

Policy name	Alterations & Modifications
Policy date	February 2026
Authorisation	Executive Housing & Property
Policy owner	Executive General Manager, Housing Operations
Policy type	Mission Australia Housing Operational Policy
Policy setting	

1 Purpose

1.1 Overview

1.1.1 This policy sets out the principles to be followed in Alterations & Modifications to properties managed by Mission Australia Housing (MAH). Our aim is to ensure a process that:

- Is fair and transparent.
- Provides new tenants with the information they need with regards to Alterations & Modifications, including their rights and responsibilities.
- Protects the assets managed by MAH; and
- Complies with the specific legal and contractual obligations placed upon MAH by government, funders, and other housing partners; and Complies with Local Government Planning and Building legislation, policy codes and standards and follows the Local Government Planning & Building process

1.2 Coverage

1.2.1 This document is a national policy and covers Mission Australia Housing (MAH), and its entities. All references to Mission Australia Housing, MAH and Housing means MAH and its entities unless specifically stated otherwise.

1.2.2 This policy applies to all forms of housing provided by MAH including social, affordable, and transitional housing.

1.2.3 This policy applies to housing provided by MAH in the jurisdictions of New South Wales (NSW), Tasmania (TAS), Victoria (VIC), Queensland (QLD), Western Australia (WA) and the Northern Territory (NT). Where jurisdiction-based variations exist in policies and procedures, these will be identified in the document.

1.3 Information on procedures and other related policies

- 1.3.1 This policy focuses on why certain things need to be done. It is supported by procedures that provide more detail on what to do and the steps involved in managing alterations, modifications and property upgrades.
- 1.3.2 This policy is one of several interlinked policies that support MAH's delivery of housing services. To assist you, these are identified where relevant in this policy and the supporting procedures.

2 Scope

2.1 Parts of Mission Australia that this policy covers

- 2.1.1 This policy applies to MAH staff responsible for working with MAH clients, tenants, and properties.

3 Definitions

- 3.1.1 Key terms used in this policy are defined in the following table.

Term	Definition
Alterations - Minor	An alteration made to property elements requested and paid for by the Tenant. This may include hanging pictures, securing furniture, or adding fly screens. Minor alterations can be removed at the end of the lease.
Alterations - Major	An alteration made to property elements requested and paid for by the Tenant. It also includes upgrades to the property to improve the tenant's comfort, such as pergolas. Major alterations are a fixed change and will remain in place after the lease has ended.
Tenant	Under state-based residential tenancy and rooming accommodation legislation, a tenant is a person who has entered explicitly into a lease agreement. The term is used more broadly in this policy to refer to tenants and residents under rooming accommodation agreements, unless explicitly distinguished.
Modification	A change or upgrade to property elements to allow a Tenant to live independently. This may include hand/grab rails, ramps, lever door handles.
Occupational Therapist (OT)	Occupational Therapists are training professionals that focus on enabling people to live satisfying and meaningful lives by helping them participate in the occupations they want to do, need to do, and are expected to do.

4 Policy

4.1 Guiding principles

- 4.1.1 Decisions are to be made in accordance with MAH's vision and strategic objectives.
- 4.1.2 Transparent processes enable the organisation to be accountable in all decisions made regarding property Alterations & Modifications.
- 4.1.3 The processes comply with relevant laws and procedures:
 - MAH fully complies with the jurisdictional requirements of the states and territories in which it operates.

