



TENANT HANDBOOK

Mount Isa Community Development Association Inc.

Community Rent Scheme & Long Term Community Housing Property Management



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Welcome Letter:



Dear New Tenant,

Welcome to your new home.

Mount Isa Community Development Association Inc Community Rent Scheme/ Long Term Community Housing Management would like to welcome you to your new home and we look forward to being of great service to you during your tenancy. We have prepared this handbook to assist you in answering basic questions you may have. If lost, this document is available at CRS/LTCH office situated at Old Court House, Isa Street, Mount Isa or contact us on CRS- 07 4743 9058 or LTCH 07 4749 2888.

Our goal is to provide you with a nice home hassle free and be available to you if you have any questions or concerns. We also provide the emergency contact details for urgent repairs and maintenance for after hours, weekends and public holidays.

We are hopeful that your living experience will be pleasant and comfortable. If you have any questions or concern, feel free to contact us during work hours.

We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely

The Management Team at Mount Isa Community Development Association Inc

General Information

Contact Information

Community Rent Scheme

Alina Wodyk, Property Manager

Phone: 07 4743 9058

Fax: 07 4743 2241

Email: crs@micda.org.au

Community Housing

Leonie Prowse, Property Manager

Phone: 07 4749 2888

Fax: 07 4743 2241

Email: commhouse@micda.org.au

Office Hours

The office is open Monday - Friday from 8.30am to 2.00pm with the exception of holidays.

What is Community Housing?

Community housing is social housing assistance delivered by community organisations and local governments. This assistance helps eligible tenants to transition from transitional housing to social housing to housing in the private rental market.

Community Rent Scheme

Provides transitional (short to medium term) accommodation for eligible applicants who have been assessed by the Department of Housing and Public Works as having very high or high housing needs. Tenants are assisted to stabilise their circumstances and move to longer-term living arrangements in either the private housing market or in social housing.

Long Term Community Housing

Provides longer term social housing tenancies to people referred from the housing register by the Department of Housing and Public Works Housing Service Centres for the duration of their need.



Policy Information

Important Policies

- **Rental Agreement:** The duration for your rental agreement is periodic and specified in the document. An early termination or extension must be discussed with the Property Managers.
- **Pets:** MICDA Inc. has a 'No Pet Policy'.
- **Keys:** If you lose or lock yourself out of your home during business hours, you may contact the office to receive a copy of your key at no charge.
- **Yard & Grounds Maintenance:** You are responsible for maintaining your yard, upkeep of flower beds and lawn care is expected.
- **Vehicle Parking:** Only approved and operational vehicles in designated areas are allowed.
- **Guests:** A guest(s) staying more than 14 days will require approval by the Property Manager.
- **Noise:** You are subject to all laws pertaining to noise and your rental agreement.
- **Routine Maintenance:** As you become more settled in your new home, it is important to manage routine maintenance items. Here are some examples of maintenance items you are responsible for:
 - Replacement of light bulbs
 - Regular yard and lawn maintenance

Start of your Tenancy

Moving In

Rent Assessment

People offered a tenancy by MICDA Inc will have their rent assessed based on their household income. We require proof of income to carry out a rent assessment. This can be:

- Centrelink income statement; and / or
- Proof of income e.g. payslips

Rent assistance from Centrelink is factored into the calculation.

Household Income

This is the total amount of regular assessable income the tenant/s normally receives. Detailed information on how your rent is calculated can be found in *Your Rent in Community Housing Fact Sheet* published by the Department of Housing and Public Works (DoHPW) and included in this handbook.

Rent Assistance

Many tenants currently receive rent assistance from Centrelink. You may be eligible for rent assistance. Please see your local Centrelink office for further information on rent assistance.

Rent in Advance

Tenants must pay two weeks rent before moving in and remain in advance for the duration of the tenancy.

Bonds

Tenants are required to pay a bond which is equal to four weeks rent and lodged with the Residential Tenancies Authority (RTA).

Consent

MICDA Inc will respect your right to privacy. Personal information is shared with other agencies only where written consent has been provided and only when information sharing is essential for effective service provision. You can withdraw or modify consent at any time. A copy of the Protection of Privacy Statement is contained in this handbook for further information.

