



Regional Appeals Committee

Expression of Interest - Application Kit



Dear Applicant

Thank you for your interest in the advertised position for the Regional Appeals Committee (RAC).

Please find enclosed a job information package containing:

- Invitation for expressions of interest
- Statement of duties for committee members
- Selection Criteria
- Terms of Reference
- Current sitting fees
- Closing date and Link to Department of Housing Policies

Applications close **3:00pm, 29 April, 2013**. Only those applicants who address the selection criteria will be considered for appointment.

Appeal sittings are conducted at the Department of Housing's Regional Offices and you will be required to serve in the regional office which is nearest to your usual place of residence.

Offers of appointment will be subject to applicants providing National Police Clearance and appropriate evidence of Australian Residency/Citizenship, and should be submitted at the same time as your application.

Appointments will commence from 1 July, 2013.

Applications should preferably be lodged by e-mail; however, they will be accepted by post. Only copies, not original documents, are to be included with postal applications. Applications are to be forwarded to:

By E-mail: appealsfeedback@housing.wa.gov.au

By post: Relationships and Agreements (Appeals Recruitment)
Level 5, Service Delivery Directorate
Department of Housing
99 Plain Street
EAST PERTH WA 6004

Other application enquiries can be made by phoning the Relationships and Agreements officer (Appeals Recruitment), on 9222 4546.

Yours sincerely



STEVE ALTHAM
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
SERVICE DELIVERY
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING
2nd April, 2013

INVITATION FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST TO BECOME A MEMBER OF THE REGIONAL APPEALS COMMITTEE

Background

The current Housing Appeals Mechanism was established in 1993 and provides an easy method for customers to appeal adverse decisions made by the Department of Housing relating to their tenancy or application for housing assistance.

The Regional Appeals Committee consists of a senior regional officer of the Department of Housing and two independent committee members who sit to consider and determine if adverse decisions comply with the Department's public housing policies.

Members of the Committee are appointed by the Regional Manager.

To help ensure continuity in the operation of the Committee, the Department seeks to appoint a pool of members for a one year term with an option for an additional year. Members will be eligible to reapply for re-appointment to the Committee at the end of their initial term.

It is considered important that membership of the Committee should be representative of the community and Indigenous people and people from culturally diverse backgrounds are encouraged to apply.

Relevant training in the Housing Appeals Mechanism, the Department's housing policies, the principles of good decision-making practice and application of equal opportunity principles, will be provided to appointed members. Refresher courses and client awareness training will also be provided from time to time.

Attendance at hearings and training sessions will be remunerated according to current rates for members of government committees.

Registering Expressions of Interest

Terms of Reference for the Committee, duty statements and selection criteria for appointment to the Committee are attached.

When registering your interest in becoming a Committee member, please send a covering letter explaining why you would like to serve on the Committee and how your experience and skills would help you in making fair and equitable decisions. You also need to attach a resume outlining your qualifications and experience together with a statement, of no more than four pages, addressing the selection criteria for the position on the Committee.

STATEMENT OF DUTIES FOR MEMBERS OF THE REGIONAL APPEALS COMMITTEE

1. To attend Committee hearings of appeals against adverse decisions made by the Department of Housing relating to customer tenancies or applications for housing assistance.
2. To act as chairperson and to scribe at Regional Appeal Committee meetings
3. To assess details of appeals, consider any new information provided by the client and determine if decisions made by Regional offices are in line with the Department's housing policies and are fair given the client's circumstances.
4. Reach an agreed decision with each committee member.
5. Attend training courses and information sessions as required.

SELECTION CRITERIA FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE REGIONAL APPEALS COMMITTEE

Applicants for appointment to the pool of Committee Members will need to provide a covering letter and current resume demonstrating their experience in the following areas:

1. Active member of your community;
2. Experience in community work, social work, tenancy advocacy, administrative appeals or other relevant field;
3. Ability to communicate with a range of clients and Department officers, including listening to and empathising with people from diverse backgrounds, including Aboriginal people and recent migrants;
4. Ability to analyse client information and interpret Department policy;
5. Ability to discuss and reach fair and appropriate decisions in a group environment;
6. An understanding of the social and economic issues affecting public housing, public housing tenants and applicants for housing assistance; and

Please specify the location of the regional appeals committee you wish to serve; this will usually be in the office nearest to where you reside.

