



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Communities**
Housing

**GOVERNMENT REGIONAL OFFICERS'
HOUSING (GROH)**

Security Policy

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GROH Security Policy

Purpose

The GROH Security Policy (the Policy) stipulates the types of security items the Department of Communities (Communities) supplies to Government Regional Officers' Housing (GROH) dwellings and the conditions under which extra security items may be supplied to ensure that suitably secured dwellings are provided.

Scope

This Policy applies to all owned and leased dwellings, including those that are occupied, vacant, allocated and unallocated to GROH clients. It is for use by Communities' employees, GROH clients, GROH tenants and the general public.

Definitions

Additional security item means the items over and above those required under Section 45 of the *Residential Tenancies Act 1987*, prescribed in section 12B of the *Residential Tenancies Regulations 1989*.

Client Agency means either:

- an Employing Agency, which is a Department under the administration of a Minister of the Crown in the Government of the State, or any Crown instrumentality, hospital, board, body corporate or other body of whatever description, proclaimed as a Department under s.7 of the *Government Employees' Housing Act 1964* (GEH Act); or
- a Responsible Agency, which is the agency responsible for arranging the salary and other entitlements (including accommodation) of the tenant when this tenant is not an employee of an Agency.

Communities means the Department of Communities.

Compliance means the security items supplied meet the requirements of the GEH Act, the *Residential Tenancies Act 1987*, *Residential Tenancies Regulations 1989* and all other relevant legislation.

Enhanced security item means an item other than those listed in section 12B of the *Residential Tenancies Regulations 1989* or provided to newly constructed or refurbished GROH dwellings, that may be provided to address security concerns in a particular GROH dwelling.

Family violence means violence a or threat of violence by a person towards a family member of this person, or any other behavior by the person that coerces or controls the family member or causes them to be fearful (*Restraining Orders Act 1997 WA*, section 5A).

GROH means the Government Regional Officers' Housing program administered by the Department of Communities.

GROH client means either:

- a client agency; or
- any other client serviced by GROH (**other GROH client**).

GROH dwelling means a house as defined in section 5 of the GEH Act, which is owned, leased or constructed by Housing and allocated for use by GROH.

GROH tenant means a person residing in a GROH dwelling under the terms of a GROH tenancy agreement.

Housing means the Housing Authority operating within the Department of Communities.

Leased dwelling means a GROH dwelling that is leased from the private rental market by Communities.

Location means the area in which there are perceived or actual security threats, including but not limited to particular dwellings, streets, suburbs, communities and/or towns.

Officer means an employee of the Department of Communities - Housing Division.

Other GROH client includes other worker housing programs, e.g. Non-Government Organisations, non-proclaimed state government Agencies, other housing programs or private tenants.

Owned dwelling means a GROH dwelling that is owned by Communities.

RTA (1987) Means Residential Tenancies Act 1987.

RTR (1989) means Residential Tenancies Regulations 1989.

Security item means an item supplied by Housing to ensure that a GROH dwelling is reasonably secure as per the *Residential Tenancies Regulations 1989* 12(B).

Serviced unit means any unit of accommodation that is part of a multiple-dwelling development and that may share common water, electricity and/or gas meters and facilities such as driveways, carports, washing lines and gardens.

Policy Statements

1. Compliance

- 1.1. To ensure GROH dwellings have a suitable level of security, Communities will:
 - a) comply with the minimum security provisions set out in *12B of the Residential Tenancies Regulations 1989*
 - b) maintain the premises in a reasonable state of repair having regard to its age and character and must conduct any repairs within a reasonable period after the need for the repair arises
 - c) comply with all laws affecting GROH dwellings including building, health and safety; and
 - d) regularly inspect and maintain security features and fittings.

2. Additional security items

- 2.1. New Constructions: Communities will supply the following items for newly constructed GROH owned dwellings:
 - a) Solid core doors for hinged entry doors
 - b) Security screen door to each external entry door.
 - c) Lockable sliding doors and windows.
 - d) Security screens to all opening windows to ground floor rooms.
 - e) Dead locks to external doors.
 - f) Sensor lights to front and rear of dwelling.
 - g) Locks to meter boxes.
- 2.2. Client Agencies may, on behalf of GROH tenants, request Communities to install security items listed in Section 2.1 to existing GROH dwellings.
- 2.3. Communities may supply these items subject to funds being available in the GROH Maintenance and Improvements budgets.
- 2.4. Leased dwellings
 - 2.4.1. Communities will seek to ensure that leased dwellings have the security items supplied to new constructions or upgrades (Section 2.1).
 - 2.4.2. For existing allocations of leased GROH dwellings or prospective allocations of leased GROH dwellings that do not have these items, Communities will request that the dwelling owner install them. This will take place:
 - before any new leases are taken out; and
 - at the rent reviews or lease renewals for existing leased dwellings.

2.4.3. If the owner does not agree to install security items, a Client Agency may retain an existing allocation or accept a new allocation of a leased dwelling that does not have all security items listed in Section 2.1.

