

## **Aboriginal Housing Office (AHO)**

### **Application for placement on the AHO Register as an Aboriginal Community Housing Organisation (ACHO)**

#### **What is ACHO Recognition?**

Gaining AHO recognition as an ACHO under the Aboriginal Housing Act 1998 (NSW), means your organisation may be eligible to receive future funding and/or support from the AHO, although this is not a guarantee.

#### **Eligibility to be a recognised ACHO**

Aboriginal Land Councils and Aboriginal Organisations who own a portfolio of housing used for social housing purposes can apply to the AHO to be recognised as an ACHO.

Organisations applying for ACHO recognition must agree to have their properties managed by an Aboriginal Community Housing Provider (ACHP) that is currently registered under the National Regulatory System for Community Housing (NRSCH) including NSW Local Scheme registered providers (NSWLS). The ACHO needs to negotiate a management agreement with the NRSCH registered ACHP of their choice and submit a copy of the agreement to the AHO.

Organisations need to agree to a rent optimisation plan on the properties they own, submit to AHO, and provide six-monthly reporting to the AHO to demonstrate progress of the implementation of their rent optimisation plan.

ACHO's are ineligible to manage AHO properties.

AHO recognition of ACHO's will be maintained until **31 December 2025** with a review process to take place prior to the end of that period to check suitability to continue as an ACHO.

#### **How to apply**

To apply for ACHO recognition please complete this form, provide the attachments outlined in Section 3 and submit it to [SectorInvestment@aho.nsw.gov.au](mailto:SectorInvestment@aho.nsw.gov.au)

#### **For more information**

If you need assistance to decide if becoming recognised as an ACHO is right for your organisation, please contact:

If you are a Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) – NSWALC Zone Office

- Western - Ph: 02 6885 7000
- Far Western – Ph: 08 8087 9587
- Northern - Ph: 02 6659 1200
- Southern - Ph: 02 6124 3555
- Eastern – Ph: 02 4337 4700

If you are another Aboriginal Corporation – Aboriginal Community Housing Industry Association (ACHIA) NSW

- Ph: 9690 2447
- [achiaadmin@communityhousing.org.au](mailto:achiaadmin@communityhousing.org.au)

If you need assistance completing this application form, please contact: AHO Sector Development Team – [SectorInvestment@aho.nsw.gov.au](mailto:SectorInvestment@aho.nsw.gov.au)

## Definitions

**AHO - Aboriginal Housing Office** The AHO is a statutory body established under the Aboriginal Housing Act 1998 (NSW) to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have access to affordable, quality housing. The AHO is governed by an all-Aboriginal Board, which provides advice to the Minister for Planning, and Minister for Homes on Aboriginal housing issues in NSW.

**ACHO - Aboriginal Community Housing Organisation** LALCs, Aboriginal corporations and body corporates controlled by Aboriginal people and/or Torres Strait Islanders who own a portfolio of housing used for social housing purposes can apply to the AHO to be recognised as an ACHO.

**NRSCH - National Regulatory System for Community Housing** is a voluntary registration system. Providers are not obligated to register but registration may be a precondition of funding or assistance for jurisdictional policy and funding agencies such as the AHO. The NRSCH is designed to regulate providers of community housing. This includes social and affordable housing, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations, for profit organisations and other specialist housing providers.

**NSWLS – New South Wales Local Scheme** In August 2017, under section 25A of the Community Housing Providers (Adoption of National Law) Act 2012 (NSW) - the Act - the NSW Minister for Family and Community Services directed the Registrar of Community Housing to commence the NSW local registration system - known as the NSW Local Scheme - that: as far as reasonably practicable, is consistent with the NRSCH (above). It does not include the 'wind-up' condition of registration under the Act which primarily focuses on ensuring that any assets or assistance provided by the NSW Government are appropriately protected. The initial driver to set up the NSW Local Scheme is to provide a legislative based registration system for NSW Local Aboriginal Lands Councils (LALCs).

