



Safe and secure homes

Stopping homelessness before it begins

MISSION
AUSTRALIA

Mission Australia's Tenancy Support
Impact Summary 2025



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Acknowledgements

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land throughout Australia and we pay our respects to the Elders past, present and future for they hold memories, culture and dreams of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We recognise and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and continual relationship with the land and we recognise the importance of the young people who are our future leaders.

Our thanks to the Mission Australia staff who provide support every day to people in need and those who are experiencing housing instability.

Our thanks also extend to our supporters, partners, funders and collaborators who enable us to provide excellent services and safe, secure homes that offer hope and lasting impact.

Finally, a special thank you to the people who shared with us their experiences via surveys and information collected through our services. Your insights are invaluable to understand the importance of early intervention and tenancy support to end homelessness in Australia.

About Mission Australia

At Mission Australia, we believe in hope and possibility for all. With more than 165 years of experience meeting human need, we are one of the largest and most trusted for-purpose community services and housing providers in the country.

As a national non-denominational Christian charity, our values of respect, compassion, integrity, perseverance and celebration are at the heart of all we do.

Every day, we deliver homelessness services, provide social and affordable housing, help families, children and young people thrive, improve mental health and wellbeing, support people with disability, provide pathways to employment and financial stability, strengthen communities, offer alcohol and other drug support, and more.



Impact Summary

This summary presents the evidence that Mission Australia has been gathering over the last five years across our tenancy support services – that is, services that help families and individuals who are experiencing housing instability to stay living in their homes and avoid homelessness. It includes rich data from our services, the wisdom of our staff, and the voices of people with a lived experience of housing instability.

Our evidence confirms what we already know - homelessness is preventable and early intervention works. The right support at the right time can stop homelessness before it begins through prevention and early intervention tenancy support.

Over the last five years, through their engagement with a Mission Australia tenancy support service, 98% of people avoided homelessness, stayed living in their homes or moved to safer, secure and stable housing. With a stable house and the right support, people also felt happier about their living conditions, health, wellbeing, mental health and relationships, and had a greater sense of control over their lives. As the housing and homelessness emergency escalates and poverty deepens, demand for Mission Australia's tenancy support services has surged to an all-time high. The fastest growing groups of people seeking support were people with a job, young people, and those escaping family and domestic violence.

As more people face the threat of homelessness, the case for scaling prevention and early intervention responses has never been stronger. Australia's current response is designed primarily to support people when they are already homeless, or when it is almost unavoidable - this is too late. Instead, there needs to be immediate and targeted action to:

- Establish a \$500 million Homelessness Prevention Transformation Fund, to expand targeted programs and drive policy reforms to stop homelessness before it begins.
- Boost investment in tailored, person-centred tenancy support services that are available for all households that are at risk of homelessness. The level of funding should match the growing need to:
 - expand coverage and fill gaps where services are lacking,
 - increase capacity in line with new social housing delivered through government initiatives,
 - support workforce growth and development, and
 - scale proven tenancy support services.
- Sufficiently support at-risk families and young people, through evidence-based early intervention support programs and pathways. This will ensure that people are connected to the right supports at the right time, to address underlying risk factors which can contribute to housing instability and homelessness.

Section 1. Tenancy Support Services

At Mission Australia, we believe everyone should have a safe, secure and affordable home as a foundation for wellbeing and opportunity.

We work towards ending homelessness through our homelessness services, specialist aged care, youth and other supported housing, and social and affordable homes managed by our Tier 1 Community Housing Provider, Mission Australia Housing. These services assist people who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness, helping them find and maintain stable housing with tailored support.

The need for homelessness services and social and affordable housing across Australia is growing. Inadequate income support payments, low wages, skyrocketing rental stress and low rental vacancies, rising cost of living, and shortage of social and affordable housing have escalated Australia's housing and homelessness emergency. Recent research has shown that up to 3.2 million people in Australia are at risk of homelessness, often just one life shock, such as a rent increase, job loss or eviction, away from losing their home [1].

