

Many Rivers Regional Housing would like to welcome you



Tenant Handbook

A faint background graphic consisting of several white hands of different sizes reaching upwards, surrounded by a cloud of small grey dots.

*Closing the Gap
in Aboriginal Wellbeing through housing,
partnerships and community development.*

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Rent

Methods of Paying Rent

You must pay the rent for your property two weeks in advance. This starts when you pay your first two weeks rent.

Tenants have a variety of options available for rent payments

- Centrepay deductions. Centrepay allows tenants who receive Centrelink payments to have their rent automatically deducted from their payments.
- Direct deposit into the Many Rivers trust account.
- Direct deduction from payroll.

Paying the rent on time – Why it's important?

Paying the rent on time is important to ensure your property can be maintained and general expenses such as insurance and rates can be paid.

If you can't make your payment it is important to contact your Housing Support Officer as soon as possible to let them know and set a payment arrangement to catch up on any missed payment.

Rent Assistance

The Australian Government offers financial help to people who pay rent and receive a Centrelink payment. The amount paid is based on your weekly rent and the Centrelink payment that you receive. Rent Assistance payment rates vary depending on your circumstances.

For more information about rent assistance check out

<https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/rent-assistance>

Water Usage



It is your responsibility to pay for the water used in your home and on your property. Many Rivers will pay the council for your usage and send you an invoice. You will need to pay your water invoice within 21 days or set up a payment plan with us to cover the cost of your water usage.

If you notice that your water usage is increasing, you may have a water leak. Make sure you contact us so we can arrange to have it fixed.

Ending a Tenancy

How a tenancy can end

A tenancy can end by:

- Voluntary termination by the tenant.
- Termination by Many Rivers due to a breach of the lease.
- Refusal by Many Rivers to renew a Tenancy Agreement.
- Abandonment of the dwelling by the tenant.
- Termination by the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) or other court.
- Death of the tenant.



Moving Out

You need to let your Housing Support Officer know in writing two weeks before you are planning to leave. You can do this by writing a letter or email to them.



If you are moving out of the home or unit you will need to clean it and restore it to the condition when you moved in.

If there is a rent credit balance, it will be returned to you after final inspection. Any cost incurred in clearing and restoring the property to a reasonable condition will be deduction from your rent credit balance.

If there are arrears, you will be required to set up a payment arrangement with your Housing Support Officer.

Important: Before moving out, don't forget to disconnect or transfer all your utilities for your home including phone, internet and power. Take all your belongings with you and dispose of any unwanted items

Right to Enter Your Property

Many Rivers and/ or an affiliate may enter your rental property to:

- Conduct periodic property inspection.
- Complete repairs and maintenance work.
- Show the property to a prospective tenant, if you are leaving the property.

Maintenance and Care of the Property

As a tenant, If you have a garden you have a responsibility for the general care of the property. This includes mowing the lawn and garden care. You should also ensure that the inside of the home remains clean.

You should notify your Housing Support Officer as soon as you become aware of a problem. Do not leave it until you are moving out of the property.

General Cleaning



Always use separate cleaning cloth in the kitchen, bathroom, floor & walls. This helps stop the spread of germs. You can buy multipurpose cleaning liquid.

It is good to keep the toilet seat clean & dry. Brush the toilet bowl regularly using a disinfectant cleaning product.

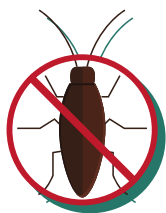
Rubbish Disposal



Rubbish should be placed in the appropriate garbage and if provided, recycling bins. These bins should be placed on the curb facing the street to be emptied into the garbage truck during your collection service.

Important note: *It is important to regularly empty out the bin to avoid any germ and maggot growth inside the rubbish bin.*

Pest Control



Please let us know if you have a pest control issue and we will arrange for a pest control service to address the problem. If you see termites please report this to your Housing Support Officer as soon as possible so we can arrange an inspection and treatment.

Many Rivers will arrange for an annual pest control service for your property if required.

Home Security



When you move in, Many Rivers will give you a full set of keys. It is your responsibility to look after them. You can store a spare set with a trusted friend or family member.

When you get your keys, you should check to ensure that all the locks work properly.

