

Inspection Policy

Location	Operations NSW/ACT
Policy Type	Social and Affordable Housing Policy
Version	3.6
Issue Date	November 2023
National Regulatory Code	Performance Outcome 1 - Tenant and Housing Services

1. Objective

- 1.1 This policy applies to all Argyle Housing managed properties and outlines the types and frequency of inspections.

2. Background and Scope

- 2.1 Argyle Housing promotes and respects the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all persons with a disability and provides a service to Clients in line with the principles of the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014, Disability ACT and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).
- 2.2 Argyle Housing supports and encourages a person-centred and culturally sensitive approach to service delivery.
- 2.3 Argyle Housing promotes and respects the rights and freedoms of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- 2.4 Routine Inspections will be undertaken at all Argyle Housing properties at least twice per year. For cyclical and planned maintenance please refer to our Asset Policy.

3. Policy Definitions

Six Week Visit	A visit to the Client six weeks after they move into a property to check the allocation has been successful, that they are settling into their home and managing their Client responsibilities. This is recorded as a routine inspection.
Cyclical Maintenance	The planned renewal and replacement of building components and appliances, based on estimates of their expected life span and the actual condition of the property.
Planned Maintenance	Means maintenance work that takes a planned approach to dealing with all non-urgent maintenance (non-urgent and routine repairs; regular preventative work or property care; and upgrading).
Responsive Repairs	Means the policies and procedures which ensure the efficient and effective notification, prioritising and carrying out of repairs.

PPE

Personal Protective Equipment such as latex gloves, masks, hand sanitizer, anti-bacterial wipes etc

4. Policy Details

- 4.1** Six Weekly Visits, and Routine Property Inspections are conducted by a Client Support Specialist. The focus of these routine inspections is to:
- ensure our properties are being maintained to an appropriate standard
 - assess if any damage has been caused by a client and if so, assess whether this damage was intentional, and discuss repair options with the client.
 - determine if there are any emergency repairs required
 - determine if there any urgent repairs required
 - determine if any routine repairs are required
 - determine if the property continues to meet the needs of the Client and discuss alternative options if appropriate
- 4.2** Where a Client has requested any improvements or alterations, these will be checked during the inspection, taking into account:
- the program area the asset belongs to i.e. CHLP or Capital
 - the context of cyclical and planned maintenance
 - the context of the current condition and standards of other properties, and
 - the particular needs of the Client
- 4.3** When undertaking inspections, Client Support Specialists will note which matters are of greatest concern to Clients, in addition to looking at standard areas of property maintenance.
- 4.4** Issues regarding the safety and security of the Client will be given priority at each Routine Inspection. This includes checking the functionality of smoke detectors.
- 4.5** Argyle Housing will give residents written notice, as per the Residential Tenancy Agreement, before a Routine Inspection. Inspection notices will advise Clients that if they are not home at the time of inspection Argyle Housing Staff will gain access to the property using available keys.
- 4.6** Telephone contact must be made on the day of inspection with the Client to confirm if the inspection can go ahead and health status of household members. Any identified Clients in quarantine due to a confirmed diagnosis of an infectious disease including COVID-19 or testing for an infectious disease, will have their inspection postponed until medical clearance is obtained. If telephone contact is unable to be made prior to attending the property, then the health status of household residents is to be checked immediately upon arrival at the property prior to entering.
- 4.7** Where there are known property hygiene concerns the Client Support Specialist will take responsibility for ensuring the use of PPE appropriate to the circumstances and environment, and compliance with the Home Visiting/Inspections Policy.
- 4.8** If the tenancy has a Support Agreement in place, the support worker from that agency is to be invited to attend the inspection. See Support Agreement Policy for more information on Support

Agreements. The support provider should also be sent the inspection notice letter as well as the client where we have consent.

- 4.9 Client Support Specialists will carry out an inspection using previous Periodical Condition Reports, for reference and maintenance records.
- 4.10 If any instance of threatening behaviour occurs in relation to the Client or visitors, tenancy inspections will not be carried out by Staff on their own. A two-person visit may be required, or assistance to be requested by support agency (if engaged). This two person risk assessment should be completed by the client support specialist and the relevant lead.
- 4.11 If access for a routine inspection is not given by the Client on the first attempt, a notice of entry will immediately be re-issued to occur within seven days. If on the second attempt, the Client Support Specialist is unable to gain access and application to NCAT will be made for an access order.
- 4.12 If any reports are received of methamphetamine manufacture or distribution, tenancy inspections will not be carried out by Staff and local councils, the Australian Federal Police or NSW Police Force will be notified, and procedures followed in accordance with the Argyle Housing Service Response to Methamphetamine Use Policy. If there are children at risk a Mandatory Report to the relevant child protection body will also be made.
- 4.13 All inspections will be recorded on MRI and the paper file. Call logs will be raised on all identified maintenance within 24 hrs. Unless they are emergency repairs, which will be reported by telephone prior to leaving the property.

