

Tasmanian
Homelessness
Charter

This document has been prepared by Youth Development Australia Pty Ltd for discussion purposes. It contains a statement of service principles and practices that underpin a rights based approach to service delivery to people experiencing and those at risk of homelessness.

Tasmanian Homelessness Charter Preamble

People who experience homelessness are one of the most vulnerable groups in Australian society. The Government of Tasmania is committed to building and maintaining a service system capable of responding to the diverse needs of Tasmanians who experience or are at risk of homelessness.

The Australian Government and state and territory Governments have embarked on a national reform agenda to prevent and reduce homelessness based on the Australian Government White Paper, *The Road Home*.

In accord with this national response, the Tasmanian Government has initiated a reform process involving new investments in support programs and affordable social housing. There is a focus in the Tasmanian response on improving the effectiveness of both specialist homelessness services and those mainstream service systems that are used by people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. The objective is a more user-focused and needs-based service provision culture.

The Tasmanian Government's homelessness reform agenda is expressed through:

- The Tasmanian Homelessness Implementation Plan 2010 – 2013: *Coming in from the cold*; and
- The Tasmanian Social Inclusion Strategy.

Coming in from the cold includes a three-year action plan for a whole-of-government and community approach to preventing and reducing homelessness. One of the priority actions identified in *Coming in from the cold* was the development of a Tasmanian Homelessness Charter.

The key objectives of the Tasmanian Homelessness Charter are:

1. To promote community awareness that people experiencing or at risk of homelessness should be treated in a respectful manner that upholds their basic human rights.
2. To ensure that Tasmanian specialist homelessness services and other mainstream services engaging with people experiencing or at risk of homelessness carry out their responsibilities to deliver services in a manner consistent with the principles outlined in the Charter
3. To provide information and guidance to people experiencing or at risk of homelessness that clarifies what they can expect as standard service practice when using services and outlines their responsibilities as service users.

The Tasmanian Homelessness Charter is underpinned by a rights-based approach and is grounded in the proposition that every human being has basic inalienable human rights. These rights are articulated in the various United Nations Conventions

to which Australia is a signatory, especially the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 25) under which housing is a component of the right to an adequate standard of living.

Tasmanians currently enjoy the protection of certain rights under specific legislation such as the Anti-Discrimination Act 1998 (Tas.), as well as further support through services such as the Commissioner for Children and the Social Inclusion Commissioner.

The Tasmanian Homelessness Charter is a rights-based charter but not a charter of rights as such. The Charter does not contradict the principles and standards promoted by the bodies outlined above, but is designed as a statement of basic values and guiding principles for services and service users, subject to the reasonable limits of the laws of Tasmania.

The Tasmanian Homelessness Charter has been developed around seven themes that cross-reference to practice principles for quality service provision. The Charter seeks to ensure that the rights of service users are upheld through the provision of 'user-focused' and 'needs-based' services. The seven themes are:

- Dignity and Respect
- Health, Safety and Well-being
- Privacy and Confidentiality
- Equity and Fairness
- Non-discrimination
- Choice and Self-determination
- Social Inclusion

Services that implement the Charter principles will have strong relationships with service users, and other service providers.

At a systems level, the Charter is intended to provide a foundation for preventing homelessness and developing opportunity rich pathways from homelessness to active participation in the social and economic life of the Tasmanian community.

About this Charter

The Tasmanian Homelessness Charter sets out what service users have a right to expect from Tasmanian specialist homelessness services or any mainstream services providing assistance and/or support to people experiencing or at risk of homelessness, and at the same time, provides a guide for both mainstream and specialist homelessness services about what users should expect from services. It sets out the obligations of both parties.

Services can be expected to adhere to certain practice principles that embody 'user-focused' and 'needs-based' service provision. Services would:

- Adhere to the Tasmanian Homelessness Charter;
- Operate services based on the Charter and any other required service standards;
- Inform service users about the service principles and what these mean in practical terms;
- Enable service users to provide feedback on their experience and respond constructively to feedback;
- Help service users to lodge a complaint if they feel they have not received the service and treatment laid out in this Charter;
- Be accountable to service users, the community and the government for upholding the Charter.