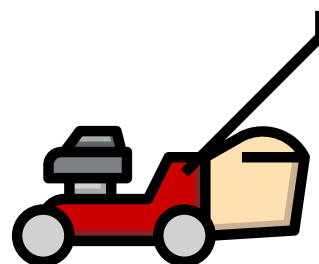
Lost your keys?

If you have lost your home key, do not attempt to entry by yourself. This can cause unnecessary damages. Inform your Housing Support Officer directly, we will assist you to get access to your home. You may be charged a fee for the service and the cost of key(s) replacement.

Yard Maintenance

Mowing, whipper-snipping, weeding and rubbish removal is the responsibility of the tenant.

Many Rivers can organise a gardening service if you need but you will have to pay for it.



Ventilation



Our body needs oxygen to breath! That is why it is essential to ensure that your home receives a regular supply of clean fresh air.

- Open home window frequently to allow fresh air inside your home.
- Avoid smoking inside your home as the cigarettes are toxic and will contaminate the air.
- Ensure that you regularly clean the fan and fly screen.

Repairs



Repairs and maintenance are carried out to keep your home in good condition.

You will not have to pay the costs of repairs and maintenance on your home when they come from normal wear and tear. However, you may be charged if you, your family or visitors cause damage.

What happens when I find a problem that needs fixing?

You need to report all repairs and maintenance immediately. Many Rivers provides a 24/7 repairs and maintenance service by calling 6562 2576. After hours, follow the prompts to be directed to the on-call mobile.

When you call we will ask you questions so we can determine if the urgency of the maintenance need.

Standard

Standard maintenance is attended to within 60 days and covers repairs which do not directly impact on the functionality of your home.

Priority

Priority maintenance is attended to within 14 days and includes non-emergency maintenance requests which do not pose a risk to personal health and safety and cause minimal impact on the daily running of the home.

Urgent

Urgent maintenance is attended to within 48 hours. It includes problems that present an urgent and significant risk to personal health and safety, and/or risk significantly damaging the property such as serious electrical faults, serious water leaks, sewerage problems and security door locks.

Smoke Alarms

Every property is fitted with a smoke alarm. Your smoke alarm must be plugged in and working. That's the law.

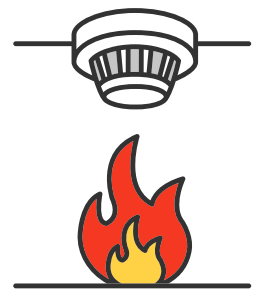
When there's a problem with your smoke alarm, tell your Housing Support Officer right away. We will make sure your smoke alarm is working.

You are also responsible for cleaning the frills of dust.

Your smoke alarm will be tested on each inspection and during our annual safety and compliance inspections.

Urgent out of hours assistance

For urgent assistance please contact Many Rivers office number 02 6562 2576 and select to be put through to the afterhours number.

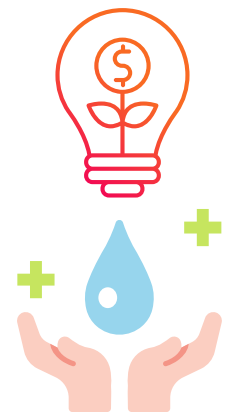


Utilities and Bills

Saving Energy and Water

Energy and water can be very expensive. You can save it by:

- Turning off TV, computer, toaster etc when they are not in use
- Turn off the lights when you leave a room
- Keep windows and doors closed when using the heater and/or air conditioner
- Taking short showers
- Report any water leaks as soon as possible



Bill Budgeting



Your expenses will come at different times. Utility bills usually come quarterly. Your phone and internet are usually paid every month and your rent.

fortnightly or weekly. It is important to keep a budget in order to manage your expenses and pay bills on time.

If you are on Centrelink income support, you can use Centrepay. Instead of paying large utility bills every three months, money will be taken from your Centrelink payment to cover upcoming bills. This will credit your utilities account to pay the bill.

You can also set up a BPAY with your utility provider to regularly pay an amount towards your bills.

You and Your Surroundings

Be a Good Neighbour

It is pleasant to have a good neighbour. It is important to make yourself a good neighbour for others as well!

- Keep your home and surrounding clean.
- Cut overgrown tree branches and clear up trash around your housing area.
- Do not block your neighbour's gate, and/or driveway, park your vehicle in an appropriate place and place rubbish bin in designated area.
- If you own any home entertainment systems such as TV, radio or speakers, ensure that the sound generated will not interrupt your neighbours especially at night.
- Please ensure that you don't have noisy parties and minimise any noise after 9.30 PM.



