

# Baptcare Affordable Housing Policy

## Document Information

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# Overview

## Purpose

The purpose of Baptcare Affordable Housing's (BAH) Maintenance and Repairs Policy is to ensure that all properties are maintained to a high standard that is fit for the needs of renters and compliant with all legislative and regulatory requirements. BAH also has a duty to protect the value of its assets.

## Who Does It Apply To?

This policy applies to all rental properties owned and/or managed by BAH. It covers all maintenance repairs undertaken by BAH and/or its contractors involving responsive maintenance, cyclical or planned maintenance and vacated maintenance.

## Definitions

- a) Repair – The act of restoring something damaged, faulty, or worn, to a good condition; the completed work where repairs have been made.
- b) Maintenance – The maintenance of a building is the process of keeping it in good condition by regularly checking it and repairing it when necessary. Maintenance may be undertaken on a planned basis (i.e. in anticipation of deterioration that requires repair), or responsive basis (in direct response to a breakage or problem that requires fixing).

# Policy

## Overview

This policy defines the arrangements for organising and undertaking maintenance and repairs to BAH houses.

### Principles

BAH is committed to ensuring that its properties contribute to the health and well-being of renters. To achieve this, BAH will

- Ensure all properties meet the required legislative minimum standards
- Undertake all maintenance within appropriate timelines and to a high quality
- Inform all renters at the commencement of their tenancy of maintenance expectations, including information on urgent and non-urgent works
- Inform renters of their rights and responsibilities, including the complaints process and the duty to inform BAH of damage or breakdown of facilities
- Monitor maintenance and repairs services.

BAH will deliver high quality maintenance and repairs through the following:

- The regular updating of the asset register containing individual property records covering maintenance undertaken, estimated planned maintenance and costs, and size, location and property type
- The development of annual budgets for maintenance and repairs
- Undertaking regular property inspections to identify any additional maintenance requirements or damage.

### Responsive Maintenance

Responsive maintenance covers all maintenance tasks and repairs that are not part of a regular maintenance schedule. These tasks are usually initiated by renters but can also be initiated by tenancy and property managers.

The Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (RTA) defines some responsive maintenance as 'urgent repairs' to be carried out immediately. A list of urgent repairs is below. If a repair or maintenance issue is not on this list, it is a non-urgent repair.

- burst water service
- blocked or broken toilet system
- serious roof leak
- gas leak
- dangerous electrical fault
- flooding or serious flood damage
- serious storm or fire damage
- an essential service or appliance for hot water, water, cooking, heating, or laundering is not working
- the gas, electricity or water supply is not working
- a cooling appliance or service provided by the rental provider is not working
- the property does not meet minimum standards
- a safety-related device, such as a smoke alarm or pool fence, is not working
- an appliance, fitting or fixture that is not working and causes a lot of water to be wasted

- any fault or damage in the property that makes it unsafe or insecure, including pests, mould or damp caused by or related to the building structure
- a serious problem with a lift or staircase.

Urgent repairs will be undertaken as soon as possible, giving consideration to any risk to health and safety, habitability of the premises and potential for damage to property. At the commencement of a tenancy all renters will be provided with an after-hours phone number for urgent repairs that are required outside of business hours.

Non-urgent repairs will be undertaken as soon as practicable within business hours, giving consideration to any risk to health and safety, as well as inconvenience to the renter. BAH will provide renters with contact details for non-urgent maintenance and repairs.

In the event that damage requiring urgent repairs has been caused intentionally or negligently by the renter, BAH will arrange for repairs as soon as possible and seek to recover costs in line with the BAH Charging Renters for Damages Policy.

Where damage has been caused intentionally or negligently by the renter requiring non-urgent repairs, a Breach of Duty Notice or a Repair Notice may be issued. The notice may require the renter to repair the damage at their expense, or to pay the reasonable costs of repairing the damage. Refer to the BAH Renter Charge for Damages Policy for further detail.

### **Planned Maintenance**

Planned maintenance refers to non-urgent work that is undertaken to improve the property or to compensate for fair wear and tear. The work is typically larger scale and completed according to a maintenance schedule.

Planned maintenance is undertaken in line with BAH's Asset Management Strategy and involves such tasks as:

- Replacement of floor coverings
- Replacement or upgrading of appliances such as stoves, water heaters and heaters
- Upgrading of kitchens and bathrooms
- Painting walls, ceilings and doors
- Replacement of fences

Planned maintenance may also encompass aspects of regulatory compliance, such as periodic gas and electrical safety checks.

### **Property Inspections and Condition Reports**

BAH conducts inspections of properties at least once every 12 months. This enables BAH to respond to any property condition changes and to make appropriate changes to the Planned Works Schedule. Renters are given notice of inspections in line with the requirements of the RTA. Refer to the BAH Property Inspections Policy for further detail.

A property condition report is provided to all renters at the commencement of their tenancy in line with the requirements of the RTA. A copy of the condition report should be reviewed, signed and returned by the renter within 5 business days. The condition report is a formal record of the condition of the property at the commencement of the tenancy. It can assist to identify any maintenance requirements and may form the basis for an assessment of damage caused by a renter. Refer to the BAH Renter Charges for Damages Policy for further detail.

## Vacated Maintenance

Vacated maintenance is treated as a high priority by BAH because this enables new renters to quickly move in to a property maintained to a high standard.

When a renter indicates they are vacating a property, an inspection of the property will be arranged no more than 14 days before the vacated date provided in order to assess and plan for any necessary maintenance.

A condition report will be completed by BAH within 10 days after the end of a tenancy in the presence of the renter. Where there is evidence of damage caused by the renter, their family or their visitors then BAH will follow the process outlined in the BAH Renter Charges for Damages Policy.

## Rights and Responsibilities

Renters' rights and responsibilities are protected under the Residential Tenancies Act and other Acts of parliament.

It is important for renters to know and understand their rights and that along with rights come responsibilities. At the beginning of the rental renters are given a series of documents including a "Rights and Responsibilities" booklet. This booklet describes both the renter's and the rental provider's rights and responsibilities. If you have misplaced this then please ask a worker for a replacement copy.

Information and support can also be obtained through Consumer Affairs Victoria and the Tenants Union of Victoria.

### Consumer Affairs Victoria

1300 55 81 81

[www.consumer.vic.gov.au/](http://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/)

### Tenants Union of Victoria

1800 068860

[tenantsvic.org.au](http://tenantsvic.org.au)

## Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years or earlier if the legal, regulatory and contractual environment requires.

## Related Documents

BAH Charging Renters for Damages Policy  
BAH Ending Rental Agreements Policy  
BAH Property Inspections Policy  
BAH Strategic Asset Management Plan  
Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic)  
Residential Tenancies Regulations 2021 (Vic)  
Consumer Affairs Victoria Director's Guidelines 'Urgent repairs'  
Consumer Affairs Victoria Director's Guidelines 'Maintenance'  
Housing Act 1983  
Victorian Housing Registrar Performance Standards

## Revisions and History

<b>Next Review Date:</b>	Month Year	
<b>Revision History</b>	<b>Section</b>	<b>Commencing</b>
Policy no. 9.3, v.1-3 v.4	Updates to Residential Tenancies Act	1/8/2019 (Approved by ELT Date)

This policy will be available on the BAH website: [www.baptcare.org.au/services/housing/affordable-housing](http://www.baptcare.org.au/services/housing/affordable-housing)

## Document Control

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