



Connect Victoria Park Housing

Absence from Property Policy

CVP Procedures	Absence from Property	Effective date:	July 2022
Approved By	Finance and Governance Committee	Review date:	July 2025
Warning	This process is uncontrolled after printing		

Purpose

This policy defines Connect Victoria Park Inc's approach to ensuring community housing properties are not left vacant for long periods of time.

Scope

This policy applies to all community housing tenancies managed by Connect Victoria Park Inc.

General Principles

Connect Victoria Park Inc is committed to maintaining long-term tenancies.

Community Housing is a scarce resource and a valuable asset for those in need. CVP Inc balances the specific needs of tenants with the need to maximise use of property as homes and not to leave properties vacant for long periods.

CVP Inc understands and respects the need for tenants to be away from their homes from time to time.

If the period of absence **does not exceed** 30 continuous days or a total of 90 days in a 12 month interval, tenants just need to advise CVP Inc about their absence.

If absence **exceeds** 30 continuous days or a total 90 days in a 12 month interval, approval by CVP Inc's CEO is required and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

If absence is considered excessive, CVP Inc may ask the tenant to relinquish their unit so it can be allocated to someone else in need of housing.

Absence from Community Housing property

When CVP Inc provides a unit for a tenant, it expects the tenant to live in the property.

Tenants may be away from their properties without approval for up to 30 continuous days or a total of 90 days within a year, but must advise CVP Inc of their intentions.

Tenants planning to be absent for up to 30 continuous days or a total 90 days within a year should visit CVP Inc's office in advance to fill in a consent form to allow entry to their units in case important maintenance needs to be carried out while they are away.

Tenants are also encouraged to let a neighbour know if they intend to be away for a short period so that any welfare concerns for the absent tenant can be allayed.

Absences exceeding 30 continuous days or a total of 90 days in a 12 month interval need to be communicated in writing and approved by CVP Inc's CEO. Requests will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, but acceptable reasons for long absences may include:

- Caring for sick/frail family members
- Family, kinship and cultural responsibilities
- Hospitalisation, institutional care, nursing home care or rehabilitation
- Escaping domestic violence, harassment or threats of violence
- Extended stay in the country of origin for family or immigration matters

Giving notice of long absences

If absence exceeds 30 continuous days or a total of 90 days in a 12 month interval, tenants must give notice in writing and inform:

- contact details while absent from the property
- if a person has been nominated as a contact during absence
- arrangements for rent and electricity charges to continue to be paid
- arrangements for the property to be looked after during their absence

Written requests for approval of absences exceeding 30 continuous days or a total of 90 days in a 12 month interval must be lodged with the office at least two weeks in advance of the intended departure date. Tenants should lodge the request before making significant financial commitments related to the absence such as air fares etc.

CVP Inc's CEO will assess requests and inform decision to tenants within 2 business days.

Extended absence without notice

If a tenant is away for longer than the acceptable timeframe without requesting approval, or has stayed away for longer than originally advised (without any further communication with CVP Inc), CVP Inc reserves the right to review the Community Housing discount applied to the tenant's rent.

Moving into aged care facility

If a tenant moves into an aged care facility, CVP Inc will request that the tenant relinquish their tenancy unless the stay in the facility is for short term respite care or for rehabilitation purposes.