Utilities

Prior to the commencement of the lease term, you need to set up/transfer the electricity account to your name for the property.

Your Tenancy Agreement



Signing a lease

Periodic leases are offered and will be ongoing as long as you remain eligible and abide by your Tenancy Agreement. This includes:-

- Paying your rent;
- Keeping your property clean (including outdoor areas);
- Making sure your unit is not damaged and reporting any damages as they occur; and
- Being a good neighbour.

Entry Condition Report

When you sign your Tenancy Agreement you will receive an Entry Condition Report (RTA Form 1a).

A Property Manager has already inspected the unit thoroughly and filled in the report.

The Entry condition report records the condition of the property at the start of your tenancy.

You are then responsible for:

- Carefully checking through the condition report. If you feel you would like to add any further comments please do so on the Tenant side of the report;
- Signing and dating the report at the bottom of each page; and
- Returning the copy to our office within three (3) working days of occupying the property.

If you don't return the form within 3 days, you are accepting the property in its condition.

The purpose of this report is to ensure that you are not liable for any pre-existing damage or missing items when you leave. It is important that you keep a copy of this report, as it is your evidence of the condition of the premises when you moved in and it may help to resolve any dispute that may arise when you exit the premises.

Insurance

Our organisation does not take responsibility for any loss or damage of tenant belongings. Please ensure your personal possessions are covered by contents insurance.

Council Detail

Please contact the local council for regular rubbish collection dates.

Rent:

As per the Community Rent Scheme Guidelines and Service Agreement, we use the Community Housing Rent Calculator to assess all household income. This rent calculator will inform us on the amount of rent required on a weekly basis. The rent calculator will not save any tenant or household details and can be found on the Department of Housing and Public Works webpage www.hpw.qld.gov.au/RentCalculator/ The amount of rent payable is based on either 25% of your total household's assessable income or the market rent for the property in which you live – whichever is lower. You also might be eligible for rent assistance.

Your rent can change after you move in, for example, if your income changes or someone leaves or joins the household.

Paying your Rent

Before you sign the Tenancy Agreement the rent will have been calculated as mentioned previously. It is a condition of your Tenancy Agreement that rent is paid 2 weeks in advance. Payment of your rent must be treated as a priority.

How to pay rent

Your rent can be paid using any of the following methods:

- Bank deposits;
- Centrepay option via Centrelink;
- Cash over the counter.

We encourage tenants to pay their rent via Centrepay deduction. This means your rent will be deducted from your Centrelink benefits and deposited directly on our account.

The bank account details for depositing your rent are:

Bank: Westpac

Account name: MICDA No 1 Account

BSB: 034-203

Account #: 646739

Place your name and property address on the direct bank deposit in order to ensure that you are properly credited with rental payment.

Receipts

Once we receive confirmation from the Bank or Centrepay that your payment has been made, we will record it on your rent ledger and post out a receipt with your 'paid to' date (Community Housing tenants only). You are welcome to request your rent payment status at any time.

What happens if you don't pay your rent on time?

If you can't pay your rent on time, for whatever reason, please contact your Property Manager to discuss the situation and work out a solution. If you haven't paid your rent by the due date you are in breach of your Tenancy Agreement. A Remedy Breach will be issued if this situation is not resolved.

During your Tenancy

Income review

Annual Review: Once a year we ask each tenant to provide their current income details for assessment purposes. This will determine if there will be any changes to your rent.

Change in Income: Tenants will have their rent reduced immediately upon providing proof of a decrease in income.



An important part of being a good tenant is being a good neighbour.

Neighbours

Respect your neighbours by:

- Keeping your music or TV volume down;
- Being polite; and
- Leaving Common Areas clean and tidy.

We encourage tenants to discuss any issues between each other in a calm and respectful manner. If a problem occurs that you cannot resolve yourself please let us know before it gets out of hand.

Noise

Tenants and their visitors are requested not to make or permit any disturbing noise in your property or do anything that may interfere with the rights, comfort or convenience of other tenants.

Rights and responsibilities

Before moving in, you will receive a copy of 'Pocket Guide for Tenants' (RTA Form 17a). This is a summary of your rights and duties covered by the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008.