The Tasmanian Service System

The Tasmanian Homelessness Charter applies to all government departments, health and community services dealing with people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

The service system includes:

1. Specialist homelessness services including crisis services that provide accommodation for short periods of time and transitional housing services that might provide longer periods of assistance while working to help service users into permanent accommodation. It also includes services that provide outreach support and/or brokerage funds to buy accommodation or other services;
2. Social housing providers including community housing, public housing and Housing Associations;
3. Mainstream services that provide services to the broader community including people experiencing homelessness such as government departments, Centrelink, schools, police, the justice system, hospitals and health services as well as General Practitioners (GP's) and community services;
4. Specialist services that provide assistance for people with specific needs such as counseling services, mental health services, alcohol and other drug rehabilitation and counseling services, advocacy services, specialist children's services, Child Protection and Youth Justice, disability services, employment and training providers and emergency relief agencies.

It is intended that the Charter should provide guidance on service principles for all services and organisations that deal with people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Adjunct to the mainstream and homelessness service systems there are groups who profit from people experiencing or at risk of homelessness such as private landlords, rooming house operators, operators of caravan parks with permanent residents or who take individuals and families on an emergency basis and real estate agents managing private rental properties.

Charter Service Principles

People can become homeless for many reasons including financial hardship, inappropriate or unaffordable housing, escaping domestic and family violence, abuse or neglect, illness or a breakdown in relationships.

People experiencing or at risk of homelessness need the assurance that when they approach a service they will receive assistance to meet their needs and that their basic human rights will be protected and upheld.

1. Dignity and Respect

- When people experiencing or at risk of homelessness seek assistance and use services they have a right to expect that they will be treated with the same respect due to any other member of the community.
- When people experiencing or at risk of homelessness are accommodated or supported in any service, this should be done in a way that upholds their dignity as human beings and citizens.
- Services should encourage and uphold a culture of respect amongst service users and between service users and staff.

2. Health, Safety and Wellbeing

- People experiencing or at risk of homelessness should expect access to environments that are safe, secure and healthy.
- Services should promote good health and wellbeing and advise service users appropriately if their health and wellbeing seems under threat.
- When people experiencing or at risk of homelessness are provided with accommodation this should not be in an environment where violence, threats, abuse or exploitation can take place.

3. Privacy and Confidentiality

- Services should respect the right to privacy of people being supported or assisted.
- Private information should be safeguarded under the terms of privacy legislation.
- When information is shared between services agreed terms of confidentiality should be observed and service users informed consent should be obtained.

4. Fairness and Equity

- Service users should expect to be treated fairly according to policies and arrangements that are transparent and applied consistently.
- Irrespective of their needs service users should be able to enter the service system under policies that ensure equitable access.
- Service users with diverse needs should expect the appropriate level of support necessary for achieving sustainable outcomes.

5. Non-discrimination

- Service users should expect respectful and appropriate treatment irrespective of different cultural backgrounds, sexual preferences and identity or religion.
- Service users should be able to access services regardless of their legal status.
- Service users should be able to lodge a complaint or appeal a decision and expect a meaningful response without fear of retribution.

6. Choice and Self-determination

- Service users should be provided with information about the choices available to them.
- Service users should be encouraged and assisted to make informed decisions about their own situation.
- Service users should have a voice and be consulted on the planning, development and evaluation of services.

7. Social Inclusion

- Assistance for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness should contribute to building positive human relationships and foster active participation.
- Wherever possible, people experiencing or at risk of homelessness should be supported to participate in 'normal' community activities.
- People experiencing or at risk of homelessness should be assisted along opportunity-rich pathways to social participation and independent livelihoods.

Responsibilities of service users

Service users have rights but also responsibilities. It is reasonable that service users are asked to accept responsibility for the way they behave towards other service users and service staff.