Within Mission Australia's total of 82 homelessness services around Australia, 24 are specifically tenancy support services. Tenancy support services work with people to prevent them from falling into homelessness or intervene early to ensure that homelessness is rare, brief and non-recurring. This includes prevention and early intervention, goal-based, holistic, and multi-disciplinary support for people living in homes managed by Mission Australia Housing or other Community Housing Providers (CHPs) and/or in public housing, private rental properties or owned or mortgaged homes.

Some of these are funded under State Government programs; others are funded from Mission Australia Housing's rental income; and some are wholly or part-funded through the generosity of our donors and philanthropic supporters. The 24 services differ somewhat in their operational details, but they share the same overall purpose: to address factors contributing to their risk of homelessness and build protective factors to sustain their housing over the long term. For example, our services support:

- Mission Australia Housing residents to connect with opportunities to sustain their tenancies, achieve their goals, improve their wellbeing, and build independence. Our Tailored Support Coordination Services are offered across six Mission Australia Housing locations in New South Wales, Northern Territory and Tasmania.
- Public and community housing residents (managed by other CHPs) to increase their knowledge, skills and capacity to successfully manage their own tenancy and/or make a positive exit into other accommodation. We provide these services in Western Australia, Northern Territory and New South Wales.
- People in private rental properties or owned or mortgaged homes to create better pathways to home security, reduce household rental stress and sustain tenancies in New South Wales and South Australia.
- Young people at risk of homelessness, to build life skills, make progress towards their goals, including education and employment, and develop their capabilities to sustain tenancies in the private rental market or social housing. Our youth-specific services are provided through the Youth Foyer and Sustaining Young Tenancies service in Townsville, Willow House in Victoria and the Duke Street Youth Housing project in New South Wales.

[1] Jackson, A. and Blane, E. (2024). Call Unanswered. Unmet Demand For Specialist Homelessness Services. Impact Economics: Homelessness Australia. [Impact-Economics-Call-Unanswered.pdf](#)

Section 2. How do we measure our impact?

This Impact Summary includes data from people who were at risk of homelessness and received support from Mission Australia's 24 tenancy support services from 2020 to 2024.

The sample includes:

- 2,611 times when an individual or family engaged with a tenancy support service, to describe the demand for services and characteristics of people when they sought support
- 1,493 times when an individual or family exited a service to measure changes in housing status at the start and end of a service.
- 235 people who exited a service who completed both an entry and exit Impact Measurement survey (matched sample), including the Personal Wellbeing Index [2], to track changes in wellbeing outcomes over time. Statistical tests conducted are detailed in the footnotes.
- Stories of change gathered from people engaged in services are presented throughout the summary.

Aligned to Mission Australia's Organisational Impact Framework, we measure outcomes across five domains. This summary focuses on the first four domains that we measure at an individual and family level through our Impact Measurement program.

Mission Australia's Organisational Outcome Domains



[2] International Wellbeing Group (2024) Personal Wellbeing Index Manual: 6th Edition. Melbourne: Australian Centre on Quality of Life, Deakin University. The PWI contains seven items corresponding to quality of life domains to assess an individual's subjective wellbeing. Higher scores indicate higher levels of wellbeing. Normative or average ranges, reported by the general adult population in Australia, are provided for each item to identify people who may require additional assistance.

Section 3. What is the impact of early intervention tenancy support?

The following section presents evidence to explore the demand for and impact of Mission Australia's early intervention tenancy support services for people who are at risk of homelessness.

