



BaptistCare



BaptistCare Community
Housing Program

Applicant Information

JULY 2020

*Because
we care*

Vision Statement

BaptistCare is committed to transforming lives by expressing the love of Christ. We have identified that a significant need for many in our community is the need for housing. In response to this identified need BaptistCare has developed a strategy to increase the amount of affordable housing available particularly for older people and single parent families.

Community Housing Mission

The provision of a physical dwelling is key in meeting the needs of many in our society. In addition, it is imperative that tenants have access to support services that sustain their tenancy, allow ageing in place and enable a continued connection to their community and when appropriate, seek education and employment.

To ensure the full needs of our clients are addressed BaptistCare implements innovative options to secure funding for sustainable growth of our programs and to ensure housing is adaptable and accessible. BaptistCare also assists tenants to engage and connect with other service providers and in their local community at large to enable a long-term stable tenancy.

We can only achieve this through working in partnership with the tenants and other local community groups.

BaptistCare Housing Models

The BaptistCare Housing program consists of different models for different needs.

Community/Social Housing

BaptistCare provides housing similar to that provided by the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) Housing. Applicants eligible for DCJ Housing can apply for this housing.

Senior's Housing

BaptistCare has housing specifically for Seniors in Lismore, Goulburn, Springwood, New Lambton, Five Dock, Point Clare and Elderslie.

Senior's Communities are social housing complexes for older people who want to live near other people with similar interests and needs, with support systems in place for older people. BaptistCare manages Senior's communities as we have strong links with aged care services and our housing is suited to older people, who need convenient access to shops, transport and other services.

Tenants are eligible for Senior's Community Housing property if they are:

- a single person household, the tenant must be 55 years and over, or 45 and over if Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- a two-person household, the tenant and household member must be aged 55 years and over, or 45 and over if Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Single Parent Family Housing

BaptistCare has a small number of housing for single parent families within the senior housing communities at Elderslie, Lismore and Point Clare.

Single parents with at least one child or young person are eligible for this type of property.

Affordable Housing

BaptistCare provides affordable housing in convenient locations for people on a low to moderate income. If you are working and have a need to live in a specific area but can't afford the market rent, this program might suit you. Contact BaptistCare for an application form for Affordable Housing. Once you lodge an application form we will send you information on locations, waiting times and conditions of living in affordable housing.

Social Housing Information

Applications

- Applicants eligible for Social Housing need to lodge an application for housing assistance online using the link: <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/housing/help/applying-assistance/assistance> or apply by calling the DCJ Housing Contact Centre on 1800 422 322 between 9am–5pm.

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for BaptistCare community housing, you need to meet the following criteria:

- Be a citizen or have permanent residency in Australia
- Be eligible for and on the NSW Housing Register
- Be a resident in NSW
- Have a household income within the income eligibility limits (social housing) <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/housing/policies/social-housing-eligibility-allocations-policy-supplement/chapters/income>

- Not own any assets or property which could reasonably be expected to resolve your housing need (there may be exceptions in certain circumstances)
- Be able to sustain a successful tenancy, with or without support
- If a former tenant of public or community housing, make repayments of any former debts to DCJ Housing or the relevant community housing provider
- The person entering into the tenancy agreement must be 18 years of age or older

Eligibility Evidence

To prove your eligibility you will need to supply the following when you lodge your application with DCJ Housing

- Income statements
- Documentation supporting the need for housing, e.g. a letter from a support worker, medical certificate, etc.
- Personal Identification, e.g. driver’s license, pension card, birth certificate.

When you complete the DCJ Housing Assistance form you need to sign the consent for release of information, noting you wish to be considered for Community Housing. This allows DCJ Housing to provide us with your details.

Property Type

We offer affordable housing, which means basic housing to meet your housing needs. The property will be safe, secure and habitable, however it may not:

- Have a garage or carport
- Be newly painted or brand new
- Be a free standing or single level property
- Be walking distance to shops or schools – but will be near transport
- Have air conditioning, separate dining or en-suite bathrooms.

Location Preference

If you want to live in a popular location, you may be asked to provide evidence of your need to live in that area.

Bedroom Categories

Our bedroom allocation is the same as DCJ Housing. The number of bedrooms you will be eligible for is as follows:

| Household Size | Bedroom Entitlement |
|---|-----------------------|
| Single | 1 |
| Couple | 1 |
| 2 adults or 1 adult with 1 - 2 children | 2 |
| 2 adults or 1 adult with 3 - 4 children | 3 |
| 2 adults or 1 adult with 5 or more children | 4 |
| Two or more single adults | One bedroom per adult |

Bedroom categories can also be dependent on age of children, custody arrangements, and medical conditions. If you believe you need an additional bedroom, talk to our Housing Manager (see DCJ Housing policy).

Allocating a Property

When you lodge your DCJ Housing application you will go on the DCJ Housing waiting list according to your status, chosen location, bedroom size and other essential needs.

When a BaptistCare property becomes available, we will match an applicant on the waiting list with a suitable property and contact the potential tenant. BaptistCare houses are allocated to applicants according to a priority need for housing.

We will also confirm if you are still eligible for social housing.

Wait times for community housing varies depending on the availability of properties, either from tenants vacating a property or BaptistCare developing new properties.

Offers

If you are a successful applicant, we will arrange for you to inspect the property on offer. You will have 2 days to view the property and let us know if you wish to accept or decline the property.