**ACHP – Aboriginal Community Housing Provider** deliver and provide culturally competent social and affordable housing services for Aboriginal tenants and families across NSW. ACHP's can be owning providers and also be eligible to receive funding support from the AHO for the purpose of carrying out operational and management services, including acquisition and construction of properties. Under Section 26 of the Aboriginal Housing Act 1998 (NSW) in order to be eligible to receive funding support, ACHPs must be registered with the AHO.

**ACHIA NSW – Aboriginal Community Housing Industry Association** is the new peak body for ACHPs in NSW. The purpose of ACHIA is to be the industry body for ACHPs in NSW and in doing so, to: promote the human rights of all Aboriginal people in NSW to decent, affordable and secure housing.

## Application for placement on the AHO Register as an ACHO

Part 5 of the Aboriginal Housing Act 1998 defines what an “eligible organisation” means. We ask that you complete and submit the following information so that we can confirm your organisation’s eligibility and register your organisation as an AHO recognised ACHO.

### Part A - Organisation Details

Name of Legal Entity .....

Type of Entity .....  
(E.g., LALC, company limited by guarantee, incorporated association) and any related party arrangements (for example, parent/subsidiary, group structure etc.)

Trading Name .....  
(if applicable)

Registration No. ....  
(If registered with the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC), provide your ABN  
If registered with the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC), provide your ICN)

Registered Business Address      Street Number & Name .....  
Suburb .....

Postal Address      Post Code ..... State .....  
Same as above ☐ ; or complete the information below

PO Box .....  
Street Number & Name .....  
Suburb .....  
Post Code ..... State .....

Primary Contact      Name .....  
Position in organisation .....  
Telephone number .....  
Mobile number .....  
Email address .....

### Organisation Details (continued)

Secondary Contact    Name .....

                                 Position in organisation .....

                                 Telephone number .....

                                 Mobile number .....

                                 Email address .....

## Part B - Organisation Details

(1) Is your organisation -

(a) an Aboriginal or Torres  
Strait Islander corporation  
*(within the  
meaning of the Commonwealth  
Act)*

☐ Yes

☐ No

(b) a Local Aboriginal Land  
Council *(within the meaning of  
the Aboriginal Land Rights Act  
1983)*

☐ Yes

☐ No

(c) a Prescribed Body  
Corporate which is controlled,  
either directly or indirectly, by  
Aboriginal people or Torres  
Strait Islanders (or both)

☐ Yes

☐ No

(2) Does your  
organisation already  
provide Aboriginal  
community housing?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Details: .....

.....

.....

.....

.....

**(3)** Does your organisation own its own properties?

☐ Yes

☐ No

**(4)** Does your organisation have a management agreement in place (or proposed) with an Aboriginal NRSCH registered provider?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, please attach a copy of your current management agreement.

**(5)** Has your organisation agreed to a rent optimisation plan?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, please attach a copy of the rent optimisation plan.

**6)** Why does your organisation wish to achieve recognition as an ACHO with the AHO?

[Note: This question is optional. The answer you give will not impact on your eligibility to be recognised as an ACHO. Any information you provide will be used by the AHO to assist in tailoring support for the Aboriginal Community Housing Sector.]

Details:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

## Part C – Attachments

Please attach:

1. A copy of your most recent Annual Report or strategic/business plan
2. A copy of your current (or proposed) management agreement with an Aboriginal Community Housing NRS registered provider
3. A copy of your current rent optimisation plan agreed with the managing provider

## Part D – Declaration

### Declaration

Please sign this declaration after completing the application form. It must be signed by person/s identified in your organisation's constitution, or holding a position that is identified as being authorised to commit your organisation to the following conditions.