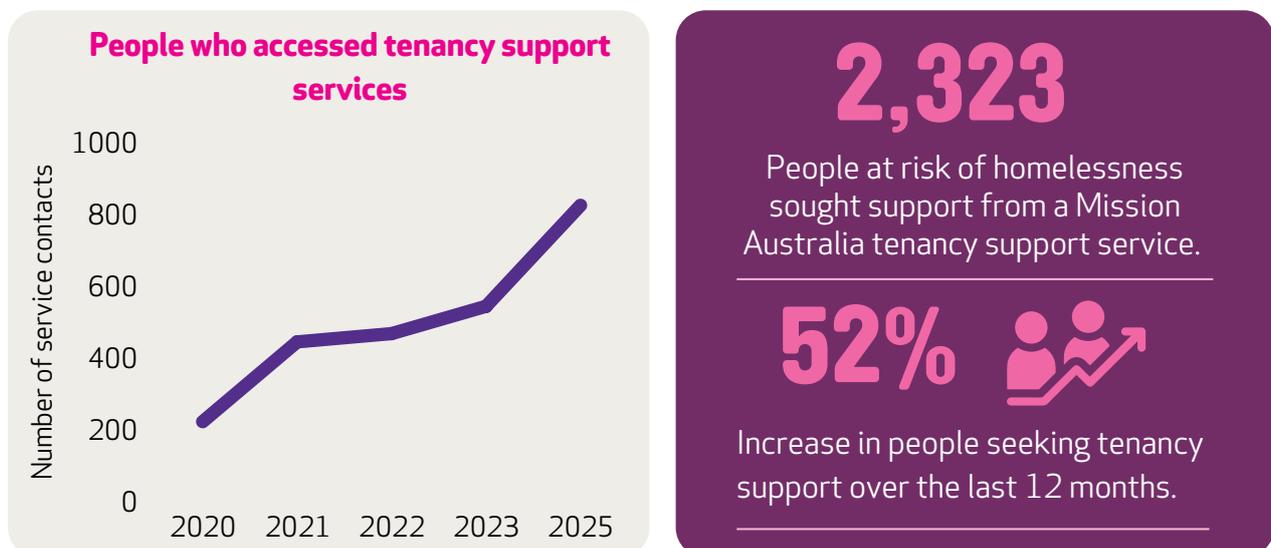
The demand for Mission Australia's tenancy support services is growing.

KEY INSIGHT

Demand for tenancy support services has grown year on year. Over the last 12 months, there has been a 52% rise in the number of people at risk of homelessness seeking help from a Mission Australia tenancy support service.

Since 2020, Mission Australia has provided support to 2,323 people who were at risk of homelessness through our tenancy support services. In line with our focus on prevention and early intervention, we have doubled the number of tenancy support services provided across Australia.

Over the last 12 months, when most services were operational, demand reached an all-time high, with a 52% increase in people seeking support to sustain their housing.



Poverty and housing affordability are key drivers of homelessness. Our data shows that most people who sought help from a tenancy support service were reliant on income support (90%), which is often insufficient to meet the costs of living and is a risk factor for poverty [1]. However, we are also seeing a significant rise in people with jobs seek help from tenancy support services; in 2024, almost one in seven people who accessed a service were employed and needed help to stay in their homes.

[3] Davidson, P., Bradbury, B., and Wong, M. (2023), Poverty in Australia 2023: Who is affected. Poverty and Inequality Partnership Report no.20. Australian Council of Social Service and UNSW Sydney.

KEY INSIGHT

Over the last 12 months, more people with jobs, young people and those experiencing domestic and family violence needed support to keep their homes or move to safe, secure and stable housing.

People seeking tenancy support services had a wide range of ages and cultural backgrounds. Many were navigating complex circumstances, including physical disabilities, mental health challenges, and family and domestic violence.

"Having somewhere to live and enough money is very important. Living in poverty, or not having money, creates pressures on me and my family. More pressure affects my ability to cope day to day. I feel like I never have enough money to get by, even to have food in the house is hard."

67% female

32% male

1% gender diverse



31% Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander



19% Culturally and Linguistically Diverse



21%

Mental health issues



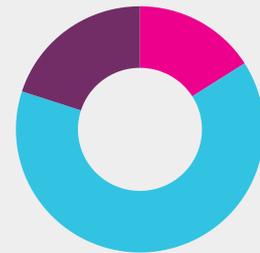
19%

Family and Domestic Violence

● <25 years

● 26-55 years

● 55+ years



Looking at trends comparing 2023 to 2024, the proportion of people seeking support with a job tripled, while young people and people escaping family and domestic violence also significantly increased. These findings highlight the deepening and wide-reaching impacts of the national housing crisis, with more people experiencing housing stress and needing help to keep their home or move to safe, secure and stable housing.