Regional Office Locations are listed as follows:

REGION	LOCATION	PHONE
North East Metropolitan	Mirrabooka	08 9345 9655
South Metropolitan	Fremantle	08 9432 5300
South East Metropolitan	Cannington	08 9350 3244
Great Southern	Albany	08 9845 7144
South West	Bunbury	08 9792 2111
Goldfields	Kalgoorlie	08 9093 5200
Wheatbelt	Northam	08 9690 1900
Midwest Gascoyne	Geraldton	08 9923 4444
Pilbara	South Hedland	08 9160 2800
Kimberley	Broome	08 9158 3600
Halls Creek	Broome	08 9168 9300

REGIONAL APPEALS COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Preamble

The Regional Appeals Committee (the 'Committee') recognises that the Department of Housing (the 'Department') is a service delivery based organisation providing housing assistance to those Western Australians in greatest housing need. The Department recognises that customer service is a priority but must continually balance individual client rights with its responsibilities to its overall client base.

Purpose

The Regional Appeals Committee exists to enhance the quality of service provided to the Department's clients. This is achieved by a transparent, effective and fair administrative review of decisions through an appeal hearing Committee which has independent representation from the community. The Committee is intended to reinforce the Department's responsibility to apply policy in a fair and equitable manner.

Principles

The Committee operates under the following principles:

- Clients have a right to request a review of how decisions are made by the Department and to be assisted in their access to the appeals process.
- Department staff are accountable for their actions and decisions.
- Application of independent decision-making based on the principles of procedural fairness.
- Cases are reviewed to ensure the correct policy and procedures have been applied, based on the client's individual circumstances.

Terms of Reference

The Committee will consider appeals by clients of the Department under the Housing Appeals Mechanism, except for appeals involving the following matters:

- Bond, rental and water consumption debts, loan arrears
- Decisions where legal action by the Department of Housing has proceeded to a Notice of Termination.
- Decisions that are being, or have been, considered by the Minister or the State Ombudsman.

In making its decision, the Committee will determine whether:

- The Department policy has been applied correctly;
- The Department gave comprehensive consideration to the client's situation;
- Any new information provided by the client is relevant to the original decision made by the Department;
- Any decision based on the Department's discretionary policy has been exercised fairly with regard to the facts; and
- The decision under review was appropriate based on the principles of procedural fairness.

Composition of the Committee

A Regional Appeals Committee will consist of a senior Department of Housing officer and two Committee members from the community selected from the Regional offices' pool of members on a rotational basis, dependant on availability.

TERMS OF REFERENCE (continued)

Selection Process

Appointment of new members will be made by the relevant Department of Housing Regional Manager. A call for applications will be advertised in appropriate media for community representatives.

As far as possible, the pool of Committee members is to reflect the diversity of the Western Australian community, including representation from the Indigenous and migrant communities.

Term of Appointment

Members will be appointed for a one year term with an option for the Department to extend the appointment for an additional year. Members finishing their term may reapply for reappointment.

Meeting of the Committee

A meeting of the Committee to consider appeals will consist of a senior officer from the Department of Housing and two Committee members from the community and will be held in a relevant regional office of the Department.

The frequency of Regional Appeals Committee hearings will depend on the volume and urgency of appeals received by each Regional Office. They are usually held over a morning at the local Department of Housing office.

In the event of the Committee needing additional information to form a decision on an appeal then the appeal hearing will be reconvened at a later date.

Confidentiality of Information

Committee members must treat all information concerning a client as strictly confidential and not release any information without the written consent of the client.

Police Clearance and Citizenship

Committee members will be required to supply a national police clearance and appropriate evidence of Australian Residency/Citizenship with their application for a position on the Regional Appeals Committee.

Conflict of Interest

Where Committee members have any knowledge or previous experience with a client, the Committee member must declare a conflict of interest and abstain from involvement in the decision made by the Committee.

Reimbursement of Members

Sitting fees paid to Committee members are set by the Department of Housing.

Training

Appropriate training to meet the needs of members will be facilitated by the Department.

CURRENT SITTING FEES FOR THE REGIONAL APPEALS COMMITTEE

Community Members:

Half day \$170

Full day \$250

CLOSING DATE:

Applications must be received by:

3:00pm, 29th APRIL 2013.

By E-mail: appealsfeedback@housing.wa.gov.au

By post: Relationships and Agreements (Appeals Recruitment)
Level 5, Service Delivery Directorate,
Department of Housing
99 Plain Street
EAST PERTH WA 6004

Application Checklist – remember to include the following:

- Covering letter
- Selection criteria submission
- Resume
- No original documents - only copies
- Name of the region you wish to serve in
- National Police Check evidence
- Citizenship evidence (if applicable)
- Contact phone numbers

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE APPLICATIONS ARE SUBMITTED?

After the closing date, applications will be collated centrally and then sent to the region you have nominated to serve.

Each region will have its own selection panel, who may contact you for interview appointments or other information related to your application.

After the application closing date, all inquiries relating to the position should be directed to the administration officer in the regional office you have nominated to serve.

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING POLICIES

Department of Housing's rental housing policies are available on the [website](#):

<http://www.housing.wa.gov.au/aboutus/strategyandpolicy/PolicyDocumentation/Pages/default.aspx>