Alcohol and Illegal Drugs

Anti-social behaviour by you or visitors affected by alcohol and other drugs is not tolerated by Many Rivers.

You are not allowed to bring, consume, manufacture or distribute illegal drugs or other mind changing substances in your property. Breaching this will result in immediate eviction from the premises.



Pets and Visitors

Visitors

You are responsible for the conduct of the visitors coming to your home. If your visitors plan to stay more than two weeks you need to notify your Housing Support Officer.

Pets

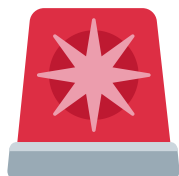


Written approval must be obtained to keep pets in Many Rivers' properties. The decision to allow pets rests with Many Rivers and/or the property owner. Circumstances of the tenant, the property and impact on the neighbourhood will be considered with all requests.

- Under no circumstances will Many Rivers allow the keeping of an aggressive dog/animal.
- For the welfare of the animal, tenants are required to choose pets whose size is reasonable for the dwelling or property.
- Pets such as fish, birds, reptiles, rodents, rabbits and guinea pigs must be kept in an appropriate, but cage or tank.
- Keeping chickens or livestock (including other poultry and goats) is not permitted without prior approval from Many Rivers.
- Keeping native animals for culturally significant reasons or by registered wildlife carers may be permitted at the discretion of Many Rivers and/or the property owner.
- Guide dogs, hearing dogs, and other assistance animals are welcome in all Many Rivers properties.

Emergencies

000 and Emergency Services



If there is an emergency, you should call 000 (triple zero).

The emergency call services will answer "Emergency – Police, Fire or Ambulance?" and then you should respond with the service you require and the location you need it. Only call 000 in an emergency. This would be an incident that just happened or is currently happening (like a fire, a crime or a severe health problem).

Inspections

Inspection Guide

Your Many Rivers Housing Support Officer will do at least 2 inspections per year to ensure the property is well taken care of.

Here's a checklist that will help you prepare for an inspection:

- ☐ Walls and doors: Dust and wipe down internal walls and doors with water to remove marks and dirt. External walls to be washed down and cobwebs removed. Door handles to be replaced or repaired if damaged.
- ☐ Cupboards and wardrobes: Kitchen cupboards, wardrobes and linen cupboards should be cleaned inside and out with a damp cloth.
- ☐ Oven and stove: Clean the stove and oven including hotplates, drip trays and behind the stove. Make sure all the food and grease is removed.
- ☐ Floors: Sweep or vacuum to remove loose dirt then use a mop and bucket of water to clean the floors.
- ☐ Light fittings, power points, switches and controls: Dust and wipe down light fittings, power points, switches and controls.
- ☐ Bathrooms, toilets and laundry: all tiled areas to be swept or dusted then wiped/mopped. Scrub the toilet with a toilet brush and disinfectant. Cleaned of all scum around the taps and bath tub. Vanity cupboards thoroughly cleared of used items.
- ☐ Ceiling fans and exhaust fans: Clean ceiling fan blades regularly with a damp cloth and leave streak free. Exhaust fan covers should be removed for cleaning.
- ☐ Windows: Window sills, tracks, fly screens and glass should be thoroughly cleaned, dust and streak free.
- ☐ Cobwebs: All cobwebs to be removed from walls, windows and doors, ceilings and surfaces inside and outside your home.
- ☐ External areas: Veranda and paths to be clean, rubbish removed, swept and washed down. Grass should be kept short edges trimmed, garden beds and plants kept tidy. Garden sheds, fencing gates and clothes lines to be tidy and clean.

Going Away

You are still required to pay your rent when you are away from home.

If you are moving out of your home permanently, you will need to clean as per inspection guide on page 10.

- Structures: Put-up structures (such as shade home, lattice or pool fences) must be taken down and all materials removed before you move out the home. Restore the home to the condition shown on your entry condition report.
- Remove all personal items: When you move out, do not leave any unwanted personal belongings in the property (such as worn out mattress, broken furniture etc). If you do Many Rivers may charge you for removal and disposal of these items. All hooks, Blu-tac and stickers must be removed, and paint patched.
- Return home keys: Return the keys the day you move out. If you do not return all keys, you may be charged the cost of replacing locks.

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