People with a job

200%

Increase in people with a job
5% increased to 15%



Young people

50%

Increase in young people
12% increased to 18%



Domestic and Family Violence

27%

Increase in people experiencing Family or Domestic Violence
15% increased to 19%

Mission Australia's tenancy support services were highly effective in sustaining at-risk tenancies.

KEY INSIGHT

Early intervention tenancy support works. While engaged with a Mission Australia tenancy support service, almost all people avoided homelessness, stayed living in their homes or moved to safe, secure and stable housing. When exiting a tenancy support service, people felt their housing situation was more stable and they were more satisfied with their standard of living and safety.

Over the last 5 years, most people (98%) who received tenancy support remained living in public, community or private housing when they exited the service [5].

People who received support told us they felt their housing situation was more stable and that the service had helped them to avoid homelessness, move to safer accommodation, or secure their existing tenancy. Others highlighted tangible enhancements to their living conditions - such as cleaning, decluttering or completing repairs - as well as gaining practical skills to help maintain their home and sustain their tenancy in the long term.

Two thirds of people who completed a matched Impact Measurement survey were more satisfied with their standard of living (68%) after leaving a service and half were within or above the Australian average range. This was the largest improvement across all seven personal wellbeing domains. Half of people were also more satisfied with their safety (53%) and two thirds were with or above the Australian average for personal safety when they exited a service.

"I have stable accommodation which allows me to feel safe. I have been able to reach goals that have previously been out of reach. I have been able to maintain my work life balance and have started the next chapter of this goal. I have a sense of personal identity and finally have hope for my future."

"I have moved to a new home address that is maintained, safe and has the amenities needed in a home including gas, power, plumbing and safety! Extremely important for my mental and physical wellbeing. Like day and night the changes have been greatly improved."

1,154

People who exited a Mission Australia tenancy support service

98%



People at risk of homelessness remained living in their home and/or moved to more secure housing

93%



People had their tenancy support needs met

2 in 3

People were more satisfied with their standard of living

[3] Comparative data: SHS Annual Report 2023-24. People at risk of homelessness at entry n=91,470 who received support from a homelessness services (not specifically tenancy support). Number of people who remained living in public, community or private housing n=83,499 (91%) excluding institutional setting and missing data.

Mission Australia's tenancy support services contributed to improved wellbeing.

KEY INSIGHT

Safe, secure and affordable homes are the foundation for wellbeing and opportunity. With support to stabilise their housing, people felt happier about their wellbeing and relationships, experienced better mental health, and were less stressed and more hopeful for the future.

Most people who completed a matched Impact Measurement Survey reported improvements in their overall wellbeing when they left a service (81%). The average personal wellbeing score increased significantly from 59.7 at entry to 70.2 at exit. Half of people were also more satisfied with their health (54%) and were within the Australian average for health when they exited the service.

Improvement in mental health was one of the most common themes when people were asked what had changed because of the service. Many people described how having safe and stable housing had improved their mental health, reduced stress, and gave them a sense of peace and hope for the future.



Strengthened relationships, such as reconnecting with family, increased stability and safety, access to basic resources, were reported as significant changes that improved individual and family wellbeing. Half of people who completed an Impact Measurement Survey were more satisfied with their relationship (50%) and almost 3 in 5 were within the Australian average range for satisfaction with relationships when they left the service.

"I have a place to call home and a place to feel safe and my mental health is doing so much better. I am changing in very healthy ways and is making me able to move forward with my life finally."

"The transfer has really helped my family. It has allowed my family to not live on top of each other with tensions being lowered. It has also allowed me to better manage the upkeep of the property."

A Wilcoxon signed-rank test showed a significant improvement in overall wellbeing at entry (Mdn=59.7) compared to exit (Mdn=70.2), $p < 0.01$, $r = 0.52$, indicating a large effect.

Wilcoxon signed-rank tests showed significant improvements in health entry (Mdn=6.0) compared to exit (Mdn=7.0), $p < 0.01$, $r = 0.60$, and relationships at entry (Mdn=7.0) compared to exit (Mdn=8.0), $p < 0.01$, $r = 0.44$, indicating medium to large effect.

