



# *Renter Charges Policy*

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## 1. FOREWORD

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Winda-Mara Housing Limited ('WMHL') and Winda-Mara Aboriginal Corporation ('WMAC') work together to deliver safe, secure and affordable housing solutions for eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members living in far southwest Victoria.

WMHL's internal governance and strategic objectives are designed to ensure that its practices and service delivery align with the following cultural statement:

*Our vision is to create a thriving community where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have access to safe, affordable, and culturally appropriate housing.*

*We aspire to empower individuals and families through improved health, education, and wellbeing, fostering a strong sense of identity and pride in our cultural heritage.*

*Through collaboration and sustainable development, we aim to build a future where every member of our community has the opportunity to flourish and succeed.*

## 2. PURPOSE

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This policy outlines which costs will be transferred to the renter and recouped by WMHL during a tenancy. WMHL will pass on renter charges where they are the sole responsibility of the renter and have been directed to WMHL for payment.

## 3. SCOPE

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This policy applies to all properties under WMHL's stewardship, whether owned or managed on behalf of other individuals, organisations, or government agencies.

## 4. TYPES OF CHARGES

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The following types of charges may be passed on to renters if incurred by WMHL:

- utilities costs that are the renter's responsibility;
- repairs for damage that has been deemed the renter's responsibility (see WMHL Property Damage by Renter Policy);
- Council or Body Corporate fines that are attributable to the renter's acts or omissions;
- rectification of modifications to properties.

This list is not exhaustive and there may be other scenarios where a renter is liable for costs.

## 5. IDENTIFYING AND RECOUPING CHARGES

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### 5.1 Communication

WMHL will ensure that renters are aware of their responsibility to transfer accounts for utilities to their name at the start of the tenancy.

WMHL will ensure renters are aware of their responsibility regarding cost of repairs as detailed in the WMHL Property Damage by Renter Policy and WMHL Modifications Policy.

### 5.2 Documentation

Where a renter has incurred a cost that has been directed to WMHL for payment, WMHL will notify the renter in writing and provide copies of all relevant documentation. This may include invoices, utilities payment notices, fines, or other documents. The charge will be added to the renter's account.

### 5.3 Repayment of charges

Renters are required to pay the full amount of the charge within 30 days or arrange a repayment agreement with their Tenancy Officer. A repayment agreement may result in paying back the charge in smaller increments alongside rental payments. This will only be approved at the discretion of the relevant housing Subcommittee. The repayment amount must nonetheless be repaid within a 12-month period.

Where the renter fails to repay the charge or enter into a repayment agreement, WMHL will commence action at VCAT to recover the costs of the charge. WMHL will keep renters informed of this process as it progresses. WMHL will abide by the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic)* throughout this process.

## 6. COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

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Renters who wish to submit a complaint or appeal a decision by WMHL can submit the Complaints and Appeals Form to the Housing Officer. This form can be found on WMHL's website [here](#), or renters can contact the Housing Officer to access a copy.

See WMHL's Complaints, Feedback and Appeals Policy and Procedure for more information.

## 7. REFERENCES

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### 7.1 External or Statutory Requirements

This policy complies with the following external legislation or requirements:

- *Residential Tenancy Act 1997 (Vic)*



## **7.2 Internal Requirements and Forms**

This policy refers to the following internal documents, which are available in the WMHL Document Register and available on WMHL's website [here](#).

- WMHL Modifications Policy
- WMHL Property Damage by Renter Policy
- WMHL Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures
- WMAC Privacy Policy

## **8. REVIEW**

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This policy will be reviewed every two years or earlier if the legal, regulatory, and contractual environment requires.



## 9. AUTHORISATION OF THIS POLICY

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Approval Authority	WMHL Board of Directors
Governing Authority	WMHL Board
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## 10. AMENDMENT HISTORY

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Date	Version	Approved by	Amendment Notes
16 April 2025	2	Nicole Stanley	Added Authorisation and Amendment tables