Service users have a responsibility to:

1. Respect the rights of other service users and service providers.
2. Treat staff, volunteers and other service users in a respectful manner.
3. Respect the right of others to have a safe environment
4. Not act in an aggressive or violent and threatening manner towards others.
5. Respect the privacy of other service users, staff and volunteers.
6. Be fair in their dealing with other service users, staff and volunteers.
7. Meet their responsibilities as a tenant or resident.
8. Respect the cultural background, sexual preferences or identity and religion of others.
9. Accept and abide by final decisions arrived at through due process.
10. Provide correct and up to date information about themselves.
11. Participate to some degree in the daily life of the program they are involved with.
12. Cooperate with services and their staff to achieve mutually agreed life outcomes.

Dignity and Respect

Service Principle 1:

When people experiencing or at risk of homelessness seek assistance and use services they have a right to expect that they will be treated with the same respect due to any other member of the community.

The rights of service users should be acknowledged, promoted and supported during all aspects of service delivery.

Service users can expect that:

Services will endeavour to develop a purposeful and trusting relationship with each service user and deliver support tailored to their individual needs and choices.



- Support for service users should be based on developing meaningful relationships between staff and service users;
- Support should be delivered on a needs-basis, accepting that some people have higher needs than others and will require more support;
- During case planning, service users should be assisted to make choices about their own situation and lives.

Service users will be treated in a respectful manner at all times.



- When talking or interacting with service users, staff should act in a courteous manner. This applies to service procedures at intake, minimising the time service users have to wait before being assisted and being respectful during ongoing interactions.

Services will have ethical guidelines for client services.



- These guidelines should be made available to service users and clearly explained to them.

Service users who feel they are not being treated with dignity and respect will be assisted to redress this situation.



- Services should attempt to address grievances within their jurisdiction and either support service users seeking redress or, where this cannot realistically be done, services should provide information about where appropriate support or advocacy might be obtained.

Service Principle 2:

When people experiencing or at risk of homelessness are accommodated or supported in any service, this should be done in a way that upholds their dignity as human beings and citizens.

As well as adults, a significant number of children and young people experience or are at risk of homelessness. Services need to have a capacity to understand the issues of children and young people and be able to respond to their special needs in a way that is appropriately respectful and upholds their dignity.

Service users can expect that:

They will be supported in a way that makes them feel they are valued members of society.



- Services should ensure that the arrangements for accommodation are of an appropriate standard.
- When providing accommodation services should try to house family members together.
- Support services should be delivered in a reliable, coordinated and professional manner.
- Services should have systems and resources that positively engage and respond to the needs of children and young people.

Service Principle 3:

Services should encourage and uphold a culture of respect amongst service users and between service users and staff.

The notion of a 'culture of respect' refers to a code of behaviour for how staff and service users should interact, respecting each other as human beings regardless of status or power. This applies as much to how managers and staff behave within these services as it does to staff interactions with service users. The same respectful standards of behaviour are expected amongst service users.

Service users can expect that:

Services will promote a respect for service user rights.



- Services should advertise their policies and commitments on service user rights visually on notice boards and in service literature.
- Staff should demonstrate a commitment to service user rights when they talk with service users.
- The Tasmanian Homelessness Charter should be displayed on noticeboards throughout the organisation.
- Copies of the Charter should be available in a number of languages for service users to read.
- Information about how to make a complaint or redress an issue should be readily available.

Services will ensure service users have access to advocacy services when needed.



- Services should provide service users with information about how to access appropriate advocacy services.
- Service staff should support service users to access advocacy services.

Service users have a responsibility to:

Respect the rights of other service users and service providers.



- Service users should observe the rules upholding the basic rights of all those in the service setting.

Treat staff , volunteers and other service users in a respectful manner.



- Service users should be expected to behave respectfully at all times.

Health and Wellbeing

Service Principle 4:

People experiencing or at risk of homelessness should have access to environments that are safe, secure and healthy.

Service users can expect that:

Services will have appropriate safety procedures and equipment in place.