Mission Australia's tenancy support services helped people to get better connected to community supports.

KEY INSIGHT

People valued the genuine and respectful support that was provided by Mission Australia. This trusted support helped people to connect to their community and other services to address risk factors to sustain housing.

People appreciated the practical and emotional support offered by the tenancy support services. Many people described that genuine and respectful support provided by their case worker was key to their engagement. Case workers supported them to identify their goals, advocated for their needs and connected them to other services when needed. With this support in place, people felt more confident to connect with their community and address other risk factors to sustain long term housing.

While engaged with a service, two thirds of people were connected to their community or other services to meet their needs (67%). A similar proportion were reported by staff to be better able to find services on their own when they left the service (68%).

Half of people who completed an Impact Measurement Survey were more satisfied with their community connections (51%) and three in five were within the Australian average range at exit. Almost half of people with cultural beliefs were also more satisfied with their connection to culture (46%).

"Feeling supported and letting go of my pride in order to accept help I needed because of [the] caseworkers ability to engage and build positive relationship. Other past experiences with agencies we have sought out and engaged with have broken trust...Very grateful for our sustaining tenancies case worker!"

"My basic living has improved, I am more confident, and staff are able to support me when I need help. It endless me to better integrate into society and live a good life on my own."



1 in 2

People were more satisfied with their community connections



Wilcoxon signed-rank tests showed significant improvements in community connections at entry (Mdn=6.0) compared to exit (Mdn=7.0), $p < 0.01$, $r = 0.46$, indicating medium to large effect.

With stable housing and trusted support, people felt more in control of their lives and were making progress towards their personal goals.

KEY INSIGHT

Through their involvement in a Mission Australia tenancy support service, people were more positive and hopeful about their future, had a greater sense of control over their lives and felt more independent. With this stability and security, people made progress towards their personal goals, including education and employment.

Through their engagement with tenancy support, three in five people were more satisfied with their future security (61%) and their achievement in life (60%) with similar proportions being within or above the Australian average for both domains at exit. In addition, seven out of 10 people felt more in control of their lives.

When asked what changes had occurred through their involvement with a service, many people expressed that they had gained more control of their lives and decisions for their future. This included self-reflection and discovery, increased motivation to move forward and independence. People set a range of personal goals, for example gaining a drivers licence, learning how to cook, connecting to support services, developing parenting skills, addressing safety concerns, budgeting, gaining financial assistance, attending medical appointments or self-care. Others had specific aspirations around education and employment.

"I have stable accommodation which allows me to feel safe. I have been able to reach goals that have previously been out of reach. I have been able to maintain my work life balance and have started the next chapter of this goal. I have a sense of personal identity and finally."

3 in 5

People were more satisfied with their future security

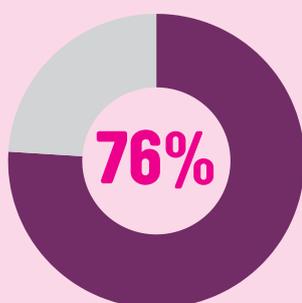


7 in 10

People felt more in control of their lives

When they left the service, three quarters of people had made progress towards their personal goals (76%), including people who had education (71%) and employment goals (74%).

People who made progress towards their personal goals



"I have connected to my culture more and am making progress with my job, finding more opportunities to use my skills I want to be a part of my culture and I now have a job that helps me to do that."

"Being able to talk to the Chaplain or case manager to keep trying with university and finding work. It means I am pursuing completing my degree, which will increase future job opportunities."

Wilcoxon signed-rank tests showed significant improvements future security at entry (Mdn=6.0) compared to exit (Mdn=8.0), $p < 0.01$, $r = 0.42$, achievement in life at entry (Mdn=6.0) compared to exit (Mdn=7.0), $p < 0.01$, $r = 0.45$, and control at entry (Mdn=5.0) compared to exit (Mdn=7.0), $p < 0.01$, $r = 0.44$, indicating a medium to large effect.

