I hope you enjoy your new home and we wish you all the best with settling in.

Kind regards,



James Norman - General Manager Community Housing Services

# Contact Us

Department	Contact number
Reception General enquiries	03 6173 0060
Property Services Repairs and Maintenance	03 6173 0061
After Hours Emergency Urgent after hours repairs Emergencies only.	03 6173 0061 – your call will be forwarded to our after-hours number
Housing Applications	1800 800 588 – Housing Connect
Feedback & complaints	(03) 6173 0060

# Glossary of Terms



word	meaning
Capital property	A property that is fully managed by Centacare Evolve Housing. Centacare Evolve Housing organises for all repairs, as well as property insurances, Council and water rates.
Leasehold property	A property that Centacare Evolve Housing leases from a private rental landlord (or real estate agent). Centacare Evolve Housing pays the full market rent for the property and subsidises the rent paid by Centacare Evolve Housing tenants. Centacare Evolve Housing is not responsible for paying for repairs and need to negotiate with the property owner to have repairs attended to.
Agreement	A Residential Tenancies Agreement (sometimes called a “lease”) sets out the responsibilities between landlords and tenants. Centacare Evolve Housing uses a standard agreement, similar to those used by most landlords in Tasmania.
Appeals	When a tenant is not satisfied with Centacare Evolve Housing’s decisions about something that affects their tenancy, they have the right to make an appeal. An appeal is a formal review process that checks if Centacare Evolve Housing’s decision was right or wrong
Fair wear and tear	Is considered to be deterioration or changes that happen during normal use of the property even though the property receives reasonable care and maintenance, or changes that happen with ageing
Property condition report	A three page report that is completed at the start and end of a lease and details the state of the property. It allows for both the landlord and the tenant to make any comments about any part of the property, including gardens and fittings. It can be critical when deciding at the end of a tenancy, who is responsible for repairs. A shorter version is used for Routing Inspections at lease renewal time
Factsheet	Written information from Centacare Evolve Housing that provides more details about many of the matters in this booklet. Factsheets can be obtained from our office and our website. We have various factsheets that provide information about matters relating to privacy, repairs, rehousing, fire safety and security, Tenant Advisory Group, Appeals and Complaints.
Tenancy Officers	<p>Centacare Evolve Housing employs Tenancy Officers who are responsible for handling nearly all of the matters about your tenancy. A Tenancy Officer looks after your rent payments and assessments, property inspections and rehousing requests.</p> <p>Each Tenancy Officer looks after a portfolio of properties and they report to the Housing Manager.</p>



Company	Phone	Website
Hobart Buses	13 22 01	<a href="http://www.metrotas.com.au/">http://www.metrotas.com.au/</a>
Translating and interpreting service	131 450	<a href="http://www.tisnational.gov.au/">http://www.tisnational.gov.au/</a>
Hearing or speech impaired	1800 637 500	N/A
Housing TAS	1300 665 663	<a href="http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/housing">http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/housing</a>
Centrelink	132 468	<a href="http://www.humanservices.gov.au/">http://www.humanservices.gov.au/</a>

## Need to contact your local council?

Council	Phone
Break O'Day	03 6376 7900
Brighton	03 6268 7000
Burnie	03 6430 5700
Central Coast	03 6429 8900
Central Highlands	03 6286 3202
Circular Head	03 6452 4800
Clarence	03 6217 9500
Derwent Valley	03 6261 8500
Devonport	03 6424 0511
Dorset	03 6362 6500
Flinders	03 6359 5001
George Town	03 6382 8800
Glamorgan Spring Bay	03 6256 4777
Hobart	03 6238 2711

Council	Phone
Huon Valley	03 6264 0300
Kentish	03 6491 0200
Kingborough	03 6211 8200
King Island	03 6462 9000
Latrobe	03 6421 4650
Launceston	03 6323 3000
Meander Valley	03 6393 5300
Northern Midlands	03 6397 7303
Sorell	03 6269 0000
Southern Midlands	03 6254 5000
Tasman	03 6250 9200
Waratah-Wynyard	03 6443 8333
West Coast	03 6471 4700
West Tamar	03 6383 6350

## Council Services

### Bin Collection

Contact your local council to find out their rules regarding bin collection.

