




## DISCRETIONARY MAINTENANCE BUDGET POLICY

| DOCUMENT DETAILS        |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| DOCUMENT NAME           | Discretionary Maintenance Budget Policy |
| NRS PERFORMANCE OUTCOME | Housing Assets                          |
| APPROVAL                | Board of Management                     |
| VERSION                 | 2.0                                     |
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| APPROVAL – BOARD OF MANAGEMENT |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| CHAIR                          |  |
| SIGNED DATE                    | 09/01/18  |

### 1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to describe how the Discretionary Maintenance Budget will be used.

Specifically

- what items are funded , and
- how requests for funding will be prioritized

### 2 Background

Community housing tenants deserve the same minimum level of amenity expected by the broader community. In the private rental market Landlords raise rents at their discretion to enable the appropriate provision of amenities and sufficient funds to maintain them.

As a landlord covered by the Residential Tenancy Act 1995, IDAA is responsible for maintaining its properties in reasonable repair so that they are safe, secure and healthy. However in accordance with the RTA there are some items that an Association (landlord) is not responsible for. These are listed in Section 11 of the Act and include:

|                  |                     |
|------------------|---------------------|
| Air conditioners | Refrigeration units |
| Antennas         | Room heaters        |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Ceiling fans  | Spa bath motors   |
| External blinds   | Waste disposal units  |
| Floor coverings (unless otherwise specified in the lease)                               | Garden sheds  |
| Internal blinds and curtains  | Window treatments – external blinds   |
| Light fittings  | Dishwashers   |
| Washing machines  | Swimming pools and associated equipment   |
| Rainwater tanks, other than where the tank is the only source of water for the premises | Water pumps, other than where the water pumped is the only water supplied to the premises |
| Gardens/Lawns   | Any property modifications carried out to a property by a tenant                          |

In 2017 even the most modest of rental properties in the private rental market could be expected to have floor coverings and air conditioning.

To meet this standard IDAA has set aside a Discretionary Maintenance Budget which is funded via an Additional Service Levy. Additional Service Levies are a mechanism to raise rents within an acceptable affordability benchmark to fund items for which a community housing landlord would not ordinarily be responsible.

### **3 Eligibility – Items funded by the Discretionary Maintenance Budget**

Funds raised via the maintenance levy are used for the following items (as outlined in Regulation 11 of the RTA).

- 3.1 Floor coverings, vinyl or carpet on a case by case basis at the end of lifespan. However, damage not considered to be ‘fair wear and tear’ will be at the cost of the tenant or support provider.
- 3.2 Air conditioning/Heating Cooling. In line with current health and safety expectations IDAA has developed a 5 year plan to ensure that every IDAA property has at least one ‘zone’ which can be temperature controlled to escape extreme heat events.
- 3.3 Light fittings at commencement only. Tenants are responsible for replacing fittings as necessary during the term of their tenancy.

In addition to the items listed above the Discretionary Maintenance Budget will also fund:

- 3.4 “One-off” hardship cases where a tenant is not able to, nor has the financial resources to undertake the work themselves. This may include garden clean-ups, pest control and other requests received from tenants and/or family members. Each request will be assessed on a case by case basis but presumes that other sources of funding/assistance have been explored.

This funding is not intended to erode the tenant's responsibilities to maintain the property as defined by RTA. Rather it is intended to provide assistance in extraordinary circumstances to help tenants get back on track and maintain their tenancy.

3.5 Installation of new Thermostatic Mixing Valves.

#### **4 Prioritization of Requests**

4.1 Eligible requests for funding will be documented on the Discretionary Maintenance Budget Request Form.

4.2 Eligible requests for funding will be added to a 'wait list' based on the date of referral.

4.3 Referrals can be made by

- Tenants
- Family members, guardians and advocates
- Support Providers
- IDAA staff visiting in response to a tenant request
- Tenancies inspections
- Inspection of vacated properties

4.4 The urgency of the request may supersede the referral date where a tenant's health could be compromised or an OH&S concern may arise if the repair is not attended to.

#### **5 Other Considerations**

5.1 The scope of work undertaken in any given month will not exceed the budget. If eligible applications exceed the monthly budget they will be rolled over to the next month and so on to maintain a neutral budget position.

5.2 If an item is already included in the forecast maintenance budget then the replacement of the item will be met in accordance with the Property Inspection Report and funded out of the programmed maintenance budget.

5.3 Hardship cases will be dealt with on a case by case basis. The request will be reviewed at a Team meeting and if it meets the eligibility criteria it will be added to the wait list based on referral date.

5.4 If a tenant is assessed as eligible for Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) funding the request will be dealt with in accordance with SDA guidelines.

#### **6 Dispute Resolution**

Disputes will be dealt with in accordance with the Grievance, Complaints, Appeals and Compliments Policy.

## **7 Responsibilities**

- The Manager Housing Assets will collate all requests for funding
- The Manager Housing Assets will review the requests for funding and develop recommendations in relation to expenditure on a monthly basis
- The CEO is responsible for approving monthly expenditure of the Discretionary Maintenance Budget

## **8 Related Policies**

- IDAA Maintenance Policy
- IDAA Water Management Policy
- IDAA Grievance, Complaints, Appeals and Compliments Policy