- A designated staff member should have responsibility for occupational health and safety.
- Staff should have had training in basic first aid, occupational health & safety, managing challenging behaviour, alcohol and drug crises, mental health awareness and safe food handling.
- Safety procedures should include fire risk compliance, safe storage of medicines and chemicals, infectious disease control and safe food handling and storage.
- Safety equipment should include fire extinguishers and first aid kits.

Service Principle 5:

Services should promote good health and wellbeing and advise service users appropriately if their health or wellbeing seems under threat.

Service users can expect that:

If staff perceive that a service user has health and wellbeing issues, appropriate advice will be provided to them about what they should do.



- Services should have information about health services such as primary health care, mental health and drug and alcohol rehabilitation that is readily available for staff to refer to.
- Services should establish collaborative linkages with the range of primary and allied health services that service users might need to access.
- Staff should support service users to access health services, particularly those that involve a complicated referral and admission process and long waiting lists.
- Staff should attend professional development opportunities on health issues relevant to their clients.

Health promotion will be part of routine practices throughout services.



- Health promotion information should be visible throughout the organisation's service delivery sites.
- Activities to promote wellbeing should be conducted within services.

Positive healthy behaviours will be modeled by service staff.



- Staff should not smoke or drink alcohol where they could be seen by service users.
- Food provided by services should be highly nutritious and not fast foods high in fats and sugar.

Service Principle 6:

When people experiencing or at risk of homelessness are provided with accommodation this should not be in an environment where violence, threats, abuse or exploitation can take place.

Protection from violence is a primary issue for women and children escaping domestic violence who experience homelessness, but an environment free from violence and intimidation is something all people experiencing or at risk of homelessness have a right to expect.

Service users can expect that:

Services will provide an environment free from violence or coercion.



- Services should not place service users in situations where there is a risk of threats or violence.
- Where violence has been an issue in a person becoming homeless, services should implement protective measures for the person escaping the violent behaviour.
- Services should respond to individuals acting in a threatening or violent manner in a timely and appropriate manner.
- Services should regularly monitor a service user's sense of feeling protected and safe.

Services will have the capacity to deal with issues of violence, threats or exploitation.



- Services should have policies on how to manage aggressive and threatening behaviour.
- Staff should be trained in handling threatening or violent behaviours.

Service users have a responsibility to:

Respect the right of others to have a safe environment.



- Service users should not act in a way that would make others feel unsafe.

Not act in an aggressive or violent and threatening manner towards others.



- Services should have a no tolerance policy for violence that all service users should be made aware of.

Privacy and Confidentiality

Service Principle 7:

Services should respect the right to privacy of people being supported or assisted.

Privacy is embodied in legislation and this should be acknowledged and understood by all staff.

Service users can expect that:

Services will operate in ways that respect an individual's right to privacy.



- Service users should be given private sleeping arrangements wherever possible.
- Services should provide for the storage of personal belongings.
- Service users should be able to conduct external telephone conversations in private.
- Interviews should be conducted in private, not open spaces.

Services will treat client information in strict confidence according to how confidentiality has been defined.



- The rules for how confidentiality is practiced should be explained clearly to service users and their consent obtained.
- Confidentiality should be negotiated and formally agreed between services.
- Staff should be trained in the principles and practices of confidentiality and how it should be implemented.

Service Principle 8:

Private information should be safeguarded under the terms of privacy legislation.

Service users can expect that:

Services will be aware of privacy legislation and adhere to its requirements.



- Policies and procedures on privacy should be communicated to service users in plain language.
- Service users should be made aware that they have a right of access to their case files.
- The handling of client information should be considered in terms of Privacy Legislation.

Service Principle 9:

When information is shared between services agreed terms of confidentiality should be observed and service users informed consent should be obtained.

Service users can expect that:

Services will explain requirements for informed consent for private information that may be shared with other services or passed onto government.



- Service users should record their informed consent verbally or in writing and a record should be kept.
- Services should share information internally on a need to know basis, thereby minimising the number of staff who have access to private information.

Services will have clear policies for handling private information in confidence.



- Services should have clear policies for confidentiality.
- Where appropriate, services should have formalised protocols with other services about agreed principles and practices for sharing client information.