We, the undersigned:

1. Certify that the information in this application is true and correct
2. Agree to comply with AHO requirements relevant to our registration
3. Consent to the AHO using the data provided in this application and in the reports we submit to prepare de-identified overview reports about the program
4. Agree to settle any disputes (should any arise) in good faith with the AHO

#### Director/Chairperson/Authorised Person:

Signature: ..... Date: .....

Name: .....  
(Please Print)

Position/Title: .....  
(Please Print)

#### Director/Chairperson/Authorised Person:

Signature: ..... Date: .....

Name: .....  
(Please Print)

Position/Title: .....  
(Please Print)

## RECOGNITION OF ABORIGINAL HOUSING ORGANISATION

### RENT OPTIMISATION PLAN

**PARTIES:** ..... (Owning Provider)  
..... (Managing Provider)

**SCOPE:** This Rent Optimisation Plan applies to tenancies in the properties owned by  
*[Name of Owning Provider]*  
which are managed by  
*[Name of Managing Provider]*  
under the management agreement dated *[Date of management agreement]*.

A list of the properties is provided at Annexure 1.

#### RENT SETTING POLICY:

*Please select the agreed rent setting policy to be utilised for the management of your properties*

- ☐ AHO Aboriginal Community Housing Rent Policy and calculator
- ☐ Owning Provider Rent Policy – *Attach copy to application*
- ☐ Managing Provider Rent Policy – *Attach copy to application*
- ☐ *Other rent policy (e.g. Build & Grow Rent Policy adjusted in line with current benefit levels)*  
– *Attach copy to application*

This option will remain in place until the end date of the management agreement or until 31 December 2025, whichever comes first, unless the Parties agree to make a change before that time.

#### RENT INCREASE PLAN

The parties agree to increase rent as per agreed rent setting policy, and in line with Residential Tenancy Act 2010 (RTA) guidelines.

The parties agree to submit a copy of their rent increase plan and provide 6 monthly reporting to AHO against progress.

*Two examples of possible rent increase templates are provided at Annexure 2*



**SIGNATURES:**

[This Plan must be signed by a person/s identified in your organisation's constitution, or holding a position that is identified as being authorised to commit your organisation to the conditions contained herein.]

We, the undersigned:

1. Agree to this Rent Optimisation Plan
2. Understand that compliance with this plan a requirement of the Owning Provider's continued recognition as an Aboriginal Housing Organisation on the Aboriginal Housing Office register.

Director/Chairperson/Authorised Person (Owning Provider)

Signature: .....

Date: .....

Name: .....  
(Please Print)

Position/Title: .....  
(Please Print)

Director/Chairperson/Authorised Person (Managing Provider)

Signature: .....

Date: .....

Name: .....  
(Please Print)

Position/Title: .....  
(Please Print)

## **ANNEXURE 1**

At the date of signing this Rent Optimisation Plan, the properties to which it applies are:

If the list of properties to which the management agreement applies is amended, this list is taken to be amended in the same way.

## ANNEXURE 2

### EXAMPLES OF RENT OPTIMISATION PLAN TEMPLATES

Example 1:

Rent to be increased incrementally over 3 year period. This would cease once **New Weekly Rent** is met, with rent to be reviewed yearly in line with the policy.

Property	Current Weekly Rent	New Weekly Rent	2023 Rent Increase	2024 Rent Increase	2025 Rent Increase
<i>Example 1</i>	\$ 100.00	\$ 160.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 20.00
<i>Example 2</i>	\$ 130.00	\$ 160.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 10.00	<i>Nil</i>

Example 2:

Rent to be increased incrementally over 3 year period. This would cease once **Target Portfolio Average** is met, with rent reviewed yearly under the policy.

	Current Average	Target Average	2023 Rent Increase	2024 Rent Increase	2025 Rent Increase
Average rent as % of 'household' rent formula	\$ 70% 100.00	\$ 100% 160.00	\$ 10% 20.00	\$ 10% 20.00	\$ 10% 20.00



Aboriginal  
Housing  
Office