The Property Manager and the tenant both have rights and responsibilities.

Tenant	MICDA Inc
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pay rent & electricity on time.• Do not create a disturbance in the neighbourhood.• Don't damage the property.• Inform MICDA Inc if damage occurs.• Do not conduct or allow any illegal or antisocial activity on the property. <p>SEE PAGE 10 Tenant Responsibilities for further information.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Give legal notice before entering property. MICDA Inc may enter the property without notice in circumstances permitted in the RTRA Act 2008 or if consent is given.• Provide secure housing.• Allow the tenant to have quiet enjoyment of the property.• Provide a property that is clean and in good condition at the start of your tenancy.



Pets

Pets are not allowed in Community Housing and Community Rent Scheme accommodation.



Smoke alarms

Smoke alarms are provided in all properties. **Tenants must not tamper with or remove the smoke alarms.** If your smoke alarm starts beeping, this means it needs a new battery. Please report the issue to the Property Manager. Do not switch it off or remove it from ceiling.

Car Parking

Please make sure cars are parked only in designated parking areas.

Subletting

Subletting is not permitted.

Absences from the property

Please notify us if you are planning to be away from your property for more than seven consecutive days.

Tenant Responsibilities:

The following items are the responsibility of the tenant at their expense while they are living at the property:

- Replacement of light bulbs with the correct wattage.
- Reporting non-functioning smoke alarms immediately.
- Reporting all necessary repairs.
- Professional steam cleaning and spot cleaning of carpets while living in your home.
- Normal insect control (bees, spiders, sugar or nuisance ants, etc).
- Normal rodent control, such as mice and cockroaches.
- Keep property clean, inside and out, free of grease, mould, mildew, cobwebs, etc.
- If you are responsible for the lawn maintenance, you need to mow, water, weed, and dispose of all yard debris on a regular basis.

The tenant is not responsible for damage as a result of a crime, provided you report it to the police and provide MICDA Inc with a Police Incident Report number along with full details. You must provide the police with full and accurate information and the name of the person(s) responsible if they are known. This is also required for any insurance claim and application for restitution.

Holidays

If you are taking a holiday from your property for more than a week, please contact the Property Manager to let them know.



Maintenance

Property Inspections

Routine inspections are carried out during a tenancy to ensure the property is being well cared for and there are no maintenance or health and safety issues.

We will post you an Entry Notice (Form 9) which will provide the date and time of the inspection. Tenants are given a minimum of seven days written notice of the intended inspection, in accordance with the RTRA Act 2008.

Your attendance at the inspection is welcome however is not necessary as we will use our key to enter the property. The Property Manager will notify the tenants, in writing, of any repairs that are the responsibility of the tenant.

Submitting maintenance requests

Tenants are to notify the Property Manager via:

- a. Repairs Request Form
- b. By telephone, email or face to face contact.

If the request is taken by phone, the Property Manager will record the following details on a Repairs Request Form:

- Date of request
- Tenant name and contact details including the property address
- Information on the requested repair
- When the repair/maintenance problem was first noted

If a contractor is unable to gain access to the property after coordinating a time and date with you, a service call fee will be charged to you.



Emergency Procedures

In the case of a medical, fire or other emergency situation that could involve immediate peril to you or someone surrounding you, please **call 000**.

Maintenance emergency procedures:

If you experience an emergency situation, please contact MICDA Inc immediately to arrange the repair. If the Property Manager is unavailable or the contractors listed in the handbook are unavailable, the tenant can arrange for a suitably qualified person to carry out the repairs, to a maximum value of two week's rent. The tenant can pay the repairer themselves and request a refund from MICDA Inc, or they can ask the repairer to bill MICDA Inc direct.



- **The specific definition of a maintenance emergency is:**

An issue that is dangerous, hazardous or if not addressed immediately could cause damage to the property or your personal well-being.