Sample Note: Number of people who had education goals N=41 and employment goals N=50 recorded.

Section 4. What more needs to be done?

Our evidence shows that early intervention tenancy support services are effective in supporting people to remain living in their homes and stop homelessness before it begins. With a stable home and the right support, people felt happier about their living conditions, experienced better mental health and relationships, and had a greater sense of control over their lives.

With more people across Australia facing housing instability and in danger of losing their homes, the case for scaling prevention and early intervention responses has never been stronger. Preventing homelessness from occurring in the first place is better than fixing it later. If we are to end homelessness across Australia, we must transition to a future state focused on prevention and early intervention.

In light of this, we strongly urge these three key recommendations:

1. The Federal Government commit to a **\$500 million Homelessness Prevention Transformation Fund**, delivering targeted prevention programs and policy reform for groups of people with elevated or immediate risk of homelessness.
2. All governments commit to a **significant boost to investment in tailored, person-centred tenancy support services** that are available for all households that are at risk of homelessness. The amount of funding should be commensurate with the need to fill gaps in coverage, enhance capacity as new social housing is delivered through government initiatives, support workforce growth, and scale tenancy support services.
3. All governments commit to **sufficient support for at-risk families and young people**, through evidence-based early intervention support programs and pathways, to ensure that people are connected to the right supports at the right time to address underlying risk factors which can contribute to housing instability and homelessness.



Key recommendations

To make homelessness in Australia rare, brief and non-recurring, these three commendations must be complemented by further actions within the following policy areas.

1. ENSHRINE HOUSING AS A HUMAN RIGHT



Legislate the right to housing and duty to assist people who are homeless and at-risk.

All governments should commit to:

- Consult on, draft and pass nationally consistent legislation in States and Territories on a right to housing with an associated duty to assist provision. At a minimum it should require government and government-funded services to make enquiries about people's housing situation, make appropriate referrals, and provide timely support to prevent homelessness or make it rare.

2. PERMANENT HOUSING



For as long as people want or need it with support as required

All governments should commit to:

- Significantly boost the number of social and affordable homes to 10% of all housing stock to meet the need in the community.
- Prioritise youth-specific housing and support in recognition of their unique life stage and increased need. At a minimum:
 - Fund 15,000 youth tenancies across Australia each year for homeless young people.
 - Construct ten 40-unit Youth Foyers to support young people's housing and education, training or employment needs.

3. UNIVERSAL PREVENTION



Universal homelessness prevention measures, to address societal drivers of homelessness

The Federal Government should commit to:

- Raise the rate of Jobseeker and other income support payments to at least \$82 a day.
- Increase financial payments through Commonwealth Rent Assistance and ensure that it remains an effective payment for those struggling to pay rent.
- Legislate an end to child poverty and make children a priority in the Measuring What Matters national wellbeing framework to drive community action.

4. TARGETED PREVENTION



Targeted support for certain groups of people with elevated risk of homelessness

The Federal Government should commit to:

- A \$500 million Homelessness Prevention Transformation Fund, delivering targeted prevention programs and policy reform for groups of people with elevated or immediate risk of homelessness.

All governments should commit to:

- Sufficient support for at-risk families, through evidence-based early intervention support programs and pathways.
- Adopt a policy of no exits from government institutions into homelessness and allocate resourcing to achieve it.
- Strategies and resources to keep at-risk young people engaged in education such as by investing in models such as the Community of Schools and Services model.

Key recommendations (Cont.)

5. IMMEDIATE PREVENTION



Responses that prevent entry to housing crisis / homelessness

All governments should commit to:

- A significant boost investment in tailored, person-centred tenancy support services that are available for all households that are at risk of homelessness.
- Prioritise the safety and stability of children, young people and families by boosting funding to relevant service systems with responsibility for child protection, out-of-home care and specialised domestic and family violence services.

6. CRISIS RESPONSE



Responses for people experiencing homelessness to ensure it is brief and non-recurring

All governments should commit to:

- Ensure high-quality crisis support and accommodation responses for people that are adequately-funded, person-centred, and located according to demand.



Together, we're building hope and possibility for all

Contact us

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