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# About your home

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## Your tenancy

Your tenancy is a legal contract you signed that gives you the right to live in your home, with rights and responsibilities for both you as the tenant and Centacare Evolve Housing as the landlord (refer to your Residential Tenancy Agreement for details).

## Water Payments

CEH expects tenants to conserve water wherever possible, and those who use water responsibly and in line with the average usage per household will not receive charges at this point in time. CEH can apply water charges in accordance with the residential tenancies act 1997.

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# What you can expect from us

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## Service Standards:

We make sure our Service Standards are in line with the National Community Housing Standards. Our service standards are available on our website and provide clear guidance around the following areas of community housing:

1. tenancy Management	2. asset Management
3. tenant rights and participation	4. working with the community
5. governance and organisational management	6. management systems
7. human resources management	

## Inspections of your home

You will always be given at least 7 days' notice of any property inspections by our staff. The only occasions where notice may not be given, may be in an emergency or when Centacare Evolve Housing have obtained a legal order that allows us to visit the property without notice. Centacare Evolve Housing also request that our tradespeople call and make an appointment with you before they arrive to do planned works.

## Identification

You should always be comfortable that the person visiting your home is who they say they are. Centacare Evolve Housing use a range of different companies for repair works, so we will not issue them with identification.

If you are unsure of the caller's identity, remember the following:

- it is unlikely that we have organised any work to your property that you were not aware of;
- if you live in a capital property, the tradesperson should carry a copy of a work order (on our letterhead) which will include your name and contact details;
- if the person claims to be a staff member or real estate agent, it is unlikely that they would arrive without giving you prior written notice of their visit

When in doubt, refuse entry and contact us immediately.

## The condition of your home

Your home should be maintained to a reasonable standard making sure that it is kept clean, safe and fit to live in. Any damage that occurs in the property needs to be reported as soon as possible.

It is also important that you complete the condition report that was given to you at the time you signed the lease agreement. This must be returned within 7 days, whether you have moved in or not. Your report will be used to assess the standard of the property when you leave and so it is very important that you fully complete it and return it on time.

For more information refer to the following documents available on our website and from our office



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# What we expect from you

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## Paying your rent and how it is calculated.

Paying your rent is part of the agreement that you signed called the Residential Tenancy Agreement. This is a legal document.

When starting your tenancy you must pay two weeks rent upfront, and then continue paying rent either weekly or fortnightly. Rent payments must be maintained two weeks in advance at all times; not being two weeks ahead in rent means you are in breach of your Residential Tenancy Agreement.

If you do not pay your rent, you can be evicted from your property. If you are having financial difficulties at some point during your tenancy, it is important to contact your Tenancy Officer before making a decision to stop paying rent. They can try and help you sort it out or put you in touch with support services.

Rent is calculated based on your income. Social Housing rent is based on 25% of your income or market rent whichever is lower.

## Paying your non-rent and how it is calculated

Non-rent are those payments Centacare Evolve Housing will ask you to pay that are not related to your rent payment, these include:

- Water usage charges (where applicable)
- Damage to the property that are caused by the tenant (cost is determined by the type of damage and the complexity of the repair)

You can negotiate a repayment plan with your Tenancy Officer for Non-Rent payments.

## Being a good neighbour

Being a good neighbour is everybody's responsibility. Centacare Evolve Housing tenants have a right to live peacefully in their property and to live in harmony with their neighbours. Tenants must follow the nuisance and annoyance conditions under their Residential Tenancy Agreement. These conditions include being responsible for their own behaviour and the behaviour of visitors and occupants at their property.

You can try to solve the problem by talking with your neighbours or through a mediator. Centacare Evolve Housing has information on resolving disputes, and we can refer you to a Dispute Resolution and Mediation services where an independent mediator may help you resolve your dispute. Centacare Evolve Housing will not be involved in this process as an advocate or third party.

## Extra Guests

Households may change from time to time, for example, the birth of a child, a new job or visitors wanting to move in with Centacare Evolve Housing's tenants etc. When these types of changes happen, tenants need to write a letter to Centacare Evolve Housing, or fill out an additional occupants form (available at Centacare Evolve Housing's head office or [www.centacareevolvehousing.com.au](http://www.centacareevolvehousing.com.au)).