3. Enhanced security items

- 3.1. Client Agencies may, on behalf of GROH tenants, request enhanced security items for a GROH dwelling or dwellings in locations in which they consider there is a significant security risk.
- 3.2. Enhanced security items may include some or all of the following:
 - a) Installation of stainless steel door guards on all entry doors.
 - b) Installation of solid security panel moulds to existing security screens.
 - c) Lockable drop bolts to all opening windows.
 - d) Installation of security sensor lights.
 - e) Security alarms.
 - f) Security cameras.
- 3.3. Communities will conduct a program of security assessments of GROH dwellings in locations deemed to have a high security risk.
- 3.4. Communities may require Police evidence in support of the request.
- 3.5. Examples of circumstances that Communities consider relevant to the request are:
 - a) Accessible flats (e.g. ground floor).
 - b) Dwellings against rights of way.
 - c) GROH tenants who have health and/or safety concerns.
 - d) GROH tenants in towns or suburbs where continual break-ins are a problem.
- 3.6. Communities will assess requests for enhanced security items case by case.
- 3.7. Communities will consult with Client Agencies to determine the most appropriate security measures.
- 3.8. For locations in which there are ongoing security issues that affect GROH dwellings, Communities may initiate an inter-agency approach to identify and most effectively resolve these issues.
- 3.9. Enhanced security items supplied by Communities will be subject to funds being available in the GROH Maintenance and Improvements budgets.
- 3.10. Client Agencies may be required to fund the installation and maintenance of some or all of the enhanced security items or measures selected.

4. GROH tenants' responsibilities

4.1. GROH tenants are responsible for:

- a) using all security items supplied with the GROH dwelling in the manner intended; and
- b) informing Communities as soon as practicable when any security item in a GROH dwelling requires replacement or maintenance.

4.2. GROH tenants whose personal safety in their GROH dwelling is threatened must, in the first instance, contact the Police and/or Emergency Services.

5. Family violence

5.1. If the tenant or their dependent has been, is or reasonably expects to be the victim of family violence, the tenant is entitled to change the locks or install additional locks to the GROH dwelling without the permission of Communities or the property owner or manager.

5.2. The tenant must contact Communities as soon as possible and at least within seven days to arrange for a copy of the keys to the new locks to be supplied to Communities or the property owner or manager as soon as practicable.

5.3. If the tenant or their dependent has been, is or reasonably expects to be the victim of family violence, the tenant is entitled to alter or add to the following security items of the GROH dwelling:

- a) security alarms and cameras;
- b) locks, screens and shutters on windows;
- c) security screens on doors;
- d) exterior lights; and
- e) locks on gates.

The tenant may also prune shrubs or trees to improve visibility around the premises.

5.4. A tenant who makes the alterations or additions in section 5.3 must:

- a) pay for the alterations or additions;
- b) notify Communities in writing of their intention to alter or add to the security items;
- c) ensure the alterations or additions have regard to the age and character of the dwelling and any applicable strata company by-laws;

- d) ensure the alterations or additions are undertaken by a qualified tradesperson and provide a copy of the tradesperson's invoice to Communities within 14 days of the works being completed; and
- e) restore the dwelling to its original condition at the end of the tenancy agreement, if Communities or the property owner or manager requires this.

Document History

VERSION	DATE	REASON	POLICY AUTHORS	OFFICER'S TITLE	DATE LOADED ON INTERNET
1.1	September 2001	Policy reformatted	Andrew Smith	Policy and Projects Officer	N/A
1.2	May 2002	Policy reformatted to reflect changes with Department of Housing and Works	Lisbet Schäfers	Projects and Policy Officer	
1.3	October 2002	Policy review	Lisbet Schäfers	Projects and Policy Officer	
1.4	August 2006	The original version of the document for the purposes of amendments and updates is held by GROH and is stored on the Department of Housing and Works Corporate Data System in the Business Services Section of GROH under CURRENT POLICIES.	Lisbet Schäfers	Projects and Policy Officer	N/A
1.5	October 2009	Policy reformatted	Danielle Faulkner	Coordinator Policy and Projects	N/A
1.6	June 2019	Policy revised to reflect changes to the Department of Communities, to incorporate feedback from client agency consultations and to reflect changes to RTA 1987 relating to family violence.	Brett Hockley	Senior Policy and Practice Officer	June 2019

Authorisation

VERSION	AUTHORISED BY	APPROVAL DATE	EFFECTIVE DATE	SECTIONS MODIFIED (IF APPLICABLE)
2.0	Executive Director Contracting	June 2019	June 2019	

Summary Information

Responsible Officer	Executive Director Contracting
Contact Officer	Senior Policy and Practice Officer, Contracting
Superseded Documents	N/A
Review	June 2022
File Number	19/D761478
Document Control	This document is published on the Communities website, www.housing.wa.gov.au , under the 'Housing', 'GROH Agencies' section of the 'Investors & Partners' menu.
Associated Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Government Employees' Housing Act 1964</i>• <i>Residential Tenancies Act 1987</i>• <i>Residential Tenancies Regulations 1989</i>• <i>Restraining Orders Act 1997 WA</i>• Housing Authority Maintenance Policy Manual