Services will store private information securely and observe secure protocols for handling private information electronically.



- Services should hold files in secure locked cabinets or on electronic storage, appropriately safeguarded.

Service users have a responsibility to:

Respect the privacy of other service users, staff and volunteers.



- Service users should respect the private space of others.
- Service users should show respect to others in communal spaces.
- Service users should respect the private property of others.

Equity and Fairness

Service Principle 10:

Service users should expect to be treated fairly according to policies and arrangements that are transparent and applied consistently.

Services should have clear and understandable intake criteria, which contain a policy about the fair allocation of placements and accommodation to those people most in need. A service user should expect a fair and transparent allocation of accommodation policy and process that considers the particular needs of the service user.

Service users can expect that:

Services will explain clearly who is eligible for support, accommodation or assistance and how decisions about priority are made.



- Eligibility criteria should be clearly advertised on websites and printed material about services and programs should be available.
- Initial screening should focus on eligibility.
- Decisions based on priority-need should be explained in plain language, e.g. why the decision has been made, and who is responsible.
- Information should be provided where required about what an applicant can do if they are dissatisfied with a decision.

If a person approaching a service for assistance does not meet the eligibility criteria, the service will offer information and referral to a more appropriate service option.



- Services should have access to community service directories and a good knowledge of available options in the local area.

Service Principle 11:

Irrespective of their needs service users should be able to enter the service system under policies that ensure equitable access.

Service users can expect that:

Services will, directly or indirectly, assist the achievement of appropriate long-term housing options or support to maintain tenancies at risk.



- Services should have links with public housing offices, social housing providers and/or local estate agents responsible for private rentals.
- Support should in some cases involve accessing financial assistance to provide bonds or help manage rental arrears.

Services will ensure that they are able to accommodate the special needs of young people, children and people with disabilities.



- Services should have links with specialist youth and children's services.
- Provision should be made to ensure people with disabilities are able to access services e.g. disabled access to premises, access to adaptive technology to assist people with sensory disabilities.

Service Principle 12:

Service users with diverse needs should expect the appropriate level of support necessary for achieving sustainable outcomes.

People experiencing or at risk of homelessness comprise a diverse population with diverse needs. Some people have a high level of need while others have a much lower level. Some have multiple complex needs.

In terms of support and time spent, some people will require a lot more support than others to achieve the same outcome. Service provision should be needs-based but directed towards the same outcomes of a sustainable livelihood and safe and secure housing.

Service users can expect that:

Services will provide support that is focused on the needs of the individual or family group.



- Services should develop case plans in consultation with service users that focus on the achievement of positive outcomes.

Services will provide them with the support they need to live in safe and secure housing.



- Services should apply resources on a needs-basis so that service users can be adequately supported into safe and secure housing and an independent livelihood.

Service users have a responsibility to:

Be fair in their dealing with other service users, staff and volunteers.



- Service users should be encouraged to deal with issues reasonably and to be fair in their dealings with other people.

Meet their responsibilities as a tenant or resident.



- Tenants have responsibilities to pay rent on time, maintain property at the same level as when they entered and to clean a property at the point of leaving.
- Tenants and residents should respect neighbours and rights of neighbours.

Non-discrimination

Service Principle 13:

Service users should expect respectful and appropriate treatment irrespective of different cultural backgrounds, sexual preferences and identity or religion.

Services should be sensitive to identity, heritage, country and culture of origin, religion, sexual orientation/preference/identity and service user's life experiences.

Service users can expect that:

Service staff will be competent to meet the needs of different social and cultural groups likely to access the services they provide.



- Services should actively seek information from service users about their cultural needs in order to inform practices.
- Information should be provided in a range of languages about the service as well as other services.
- Access to interpreters should be available if required.

Services will acknowledge, appreciate and be responsive to the uniqueness and difference of Aboriginal cultural.



- Services should be sensitive and inter-culturally competent to respond to the needs of Aboriginal service users.
- Where appropriate, assistance should be provided to access Aboriginal-specific services.

Services will acknowledge, appreciate and be responsive to the needs of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Trans-sexual and Intersex (GLBTI) service users.



