



This fact sheet is for residents whose tenancy was previously managed by Wentworth Community Housing. For more information, please visit our new website: linkwentworth.org.au

Link Wentworth has a responsibility to ensure community housing tenants are paying an affordable amount of rent. The base rent for all Link Wentworth properties is the market rent. Link Wentworth regularly reviews the base rents of our properties to match the rents of the private rental market. These market rent reviews are done annually.

Why the review?

Just as market rents in the private rental market increase and decrease over time, Link Wentworth must review the rents of our properties to ensure they are up-to-date with movements in the private rental market. This is important because Link Wentworth charges market rent for all of our properties, then offers a rent subsidy to tenants who are eligible. Approximately 85% of Link Wentworth tenants currently receive a rent subsidy.

How does the review affect the amount of rent you pay?

Link Wentworth will write to every tenant who has had a change in their market rent to inform them of what their new market rent will be and if this affects the rent they pay.

If you are:

1. **Receiving a Rent Subsidy** There will be no increase in the amount of rent you pay, unless your market rent decreases to the point where it is less than your current rental subsidy. If this happens, you will pay the market rent, which is the lesser amount.
2. **Paying Market Rent** You will need to pay the new market rent, unless you become eligible for a rent subsidy. You can check with Link Wentworth staff to check if you are eligible for a rent subsidy.

When will this happen?

The letter you will receive from Link Wentworth will tell you when you need to start paying the new market rent if applicable.

Do you need to update your payment details if there is a change in your rent paid?

Yes, if you pay your rent by deposit or BPAY you will need to increase your payments to the new market rent amount. If you pay your rent by Centrepay Deduction, you will need to contact Centrelink and have your deduction increased to the new market rent.

How does Link Wentworth decide what the new market rent will be?

The market rent is based on the rent likely to be paid for a similar property in the private rental market. Link Wentworth determines your market rent using rent data, relevant to the type and location of the property. This information is published quarterly in the Rent and Sales Report by the NSW government. The method Link Wentworth uses to decide your market rent picks up fluctuations in market rents across NSW, meaning that rents in some areas will rise while rents in other areas will decrease.

What if you pay market rent now and can't afford to pay the new rent?

If you can't afford to pay the new market rent, you can apply for a rent subsidy. If you are on a low to moderate income you may be eligible for a rent subsidy. If you think you may be eligible for a subsidy you will need to contact your local office and ask for Form A- Application for a Rental Subsidy or download the form from our website.



As rent subsidies are based on total household income, you will need to provide proof of income for all household members. If you are not eligible for a subsidy, you are considered to be able to afford to pay market rent. You may also need to apply for Commonwealth Rent Assistance from Centrelink. You can do this by taking the market rent letter to Centrelink to inform them of your new rent and complete a Rent Certificate.

What if I disagree with the new market rent?

If you already pay market rent and think that the increase in your market rent is too high, you can apply to the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT). You should do this within 30 days of receiving your rent increase letter. Tribunal fees apply. If you become ineligible for a rent subsidy and have to commence paying the market rent, you can also apply to the NCAT. You should do this within 30 days after the cancellation of the rent subsidy.

Can I appeal an increase in market rent to the Housing Appeals Committee?

No, you cannot appeal an increase in your market rent to the Housing Appeals Committee. All appeals should be lodged with the NCAT.

Where can I go for more advice?

Fair Trading NSW can give you advice about your tenancy rights and obligations, about how the NCAT works and can also help you find an advocate.

You can visit the Fair Trading NSW website at www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au or call them on 13 32 20.

Tenancy Advice

For independent tenancy advice you can contact: Western Sydney Tenants Service (WESTS) 1800 251 101 Blue Mountains Tenants Advice & Advocacy Service (BMTAAS) (02) 4704 0201 Greater Sydney Aboriginal Tenants Service (GSATS) 1800 251 101

Are all your questions answered?

If all your questions have not been answered in this fact sheet you can:

- Visit one of Link Wentworth's Offices
- Phone the Rent Review Team on (02) 4777 8008.

If you need more information, please contact Link Wentworth on 9412 5111 or email enquiries@linkwentworth.org.au