If a guest wants to stay longer than 6 weeks, the tenant must seek written approval from Centacare Evolve Housing for an additional occupant. Approval will be subject to conditions.

## Being away from your property for an extended period of time

The expectation of Centacare Evolve Housing is that tenants live in the property at all times, but can approve for a tenant to be absent from the property for an extended period of time if there is a valid reason.

If you are planning to be absent from your property for more than 8 weeks you must notify your Tenancy Officer as soon as possible and gain approval for the absence.

Acceptable reasons include, but are not limited to:

- Holiday – no more than once per twelve month period
- Incarceration, provided the offence does not involve a breach of lease
- Hospitalisation of you or an immediate family member

For more information refer to the following documents available on our website and from our office:

- Absence from Tenure Factsheet available from our office and on our website

## When you vacate your home

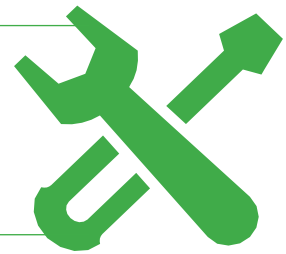
Under the Residential Tenancy Agreement (lease) that you signed, it says that you must give 14 days' written notice when you want to move out. You should return the property clean, safe and fit to live in, including removing all personal items and rubbish.

A joint inspection will be held with you and your Tenancy Officer to finalise the tenancy and to determine if you are responsible for any repairs (this is where the condition report is important).

Any money owing for rent and non-rent should be finalised by the end date of the tenancy.

It is important to notify Centacare Evolve Housing as soon as possible of your intention to leave, because if you notify Centacare Evolve housing after you leave you will be charged for that period in rent.

# Repairing and maintaining your home



## Repairs and Maintenance

We have a responsibility to you, the tenant, to ensure that the property you live in is maintained to a reasonable standard. We must maintain the premises in as near as possible to the same condition (apart from reasonable wear and tear) as when your tenancy started. We are responsible for repairs that are a result of fair wear and tear.

As the tenant, you are responsible for looking after the property, maintaining fixtures and fittings and keeping the entire property clean and free from damage. If you, a member of your household or a visitor to your home, cause damage to the property, you are responsible for the repair costs.

You are welcome to decorate your home by adding floor rugs, hanging pictures etc however the property must be returned to original condition when you vacate. You may paint only with our permission, so please talk to us first. As outlined in the Lease agreement, you are not permitted to alter, build on or add to the property, or move fixtures and fittings. To do so is a breach of your lease.

### Who pays for the repairs?

If there is a query about who is responsible for the cost of repairs, we will use the property condition report that was prepared at the beginning of your tenancy to assess fair wear and tear and determine who should pay. If you have misplaced your condition report, please ask your Tenancy Officer for a copy.

Our shared responsibilities are outlined in detail in the Lease agreement. In summary, the table below lists typical repairs and maintenance items and who has responsibility to pay for these:

Our responsibility	Your responsibility
<p>Repair or replacement of the following items due to wear and tear:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Common area lights (in complexes only)</li><li>• Stove</li><li>• Locks</li><li>• Smoke alarms</li><li>• Doors and fittings</li><li>• Basins and taps</li><li>• Bath (if applicable), shower and shower screens (if applicable)</li><li>• Fixed floor coverings</li><li>• Internal and external painting</li><li>• TV antenna</li><li>• Clothesline</li><li>• Power supply</li><li>• Water supply</li><li>• Downpipes, gutters and drains to multi-storey dwellings</li><li>• Boundary fences</li><li>• Initial supply of rubbish and recycling bins</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Any and all damage caused by you, your family or visitors to the property. This includes damage to any fixtures and fittings as listed as our responsibility</li><li>• Replacement of globes</li><li>• Replacement of smoke alarm batteries</li><li>• Broken windows</li><li>• Damage/holes in walls, doors and floors</li><li>• Faulty appliance/s that cause the power supply to trip if those appliances are not listed as being our responsibility.</li><li>• Blockages to sinks, toilet and drains (even if its accidental)</li><li>• Pest and vermin control</li><li>• Gardens, lawns and tree pruning</li><li>• Removal of rubbish including lawn clippings and garden waste</li><li>• Downpipes, gutters and drains (single-storey dwellings only)</li><li>• Replacement cost of rubbish/recycling bins</li><li>• Replacement of lost or stolen keys</li><li>• When locked out of your home outside of business hours you will need to contact a locksmith to gain entry</li><li>• Repairs to any items that you have installed</li></ul>