4.2 Alterations

- 4.2.1 Tenants can request consent to make alterations to the property in which they live.
- 4.2.2 MAH will not unreasonably withhold consent for requests for the following alterations:
 - Securing furniture to a wall, other than a tiled wall, if it is necessary for the safe use of furniture
 - Fitting childproof latch to an exterior gate of a single dwelling
 - Inserting flyscreens on windows
 - Installing or replacing internal window coverings
 - Installing cleats or cord guides to secure blinds or curtain rods
 - Installing child safety gates inside the property
 - Installing window safety devices for child safety
 - Installing or replacing hooks, nails, or screws to hang pictures
 - Installing a carriage service for connecting a phone line or accessing the internet
 - Applying shatter resistant film to windows or glass doors.
- 4.2.3 Tenants must obtain written permission before work commences.
- 4.2.4 Where appropriate, tenants must arrange for the work to be completed by a qualified tradesman.
- 4.2.5 Tenants will not be granted approval for the following alterations:
 - Installation of in-ground swimming pools
 - Any major internal painting where restoration or preparation of the walls is necessary. This includes surface preparation, sanding, and undercoat application.
 - Electronically operated security shutters and security grilles
 - Bathroom alterations that could damage the waterproofing of the bathroom such as retiling the floor and walls, relocating the bath or toilet, or installing a new shower.
 - Installation of any new solid fuel wood space heaters
- 4.2.6 If a tenant is granted approval for NBN installation, MAH will only provide the cost of main connection to the building. Tenants will be responsible for the installation cost to the property.
- 4.2.7 If the tenant causes any damage installing or removing a fixture, the tenant must

repair the damage. For more information on tenant damages, see the **Responsive Repairs Policy** and **Managing Tenant Payments Procedure**.

- 4.2.8 Housing Officers can approve tenant request for alterations listed in 4.2.2. All other requests should be passed to the Asset Team for their review and approval.

4.3 Modifications

- 4.3.7 Tenants can request Modifications to be made to the property to enable the property to meet their needs.
- 4.3.8 Tenants or household members who need modifications are usually people who are elderly and/or have a disability or medical need.
- 4.3.9 Modification decisions will be made in line with the organisations Business Plan, Strategic Asset Management Plan, local asset management plans, budget and tenant outcomes.
- 4.3.10 When assessing property modification requirements, the organisation will consider the tenant's needs and how the organisation can best meet those needs.
- 4.3.11 Tenants will need to show Occupational Therapist recommendations and where possible, apply for NDIS or My Aged Care funding for the modification.
- 4.3.12 MAH will ensure compliance with the relevant housing building codes and standards during the development and modification of MAH Housing properties.
- 4.3.13 MAH may decline modification requests that are extensive and or costly and where an alternative suitable property is available. In these instances, MAH would support the tenant to relocate to the suitable property.
- 4.3.14 If MAH does not own the property, and depending on the program, MAH may also need to seek approval from the property owner for modifications to be made to a property.

4.4 Leasehold Properties

- 4.4.7 For Leasehold properties, MAH will require property title holder approval before consent can be provided for Alterations and Modifications.

4.5 Information

- 4.5.7 The organisation will keep all records of tenant requests and the decision outcome on the tenant's file in the IT system.

4.6 Decision Making

- 4.6.7 Tenants and other stakeholders who are not happy with a decision made about alterations, modifications and upgrades can appeal a decision as set out in the **Complaints & Appeals Policy**.

5 Responsibilities

5.1 Housing staff, including Housing Officers and Client Service Officers, are responsible for:

- Receiving and approving requests from tenants for alterations
- Referring tenants for OT assessments and receiving OT reports
- Determining modification requirements
- Submitting documents to the Asset Team for modification approvals

5.2 Asset staff are responsible for:

- Approving requests for modifications in-line with delegations
- Providing advice/feedback to Housing if a modification request is refused
- Raising Work Orders for modifications
- Visiting and inspecting properties to ensure work is carried out to the agreed standard or above.

5.3 Team Leaders/Regional Manager/Assets Manager are responsible for:

- Incorporating this policy and associated procedures into staff induction and training.
- Ensuring staff are aware of and have access to this policy and associated procedures.
- Escalating feedback about this policy to the policy owner and/or policy writer.

5.4 The Operations and State Manager is responsible for:

- Ensuring that MAH complies with this policy and associated procedures.
- Recommending any changes to this policy and associated procedures.