5. Frequency

- 5.1 A six weekly visit will occur with every new tenancy within six weeks of signing the lease agreement with Argyle Housing.
- 5.2 For the first 12 months of any new tenancy, property inspections will be conducted a minimum of four times per year. Thereafter, or at any time during those 12 months the Client Support Specialist identifies that the tenancy is of high risk, a Property Inspection Assessment will be completed to determine the frequency of routine inspections (except at Ainslie Village).
- 5.3 Property Inspection Assessments must be reviewed on an annual basis or at any time there is a significant change in the household.
- 5.4 The Client Support Specialist will conduct property inspections in accordance with the Property Inspection Assessment for each tenancy. If a single risk factor is identified in the assessment routine inspections will occur on a minimum of four times per year. Inspections will be assessed as needing six monthly inspections if they meet ALL conditions on the assessment.
- 5.5 If three or more risk factors are indicated in the Property Inspection Assessment a referral for High Risk Conferencing is to occur. (See High Risk Tenancy Policy)
- 5.6 Each new tenancy will have a scheduled property inspection within six weeks of the commencement of the tenancy, to identify early any issues with property care or support, to maximise the success of the tenancy.
- 5.7 Where a Notice to Remedy Breach has been issued for property care, a follow up inspection will occur following the expiry of the breach period. At this time a further breach notice may be issued, or further action taken at NCAT should the breach remain un-remedied.
- 5.8 A pre-vacate inspection will be conducted by the Client Support Specialist, and wherever possible, the Maintenance Officer to identify any maintenance and repairs and other tenancy issues prior to the Client vacating the property (See End of Tenancy Policy). The Client should be present at this pre-vacate inspection and provided with a formal letter of items to rectify if there are any.

Other Inspections

- 5.9 Any other inspections are covered under the terms and conditions of the relevant Residential Tenancies Act.

6. Appeals

Appeals and complaints

Social housing applicants or Clients may lodge an appeal or make a complaint by following the Argyle Housing Appeals Policy or Complaints Policy. Affordable Housing Clients may lodge an external appeal through the external appeals process, which is applicable in the State or Territory in which they live.

Matters that the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) or the ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal (ACAT) can resolve are not able to be appealed. For example, if Argyle Housing issues a Notice of Termination for breaches of the tenancy agreement. See Argyle Housing's Appeal Policy for further information.

7. Related Policies and Documents

- 7.1 Delegation of Authority Schedule
- 7.2 Policy Definitions Policy
- 7.3 Argyle Housing Procedures
- 7.4 Property-specific Complaints Policies, Procedures and Tools
- 7.5 Residential Tenancies Act 2010 (NSW)
- 7.6 Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (ACT)
- 7.7 National Community Housing Standards Reference - 1.2 Establishing and maintaining tenancies
- 7.8 Argyle Housing Appeal Policy and Argyle Housing Complaint Policy
- 7.9 End of Tenancy Policy
- 7.10 Service Response to Methamphetamine Use Policy
- 7.11 Home Visiting Policy
- 7.12 High Risk Tenancy Policy
- 7.13 Property Inspection Assessment
- 7.14 High Risk Tenancy Referral

Version Control

Version	Review Date	Author	Positions	Next Review Date
1.0	27/1/2014	D. Skelton	GM BD&R	
2.0	20/5/2015	M. Ward	Operations Manager NSW	

Version	Review Date	Author	Positions	Next Review Date
2.1	01/5/2016	M. Ward	GM Operations	30/4/2017
3.0	18/12/2017	R. Reader	GM Operations	18/12/2018
3.1	24/12/2018	C. Doherty	Housing Services Manager	30/12/2019
3.2	16/4/2019	C. Doherty	Housing Services Manager	15/6/2020
3.3	13/6/2019	C. Doherty	Housing Services Manager	13/6/2021
3.5	18/5/2020	C. Doherty	Housing Services Manager	18/5/2022
3.6	22/4/2021	C. Doherty	Housing Services Manager	30/4/2023
3.6	28/11/2023	C. Tizzoni	Client Services Manager	28/11/2025