If you do not respond within 2 working days, we will assume you are not interested in accepting the property and this will be classified as a rejection. You will be asked to sign whether you accept or refuse a property.

Number of Offers

You will be eligible for a maximum of two reasonable offers of housing from any housing provider.

If you decline the first offer:

- You will receive only one more offer unless you can prove the first offer was not suitable by providing us with additional evidence of special needs.
- You will remain on the DCJ Housing waiting list.
- You may need to wait a long time before we make a second offer.

If you decline the second offer:

- You will be removed from our waiting list.
- If you believe the second offer was not suitable, you will need to provide a letter and any other supporting documents to us within 14 days. The letter should explain your reasons for rejecting the offer. We will consider any information you have provided as to why you did not want to accept the offer. We will advise you whether the offer will be classed as a cancellation or a rejection.
- If you do not provide a letter within 14 days, the offer will be considered reasonable.

When two reasonable offers are rejected, your name will be removed from the waiting list.

Suitable Offer

A suitable offer means that we have met your need by offering a property that meets your bedroom size in a suitable location, but not a specific suburb, and any special needs as demonstrated in your application.

Accepting the Offer

If you accept the offer the Housing Manager will tell you what needs to happen before you can move in, and when you can expect the property to be ready.

Moving In

When you accept the property you have been offered, BaptistCare will expect you to move in as quickly as is reasonably possible to avoid lengthy vacancies of houses. At the time of accepting the offer, your Housing Manager will make an appointment time for signing the tenancy agreement.

The tenancy agreement you will sign is the standard agreement tenants sign with a real estate

agent, giving you full rights under the Residential Tenancy Act. If you are being housed under a specific program, there may be an additional clause explaining the conditions of the program.

DCJ Housing Application

If you are allocated a property, we will notify DCJ Housing that you are now a tenant of our housing program and your name will be removed from their waiting list.

Appeals

If you don't agree with a BaptistCare decision, you can appeal the removal of your name from the waiting list. Firstly, talk to the Housing Manager to ensure there has been no misunderstandings. If this does not resolve the issue, then you will need to complete the appeals form and lodge with our Senior Housing Specialist. Your appeal will be investigated. If you are not satisfied with the decision you can then ask for the Housing Appeal Committee to review the decision.

The NSW Registrar of Community Housing deals with complaints about our compliance with the Community Housing Provider's Law (the National Law) including the National Regulatory Code.

Rent & Other Charges

Before you sign your Tenancy Agreement, BaptistCare will ask you to provide us with evidence of the total gross income of every member of the household. This includes any wages, Pensions, Benefits, Child Support Payments and overseas pensions, etc.

In general, rent for community Housing is assessed at 25% to 30% of the gross income of everyone living in the house who is employed, or at 25% to 30% of the pension and benefit of all adults, plus 100% of rent assistance, and 15% of Family Tax Payment A and B. If you would like a copy of the full rent assessment policy please ask at the office.

No household pays more than the market rent for their home as their rent. The 'Market Rent' is assessed as the rent that could be received if the property was leased through a real estate agent in the private rental market, and is stated on your tenancy agreement.

Rent for affordable housing is set as a discount of the market rent. This means the rent is usually 20% to 25% below the market rent.

How to Pay Rent

The following ways of paying your rent are available; they need to be discussed when you sign your tenancy agreement. You can change your arrangements at any time by talking to your Housing Manager

The preferred options for payment are:-

- Centrepay arranging with Centrelink for the rent to be deducted directly from your Pension or Benefit
- Arranging an automatic payment from your bank, building society or credit union account (direct debit)
- Rent is always to be in paid in advance

On the day you sign the tenancy agreement we will expect you to pay at least one week's rebated rent. If you are paid fortnightly you may prefer to pay two weeks' rent so that your rent is paid up to your next pay.

Bond

Usually, the bond required is equivalent to 4 weeks of your rebated rent. We will discuss with you paying a portion at sign up and paying the balance over the next 3 months under special circumstances. No bond is charged for Seniors Housing.

Electricity/Gas

These are your responsibility to have connected in your name and to pay the accounts.

Pets

We appreciate that you may wish to have a pet however; some of our properties do not permit pets. If you do have a pet you need to apply in writing for approval.

Smoking

BaptistCare does not permit smoking inside their properties or in communal spaces. Each site has different requirements. Please discuss this with the Housing Manager on application.

Application Form

If you have any concerns or need assistance to complete an application form, please do not hesitate to contact the Housing Manager in your preferred location.

Office Contacts

**Office hours are usually 9.00am to 5.00pm.
Contact your local office to confirm their office hours.**

BaptistCare Bouddi Place

12 Giralong Avenue
Point Clare NSW 2250
Phone: (02) 4337 5495

BaptistCare Clinton Place

179 Clinton Street
Goulburn NSW 2580
Phone: (02) 4819 3850

BaptistCare Community Housing Newcastle

Housing Manager
PO Box 412
Wallsend NSW 2287
Phone: (02) 4032 5296

BaptistCare Community Housing Lismore

Unit 21, BaptistCare Garimaleh Place
26 Dibbs Street
Lismore NSW 2480
Phone: (02) 6621 6737

BaptistCare Kitty Doyle

8 Kings Road
Five Dock NSW 2046
Phone: 0438 437 731

BaptistCare Narralling Community

Housing Manager
PO Box 377
Narellan NSW 2567
Phone: 0490 126 872

BaptistCare Wingara Hamlet

315 Macquarie Road
Springwood NSW 2773
Phone: (02) 4751 6849



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