- Staff should be sensitive to GLBTI issues and trained to respond appropriately.
- Services should pay attention to providing accommodation for GLBTI clients free from discrimination.
- Services should seek advice from specialist GLBTI advocates and service providers when dealing with matters beyond the experience and expertise of the service.

Service Principle 14:

Service users should be able to access services regardless of their legal status.

Young people who have been in state care or juvenile justice systems are particularly vulnerable to experiencing homelessness. When these young people experience homelessness they may miss receiving the support they need because they fall between the two service systems – the child protection and homelessness support system. Young people in these circumstances need to be offered services and support free of discrimination.

Further, when individuals are or have been involved with the justice system (on bail, leaving detention or on community orders etc.) they should be able to access support and accommodation and other services and not experience discrimination.

Service users can expect that:

Services will support people experiencing or at risk of homelessness regardless of their legal status.



- Persons experiencing or at risk of homelessness who are involved with the justice system should receive assistance based on their needs.
- Young people, who are statutory clients, should receive support just the same as other young people not under-statutory orders.
- Services staff should work in partnership with state care and protection programs in the interests of the child or young person.
- Services should work with the Commissioner for Children Tasmania to improve support and assistance to children.
- Children should be supported as individuals with specific needs in their own right, as well as members of a family.
- People exiting prison or on community orders should be assisted without discrimination.

Service Principle 15:

Service users should be able to lodge a complaint or appeal a decision and expect a meaningful response without fear of retribution.

If a service user believes that a decision that affects them is unfair they should be able to access a fair and independent process to resolve the matter. An issue, complaint or appeal should be addressed promptly, respectfully and fairly.

Service users can expect that:

Services will provide information about how to raise issues, make a complaint or appeal a decision made by an agency.



- Services should regard issues that are raised by service users as a normal part of the practical work of providing support/assistance and accommodation to homeless or at risk service users.
- Service users should be advised how to raise an issue, how it will be managed, the process involved and how long it might take.
- Services should assist young people to understand their legal rights.

Services will accept feedback, even when critical, as an opportunity to improve the quality of the service delivery.



- Services should seek feedback regularly, both informally and through formal mechanisms and report back to service users in a transparent manner.

Services will advise service users on how to make a complaint if issues cannot be resolved at the local service level.



- Services should provide information about how to make a complaint and to which bodies it might be directed.
- Services users should be supported to make their complaint even if it is about the agency itself or due to matters outside the services control.

Service users have a responsibility to:

Respect the cultural background, sexual preferences or identity and religion of others.



- Service users should be expected to respect difference amongst other service users as well as service staff.

Accept and abide by final decisions arrived at through due process.



- Service users and service providers should be expected to accept and abide by final decisions arrived at through due

processes of reviewing issues or dealing with complaints.

Choice and Self-determination

Service Principle 16:

Service users should be provided with information about the choices available to them.

People experiencing or at risk of homelessness should receive reasonable and accurate information and advice as well as assistance to consider all the available options so that they can make the best possible choices about their future. Services should also respect the fact that service users have the right to, not accept advice or seek other advice, if that is what they wish to do.

Service users can expect that:

Services will provide timely and relevant information so that they can make informed choices and decisions.



- Services should keep up to date information in a readily available form.
- Service users should be supported to make their complaint even if it is about the service itself or due to matters outside the services control.
- Services should provide support, information and encouragement for service users to develop the skills to advocate on their own behalf.

Services will provide specialist support for those people who have limited decision-making capacity.



- Services should facilitate access to special needs support internally or from external sources.
- Information should be presented in a visual graphical form to help people with intellectual disabilities or low literacy or those who speak a language other than English.

Service Principle 17:

Service users should be encouraged and assisted to make informed decisions about their own situation.

Service users should be fully informed of the options they have and the implications of each option. Service users should be given the confidence that their needs will be responded to in a way that recognises and respects their choices, skills, and strengths, as well as their social and cultural backgrounds.

Service users can expect that:

Support and case work will be conducted in a way that maximizes their decision-making about themselves.