Examples of emergency repairs include:

- a burst water service
 - a blocked or broken toilet system or fittings
 - a serious roof leak
 - dangerous electrical fault
 - flooding or serious flood damage
 - serious storm, fire or impact damage
 - a failure or breakdown of the electricity or water supply to premises
 - a failure or breakdown of an essential service or appliance on premises for hot water or cooking
 - a fault or damage that makes the premises unsafe or insecure
 - a fault or damage likely to injure a person or damage property
 - a serious fault in any stair case
 - air conditioner not working
- **An emergency is not:**
 - Annoying sounds, appliance malfunction, etc... While inconvenient, these are not considered emergencies and will be handled by our office on the following business day.
 - An air conditioner blowing hot air is not defined as an emergency; we do understand how hot the summers are in Mount Isa and can sometimes be unbearable.

Emergency failure check steps (prior to contacting the property manager):

For Electrical Issues:

- Check that all circuit breakers (switches) in power box are in ON mode.
- If a switch is off, turn it back on.
- If switch turns off again (trips) check to see if one of your appliances is tripping the power switch. Unplug the faulty appliance & reset switch.

For Water Related Issues:

- If water is running onto floors from any appliance, fixture or pipe, shut-off the main valve for the property.
- Call the plumber on the contractor list. If this fails, call any plumber in the yellow pages & get them to invoice the relevant housing program.

Ending Tenancy



Moving out

Notice of Intention to Leave

A Notice of Intention to leave form needs to be submitted to the property manager at least 2 weeks prior to vacating the property.

Cleaning up and Clearing Out

We understand that moving can be a stressful and busy time. However, there are some important items to consider when moving, which if done properly, will save you time and money in the long run. There is a level of cleaning that is required to return the unit in the condition you received it in. If you have any question, please contact your property manager and be sure to reference the **End of Tenancy Checklist – Tenants**.

Any work not completed by the tenant will be completed by the property manager and deducted from the bond. Once you have removed all personal property and have completed the cleaning of the unit, please contact us for the exit inspection. Return all door keys to the relevant housing program or to a MICDA Inc staff member.

Returning keys

Once the property has been cleaned please return the keys to our office. Please note, your rent will continue to be charged up until the day you return the keys to us.



Exit Condition Report

An Exit Condition Report (Form 14a) will be completed to show the condition of the property when you leave. This will be compared with the Entry Condition Report.

Bond Refund

Once you have completed moving out, MICDA Inc will complete any repairs and cleaning not noted on your initial walkthrough and refund your remaining bond if applicable. **WE CANNOT REFUND YOUR BOND THE SAME DAY YOU MOVE OUT** because we must ensure all repairs and cleaning was completed.

Please make sure MICDA Inc has your forwarding address and bank details for your bond refund to be sent to you.

If the property was damaged or you have rent arrears and this amount is in excess of your bond you will not be able to get another property from us until the outstanding debt is paid.

Abandoning your Property

If the Property Manager believes you have permanently left your property without notice, they will establish a case for abandonment. An Abandonment Notice (RTA Form 15) will be taped to the property's door to have the property declared abandoned. MICDA Inc will also have the locks changed at the end of this notice period to all external doors. Any cleaning or damage is recouped from the bond.

Abandoned Goods

If you leave personal items behind after you have left the property, they will be dealt with or disposed of in accordance with the RTRA Act 2008. MICDA Inc is under no obligation to store tenant belongings with a resale value under the RTA guidelines. It is best not to leave any items behind. If you can't take all your items with you when you leave, please talk to your Property Manager who may be able to give you contact details for storage options.

Complaints, Concerns, Feedback & Other Issues:

MICDA Inc acknowledges the right of tenants to raise a concern if they are dissatisfied and commits itself to providing tenants with responsive procedures that are accessible, prompt and fair.

Tenants can make a complaint about any experience with MICDA Inc they consider being problematic, including but not limited to:

- Breach of confidentiality or privacy
- Inadequate standard of service provision and / or professionalism
- Denial of personal rights
- Discrimination or harassment
- Conflict arising from lack of communication or misunderstanding
- Organisational policy issue
- Problem with advice or action recommended

Principles

The general principles are that all parties:

- Will be treated with respect and receive fair and non-discriminatory treatment;
- Have a right to state their case in person or use an authorised advocate or representative;
- Have a right to be kept informed of the progress and outcome of grievance procedures.

Any person making a complaint must complete a Client and Tenant Complaint / Appeals / Commendation Form (H21).