



Housing Establishment Fund Guidelines

Background

The Victorian government acknowledges the critical role that funded organisations play in delivering services to people at risk of and experiencing homelessness.

Homes Victoria published the Housing Establishment Fund Program Guidelines version 1 (HEF guidelines version 1) in November 2025.

Why Homes Victoria have updated the Housing Establishment Fund Guidelines.

When the HEF guidelines version 1 were published, a 40 Business Days' Notice was required as part of Clause 3.1 (g) of the Service Agreement with the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH).

During the notice period, Homes Victoria received feedback on the HEF guidelines version 1 and as a result some changes were made.

What changes have been made

The HEF guidelines version 1.1, provide clear guidance to ensure service providers deliver a service that meets best practice and modern standards.

The changes made to the HEF guidelines V1.1 include:

1. Five new sections have been incorporated:
 - Section 1 – Introduction
 - Section 2 – How to use these guidelines
 - Section 3 Roles of government entities
 - Section 4 Applicable policy requirements
 - Section 9.1 Managing client data
2. Section 6.2 has been updated to clarify that HEF cannot be used for staff activities
3. Section 6.5 includes advice for organisations complete due diligence checks on whether short stay accommodation is available under Owners Corporation rules. This is in addition to legislated regulations and council requirements

4. Section 6.6 includes the provision for funded organisations to utilise their own motel safety system, as long as it is cross checked with Family Violence services in the local area.
5. Section 6.7 includes new information on client feedback on purchased accommodation.
6. New advice is included in section 6.10 to identify that organisations may run out of HEF despite their best efforts to manage expenditure across the funding period.

Implementation

Under Clause 3.1 (g) of the Service Agreement, the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) are required to provide funded organisations with 40 Business Days' written notice when making amendments to Departmental Policy.

The 40-business day notice to advise organisations that updated HEF guidelines version 1.1 have been published, was delivered to all funded organisations on 30 March 2026. On the 29 May 2026, the HEF guidelines version 1.1 will supersede the HEF guidelines version 1 and all organisations will be required to comply with the HEF guidelines version 1.1 alongside their Service Agreement with DFFH.

During the 40-Business Day period, organisations should become familiar with the HEF guidelines version 1.1. Should organisations or a Local Area Service Network have a query on the HEF guidelines version 1.1, they are advised to contact their local area Agency Performance Systems Support representative. If they are unable to assist, the query will be forwarded to Homes Victoria for a response

Homelessness.Guidelines@homes.vic.gov.au.

Where can I access the HEF Guidelines

You can download a copy of the HEF guidelines version 1.1 from the [Funded Agency Channel](https://fac.dffh.vic.gov.au/housing-establishment-guidelines-hef)
<https://fac.dffh.vic.gov.au/housing-establishment-guidelines-hef>

Once the notice period has expired, a link to the HEF guidelines version 1.1 will be found on the [Homelessness Operational program guidelines webpage](https://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/homelessness-operational-program-guidelines).

<https://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/homelessness-operational-program-guidelines>

Who to contact for more information

Should you require additional information please contact your local area Agency Performance and Service System team or Homelessness.Guidelines@homes.vic.gov.au