- Staff should be trained in providing client-focused case work.
- Services should provide the support necessary to assist people to become as independent as possible.

Services will help them understand the risks and consequences of the various options and decisions they might make.



- Services have a 'duty of care' to service users as well as staff and volunteers.
- Services should promote a culture of service user participation.

Service Principle 18:

Service users should have a voice and be consulted on the planning, development and evaluation of the services.

Service users can expect that:

Their opinions and input will be sought during the regular operation of programs.



- Services should provide opportunities for service users to have a voice about the daily operations of services.
- Service users should be given opportunities to participate in service development, planning and reviews. This could include contributions through formal feedback, membership of a reference group, a working party or committee/Board, as well as contributing to focus groups or being interviewed.

Service users have a responsibility to:

Provide correct and up to date information about themselves.



- Helping service users make choices during support or case work relies on accurate personal information.

Participate to some degree in the daily life of the program they are involved with.



- Services should encourage and facilitate participation.


Social Inclusion

Service Principle 19:

Assistance for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness should contribute to building positive human relationships and foster active participation.

People experiencing or at risk of homelessness are often isolated or have weak social support networks. Building positive relationships is an important way of building resilience.

Service users can expect that:

Services will help them to establish supportive social networks so they can participate actively in the community.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Experiences during support periods should be designed to prepare service users for independent living in the community.• Services should encourage and assist people to join in community activities.
Services will foster positive relationships between service users and staff as a process of learning sociality.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Services should emphasise relationship-building as a central core of successful support and all case work• Services should provide mentorship as well as formal case client relationships.

Service Principle 20:

Wherever possible, people experiencing or at risk of homelessness should be supported to participate in 'normal' community activities.

People experiencing or at risk of homelessness may find themselves interacting mainly with others in the same predicament or with similar problems and therefore it is important that opportunities are provided for service users to access social, cultural and economic resources in the wider community and develop relationships that make life healthy, happy and productive.

Service users can expect that:

Services will encourage activities in which service users interact with people in the broader community not involved in providing services.



- Services should provide opportunities for leisure and recreation where service users get to do something with a wider circle of people.
- Services should maintain a strong profile in the community as a means of advocating for the issue of homelessness.
- Services that are involved with children on a longer-term basis should develop programs for the children that provide for healthy growth and development cognitively, emotionally and socially.

Services will participate in broader community events where staff as well as service users will be involved.



- Services should participate in community events as a way of mobilising support but also as a way for service users to take part in community activities.

Service Principle 21:

People experiencing or at risk of homelessness should be assisted along opportunity-rich pathways to social participation and independent livelihoods.

People experiencing or at risk of homelessness often require a range of assistance and support in addition to accommodation. If a service does not, or is unable, to provide certain services then information, advice and assistance about how to access the other required service(s), should be provided.

Young people experiencing homelessness are more likely to disengage from education early, as well as suffer exploitation and harm. For this group, support onto employment pathways is particularly important, wherever possible, but this may need to be preceded by education and training or preparation for entry into the workforce. Some people who have experienced homelessness and have high and complex needs may need to be supported in employment.

Service users can expect that:

Services will assist them with housing, income support, education and training and employment as well as personal support and accommodation.



- Services should seek ways to provide a coordinated and more integrated approach across different service systems such as housing support, Job Services Australia providers, various training and education options such as TAFE, apprenticeships and traineeships.
- Where appropriate, services should support coordinated case planning using a client-centred approach across different service networks.
- Services should assist young people to access education and training.

Services will provide support for service users to access and use mainstream services and service systems.



- This might include but not be limited to Home and Community Care services, primary health care services, allied health services, mental health services, drug and alcohol services, justice systems, education, training and employment programs as well as aged care and palliative care.

Service users have a responsibility to:

Cooperate with services and their staff to achieve mutually agreed life outcomes.



- Services should promote the goal of social inclusion or sustainable life-styles and livelihoods throughout their services.
- Services should uphold positive and optimistic expectations for service users while at the same time providing the support required to reach these goals.