## How do I request repairs and maintenance?

We are your nominated repairer and you must contact us first if any repairs are needed. If you are reporting damage resulting from vandalism, please phone Tasmania Police and report the matter before contacting our Maintenance Helpdesk.

1. Phone the Maintenance Helpdesk on 6173 0061 during office hours, 9am – 4.45pm Monday-Friday.
2. Provide our Receptionist with your name, address and telephone number.
3. Describe the problem and respond to questions we will ask you about the repair request.
4. We will arrange either a Works Order or an Inspection to be carried out by our Maintenance Team or a Contractor, depending on the urgency and nature of the repair.
5. We will let you know a timeframe in which you can expect the work or inspection to be undertaken.

## What to do when our office is closed

- If you have an emergency like a fire, call 000.
- If you require an emergency repair to your property, phone the Maintenance Helpdesk on (03) 6173 0061. Your call will be diverted to an afterhours Contractor.

## How long will the repairs take?

The time it takes to attend to repairs depends on the type and nature of the work required and whether it is urgent, priority or normal, as described in the table below:

Maintenance Type and Response	
Type:	<b>Urgent</b>
Response Time:	Within 4 hours
Situation: Urgent repairs are where there is an immediate health, safety or security risk or where the property will be further damaged if work is not carried out. Urgent action is required to address the situation which may mean temporary repairs are undertaken to make the situation safe until business hours, when proper repairs can be arranged. Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• a burst water service</li><li>• a gas leak</li><li>• a dangerous electrical fault</li><li>• flooding or serious flood damage</li><li>• damage that causes the premises to be unsafe/insecure or damage likely to cause injury to person or property</li></ul> Urgent works are attended to and repaired or made safe within 4 hours. Once you've reported urgent works, you will need to stay at home until the repairs are completed. If you are not at home when the contractor arrives, you may be charged for the contractor's time.	

Type:	<b>Priority</b>
Response Time:	24 – 48 hours
<p>Situation:</p> <p>Priority repairs are work needed to fix a problem that is not urgent (or an emergency), but is causing inconvenience and may develop into a health, safety or security risk if not fixed promptly. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• where essential items are not working, such as hot-water heater, room heater and stove</li> <li>• no lights working in the home</li> <li>• other electrical fault</li> <li>• leak from pipe or base of toilet</li> <li>• blocked drain outside the home</li> </ul>	
Type:	<b>Normal 7</b>
Response Time:	Within 7 days
<p>For general repairs and maintenance requests. Any work classified as normal 7 will be attended to within one week. This generally relate to repairs that are of an inconvenient nature, rather than having any urgency.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roof leak</li> <li>• Oven not working</li> <li>• Heating / cooling issues</li> </ul>	
Type:	<b>Normal 28</b>
Response Time:	Within 28 days
<p>For general repairs and maintenance requests. Any work classified as normal will be either attended to within one-month or placed on the planned maintenance program, depending on the nature and complexity of the work.</p>	

## What to do when the Centacare Evolve Housing office is closed

- If you have an emergency like a fire, call 000.
- If you require an emergency repair to your property, you can call the after-hours number on (03) 6173 0061

For more information refer to the following documents available on our website and from our office:  
Repairs and Maintenance Tenant Fact Sheet

Other useful information should you require emergency after hour's repairs:

	Provider	Contact number
Electricity	Aurora Energy	132 004 (Emergencies & Outages)
Telephone	Telstra connections	132 200
	Optus	1800 501 064
Gas	TasGas	1802 111 (Emergencies & Outages)
Water	TasWater	13 6992
Storm water	Contact your local council	
Toilet blockages	Contact your plumber	

