

THE HAVEN FOUNDATION

ALTERATIONS AND DISABILITY MODIFICATIONS POLICY

Purpose

This policy describes the processes for dealing with alterations and disability modifications to a Haven Foundation (HF) property.

Scope

This policy applies to all residents who live in HF properties.

The policy covers the following:

- Alterations
- Applying for an alteration
- Disability modifications
- Applying for a modification
- Complaints and appeals

Alterations

An alteration occurs where a resident changes, removes, replaces, or makes an addition to an existing policy.

Examples of alterations include the following:

- Putting picture hooks in a wall
- Installing a telephone line
- Painting – internal only
- Remodelling rooms
- Floor and wall tiles
- Carpets.

If approval for alterations is granted, the resident will be responsible for any remedial works caused by negligence or poor workmanship.

Applying for an Alteration

Before a resident can make a change to a property, they must obtain written permission from the HF.

To ensure that an accurate assessment can be made of the application, residents should provide as much information as possible about the proposed works and details of any contractors involved in undertaking these works.

For all alterations, residents must apply in writing to the HF for permission. HF may need to inspect the property as part of the application assessment.

All alteration applications will be reviewed within 21 days of the receipt of the applications.

When assessing an application, HF will consider the following factors:

- Impact on the structural integrity of the building
- Impact on neighbours
- Australian standards, legal requirements and Local Council regulations
- If the alteration increases the maintenance liability for the HF
- If the alteration is able to be rectified, repaired or removed at the end of the tenancy
- Impact on the entry and exit point to the dwelling
- If the alteration is consistent with the nature of the property
- Whether the resident intends to use licensed qualified contractors to manage the work
- Rent or non-rent arrears. In general, HF will not approve alterations for residents with arrears to ensure that the focus on sustaining the tenancy is first addressed
- Any applicable standards imposed by the HF.

Residents will be informed in writing about the outcome of their application. This may include any conditions attached to an approval. If the resident has supplied all the relevant details, HF will endeavour to make a decision within 21 days. If there is a delay, the HF will inform the applicant about the expected timeframe and the reason for any delay. Where an application is refused, the tenant may submit a revised proposal.

Once the application is approved by the HF, the resident:

- Is expected to pay the full costs for any alterations
- Is responsible for repairing and maintaining any alterations
- Must pay for all remedial works caused by negligence, poor workmanship or failure to complete an alteration in full. This includes the cost of rectifying and damage caused by any alteration
- Is responsible for repairing any damage the alteration may cause
- Must, if requested by the HF, remove an alteration at their own expense and restore the property to its original condition at the end of the tenancy

All approved applications will be subject to the following conditions:

- That all alterations conform to relevant Australian Standards, legal requirements and Local Council regulations
- That the resident is responsible for obtaining any further approvals, such as Council approval
- That a Certificate of Compliance is supplied for all electrical and gas installations
- All works are completed by licensed contractors
- That the tenant agrees to maintain the alteration during the tenancy
- The work is started within 8 weeks and completed within 3 months of consent being issued. The resident will need to negotiate with HF if these timeframes are not achievable. If the agreed timeframes are not met, a resident may be required to complete a new application
- HF is informed when the work is finished. For major alterations, the resident must allow the HF access within 4 weeks of the works being completed for inspection purposes

- If an inspection identifies that the alteration does not meet HF standards, the resident will be required to carry out further work within a specified timescale to meet the necessary standards. Failing this, the resident will have to reinstate the property to its original condition. The resident will be responsible for all costs associated with this work.

THF acknowledges the policy work undertaken by Bridge Housing in developing this policy.