

## Shelter NSW, CHIA NSW, Homelessness NSW, Tenants Union NSW, Churches Housing

### Policy area

Housing Affordability and homelessness.

### Introduction

Secure, affordable and liveable homes are the bedrock of any great community.

Everyone has a decent, affordable, accessible and safe place to call home.

### Problem/Issue

Having access to affordable, sustainable housing brings a positive contribution to people's lives and the New South Wales Government must play an essential role in ensuring it is available to NSW citizens. However, currently there is a housing and homelessness crisis in NSW which requires urgent government action.

### Homelessness

With our current resources, New South Wales should be the leading state in addressing and preventing homelessness. However, rates of homelessness in NSW continue to rise. There were 37,715 people in NSW in the Census who are classified as being homeless on Census night 2016 (up 37% from 27,479 in 2011). This is higher than the national increase of 14%.

Recent data has identified that Specialist Homelessness Services (SHSs) in New South Wales provided support to approximately 71,628 clients in 2017/2018. SHSs are contracted to support 58,000 clients each year and so are supporting 23 per cent more clients than the system is designed, and funded, for. Significantly the data reveals that SHSs were unable to provide accommodation assistance for over 41 per cent of those that sought it.

### Housing affordability

There are approximately 60,000 people on the NSW Housing Waiting list, with over 20 per cent of areas in NSW having waiting periods of ten years for social housing. These high rates of demand for social housing are in part due to the private

rental market being unavailable for those experiencing disadvantage. Anglicare Australia's 2018 Rental Affordability Snapshot conducted in the first weekend in April 2018 found less than 1 per cent advertised across greater Sydney and the Illawarra were available to people on income support payments. For those in the rental market over three quarters of lower income renters in NSW are paying unaffordable rents (92% of very low-income renters in Sydney). This high rental stress can also be seen in the fact that approximately 270,000 households in NSW go without food at least once a week and one of the main reasons for doing so is to be able to afford to pay the rent.

Currently if you rent your home in NSW you can be evicted without being given a reason. Sections 84 and 85 of the NSW Residential Tenancies Act 2010 allow a landlord to issue what is called a 'no grounds' eviction notice at the end of a fixed term lease or once the lease is outside of a fixed term. A significant number of renters who receive a 'no grounds' eviction notice are evicted in retaliation (for asserting a right) or because of discrimination.

### Solution

In NSW we are short over 200,000 homes that should be available to lower income households at affordable rents and this will grow by more than 100,000 over the next 20 years unless we act now. To address this shortfall, we are calling for the development of an evidence-based comprehensive 20-year housing strategy that includes:

- A Social and Affordable Housing Capital Fund to deliver at least 5,000 additional social housing homes per annum.
- Mandated targets for social and affordable housing in new residential developments of up to 15% on private land and at least 30% on government owned land.
- 100% of new social and affordable housing being accessible for people with disabilities.

To further respond to Homelessness in NSW we require:

- A 10-year plan to end homelessness that includes no exits into homelessness, systemic funding of supportive housing approaches, a focus on ending inner city homelessness and a focus on prevention.
- Enhancements to the Specialist Homelessness System that addresses gaps created by Going Home Staying Home.

To provide greater protection for tenants in private rental, current provisions which enable 'no grounds' evictions should be replaced with a comprehensive list of reasonable grounds (reasons) for ending a lease that is fair to landlords and provides protection for renters against 'unfair evictions'.

Restore and maintain funding to the Tenants' Advice and Advocacy Services. An immediate increase of \$5 million per annum, and increased each year in line with the number of bonds held in the Rental Bond Board.

Ensuring all people who rent have legislative protection against unfair evictions. Replace current s84 and s85 of the Residential Tenancies Act 2010 with a list of reasonable grounds for eviction, and protections against the false use of eviction grounds.

**For additional information – key contact:**

Read Shelter NSW complete platform at:  
<https://shelternsw.org.au/sites/shelternsw.org.au/files/ShelterNSW-2019%20-Election-Platform.pdf>

Read the CHIA NSW Election Platform at:  
<https://communityhousing.org.au/chia-nsw-2019-election-platform-housing-our-community/>

Read Homelessness NSW Election Platform at:  
[https://www.homelessnessnsw.org.au/sites/homelessnessnsw/files/2019-01/1.%20FINAL%20State%20Election%20Platform\\_0.pdf](https://www.homelessnessnsw.org.au/sites/homelessnessnsw/files/2019-01/1.%20FINAL%20State%20Election%20Platform_0.pdf)

Read more about unfair evictions at:  
[www.rentingfair.org.au](http://www.rentingfair.org.au)

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