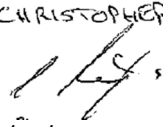




RENT AND ARREARS MANAGEMENT POLICY

DOCUMENT DETAILS	
DOCUMENT NAME	Rent and Arrears Management Policy
NRS PERFORMANCE OUTCOME	Tenant and Housing Services
APPROVAL	Board of Management
VERSION	1.0
STATUS	Approved
ISSUED	5 th May 2017
NEXT REVIEW	16 th May 2019

APPROVAL – BOARD OF MANAGEMENT	
CHAIR	CHRISTOPHER RIDINGS 
SIGNED DATE	01/06/17

1. RATIONALE

- The purpose of this policy is to outline IDAA's approach to the management of rent and rent arrears.

2. LEGISLATION AND OTHER POLICIES

- IDAA will comply with the Residential Tenancies Act 1995.
- IDAA will comply with the following Core Operating Policies, as required under the *Master Community Housing Agreement between the South Australian Housing Trust and the Intellectual Disability Accommodation Association Incorporated*.
 - Rent Management V1 2014
 - Community Housing Rent Policy and Procedures V14

3. POLICY STATEMENT

- IDAA will have documented, equitable, and consistent ways of charging rents and an approach to recovery of unpaid rent.
- IDAA will adhere to the principles and procedures outlined in the Core Operating Policies, as required under the Master Agreement.
- IDAA will ensure that decision making is transparent, non-discriminatory and consistent.

4. RENT MONITORING

- Rent will be recorded, managed and reported in accordance with the legislation, policies and procedures set out in section 2 of this document.
- All tenancies will have an individual rent record and rent charges and payments will be processed using Chintaro Community Housing Management Software.
- IDAA has and will maintain a common rent due date which will be the Thursday of each fortnight. Tenancies commencing on a day other than the common rent day will have a clause in their tenancy agreement that clearly states any adjustment payment. In these cases the ordinary 'two weeks rent in advance' payable may be less than 2 weeks rent.

5. COMMUNITY HOUSING RENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

- 100% of IDAA properties are 'debentured' and therefore subject to rent being calculated in accordance with the Community Housing Rent Policy.
- Tenants will be charged the lower of either an 'income based' rent or 'market rent' plus 'additional service levies.

6. MANDATORY ADDITIONAL SERVICE LEVIES

- IDAA may elect to include a Mandatory Additional Service Levies as part of the rent determination method. The inclusion of a levy in the rent will be in accordance with the Community Housing Rent Policy.
- IDAA will commit to keeping rent broadly affordable for all tenants i.e. the Base Charge (which includes mandatory levies) will not exceed 30% of assessable household (excluding Commonwealth Rent Assistance).
- Single adult household's whose only source of income is equivalent to or less than Newstart Allowance may request an exemption from paying Mandatory Additional Service Levies or a reduction of the amount of levy on a hardship basis. IDAA may elect to apply a lower levy.

7. MANDATORY REVIEW OF INCOME BASED RENT

- A review of all tenancies charged an income based or market rent will be conducted bi-annually.
- Tenants will be required to supply proof of income from all sources for each review. The failure to provide acceptable proof of income will result in the market rent for the property being applied as the rent.
- Rent increases or decreases as a result of a review will be passed on in accordance with the Residential Tenancies Act and the Community Housing Rent Policy and Procedures.
- If between rent reviews a tenant's income increases by more than \$20 per week, the tenant must notify IDAA and request an ad-hoc review. If a tenant's income decreases, the tenant may request a review of the income based rent. Failure to report changes is a breach of the terms of the Tenancy Agreement and may be grounds for termination of the Agreement in serious cases.
- If any change to the occupancy of a tenancy occurs between rent reviews they must notify IDAA, provide new and current proof of income for all occupants and request an ad-hoc review.

8. RENTAL PAYMENTS

- IDAA will offer a range of payment methods including;
 - Centrepay, is the preferred payment option for tenants who manage their own finances.
 - Direct Debit. Managed by IDAA and processed on a Fortnightly Basis
 - Electronic Funds Transfer to the IDAA bank account
- Cash, cheques or money order payments are strongly discouraged and will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances and is not an ongoing regular payment option. If a tenant makes a payment via one of these methods a receipt will immediately be issued.

9. RENT ARREARS

- The total rent arrears outstanding to IDAA should be kept below 2.5% of year to date rents charged
- IDAA will:
 - Ensure all tenants are treated equitably with respect to the management of rent arrears;
 - Ensure that prompt and effective action and communication is taken;
 - Be respectful and helpful in communication with tenants in relation to rent arrears;
 - Be sensitive to a tenant's circumstances but reinforce their responsibilities;
 - Recognise that not all IDAA tenants have direct management of their finances;
 - Communicate with the appropriate person on a case by case basis
 - Treat eviction as the last resort to resolve rent arrears.
 - IDAA Tenancy Agreements will require that rent is paid on a fortnightly basis in advance.
 - Rent or any part of rent not paid in full and in advance on the due date will be considered 'overdue'.
 - Rent or any part of rent that remains unpaid for greater than 14 days will be considered to be 'rent arrears'.
 - Action to recover unpaid rent should be taken as soon as practically possible after the due date.
 - Decisions about actions to be taken in relation to overdue rent or rent in arrears can be made by the CEO or the Manager Tenant and Housing Services or delegate. Such decisions must be made on the basis of evidence.
 - All documentation concerning action on rent arrears will be signed by either the CEO or the Manager Tenant and Housing Services or delegate
 - The Manager of Tenant and Housing Services will advise the CEO of all action taken with respect to the management of rent arrears at least once a month in the form of a debtors report.

10. MANAGEMENT OF RENT ARREARS

- Management of rent arrears will be in accordance with the IDAA *Rent Arrears Procedure*.