# Keeping your home safe



<p>Call <b>000</b> if there is a fire</p>	<p><b>Never smoke cigarettes in bed</b></p> 	<p><b>Never walk away from the stove</b> when you are cooking</p> 
<p><b>Always turn off electric blankets</b> before getting intobed</p> 	<p>Keep <b>curtains, clothing and bedding</b> away from heaters and candles</p>	<p><b>Clean the lint filter</b> every time you use your clothes dryer</p> 
<p><b>Do not</b> plug more than one appliance into a power point</p> 	<p><b>Switch off</b> any appliances not in use</p> 	<p>Before leaving your room or home, <b>always extinguish   candles or any open flames.</b></p> 
<p><b>Keep matches and lighters out of childrens reach</b></p>	<p><b>Test the smoke alarms every month</b> by pressing and holding the button until it beeps.</p> 	<p>If your alarm does not beep report this to CEH 03 6173 0061</p> 

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# How to make a complaint

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## Why do we have a complaints procedure?

Centacare Evolve Housing aims to provide a high quality professional service to all tenants. We always welcome your feedback, whether it's a complaint, compliment or suggestion.

- It helps us monitor our performance and effectiveness.
- It tells us what is working well and what we need to do better.
- We appreciate the opportunity to improve our services.

## What can you complain about?

- The services Centacare Evolve Housing provides;
- The way they have been treated by staff;
- The manner in which their personal information has been used, disclosed or dealt with, including health information.

## How to make a complaint

You can make a complaint by;

- Speaking to a Centacare Evolve Housing staff member.
- Visiting our office.
- Sending us an email at [centacareevolvehousing@aohtas.org.au](mailto:centacareevolvehousing@aohtas.org.au)

Complaints will be acknowledged, investigated and responded to usually within 20 days. However, complaints regarding privacy may take up to 60 days to be completed.

## How to lodge an appeal?

When tenants are not satisfied with Centacare Evolve Housing's decisions about something that affects their tenancy, they have the right to make an appeal. An appeal is a formal review process that checks if Centacare Evolve Housing's decision was right or wrong.

- You have three (3) months from the date of the original decision to ask for a review and to put in an appeal.
- Fill out the relevant Appeals form found on our website [www.centacareevolve.com.au](http://www.centacareevolve.com.au) or at our office.
- Ask for help if you cannot fill out the form, for example, a relative, friend or community worker may fill out the form on your behalf.
- Centacare Evolve Housing staff members can also help you with writing the appeal on your behalf.
- Talk to Centacare Evolve Housing staff if you need someone to explain what extra information you may need to attach.

## What is the appeals process?

From the time we receive your written appeal, a Centacare Evolve Housing staff member – who was not involved in making the original decision – will review your appeal. It may take up to 20 days working days to be done, although it is often faster.

When the review is complete, we will send a letter to you. The letter will tell you the outcome of your appeal and the reasons for our decision.



## What to do if you are still not satisfied after lodging an appeal

If you believe our decision on your appeal is still not right, you can ask for another review from the Ombudsman Tasmania. This is an independent agency that reviews decisions of community housing providers and Housing Tasmania. You can contact Ombudsman Tasmania on 1800 001 170

For more advice contact the Centacare Evolve Housing head office on 03 6173 0060.

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# Getting involved with Centacare Evolve Housing

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## What is tenant involvement?

Centacare Evolve Housing encourages tenants to become more involved in the decisions that affect your housing and to participate in activities and programs that benefit all tenants.

## What can you get involved in?

Centacare Evolve Housing encourages tenant involvement. You can get involved by taking part in the following initiatives:

**Tenants Advisory Group (TAG)** –The TAG actively works with Centacare Evolve Housing to ensure that tenants get the best possible service. They get together every two months and discuss issues that affect tenants. For more information please contact our office on (03) 6173 0060)

**Tenant Satisfaction Survey** – An annual survey filled out by tenants to provide Centacare Evolve Housing with an ongoing measure of how well it is meeting the housing needs of tenants, how contractors are doing their work and tenants views on policy issues that the organisation may be considering.

## Share your thoughts with us!

We need to know what's good, what's bad and what you think about Centacare Evolve Housing. That way we can make sure we do it more, less or better in the future. Simply email us at [centacareevolve@aohtas.org.au](mailto:centacareevolve@aohtas.org.au)