



# Inquiry into annual and financial reports 2024–2025

## Answer to question on notice

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Asked by: Ms Chiaka Barry MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Homes, Homelessness and New Suburbs

Reference: Health and Community Services

Hearing: 13 November 2025

In relation to: Public housing and Concerns raised by Official Visitors

Question received: 19 November 2025

Answer Due: 11 December 2025

At the Disability Hearing on 13 November, I was asked to refer disability questions to the relevant Operational Minister.

1. Why is it that Official Visitors report ongoing issues with continued inadequate communication to service providers and residents of Public Housing properties?
2. Why are Official Visitors reporting concerns about accessibility of housing (particularly for people with physical disabilities); safety concerns; mould in bathrooms; kitchen appliances that present a fire hazard; security issues; unfinished or poor quality of repairs; and leaking premises?
3. What are you doing to intervene in Housing to ensure people with disability do not continue to suffer this shabby treatment?
4. The Official Visitors observation that “individuals and providers are less likely to raise these issues unless explicitly asked.” Are you concerned that the reduction of client service visits in housing may make this situation far worse for people with disabilities?

Ms Yvette Berry: The answer to the Member’s question is as follows:

1. I cannot speak on behalf of the Official Visitors.

However, under the *Official Visitors Act 2012*, the Official Visitors exercise functions related to investigating and resolving complaints. Noting complaints is a core function for the Official Visitors, it can be expected they will raise and report complaints.

Housing ACT’s Senior Executives meet with the Official Visitors on a monthly basis where issues are raised by the Official Visitors, with Housing ACT working to address these issues and concerns.

2. Please see the response to question 1.
3. The government has a range of policies to ensure tenants who identify with a range of disabilities such as physical, sensory, cognitive, psychological, developmental, neurological or chronic health conditions receive the support they need.

At the time of allocation, actions are undertaken to ensure the property they are offered meets their physical and long-term needs. Over time, tenants' health can decline, disability can become more pronounced, or incidents can occur which render their accommodation no longer suitable (such as a serious car accident), requiring modifications or additional supports be put in place to assist them with living independently and to ensure Housing ACT continues meeting obligations to tenants under the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997*.

When Housing Managers are made aware of these types of concerns a number of actions can take place:

- Referral to an Occupational Therapist (OT) who will undertake an assessment regarding whether modifications can be made to their current property. If so, these works are arranged. If not, the OT will support a transfer to a more suitable dwelling.
  - Support for tenant/s to lodge a transfer application and educate them on what documents are required to support their application.
  - In extreme circumstances an Out of Turn (OOT) transfer, Priority brief or Management Initiated Transfer (MIT) will be developed.
  - An internal referral to a Tenant Support Community Connections Officer (TSSCO) to support the tenant when it is identified they require more specialist interventions for support and assistance to sustain their tenancy. These specialists will meet with the individual or nominated support personnel to discuss support needs or gaps and will provide information on available services such as ACT Office of Disability, Aged and Carer Advocacy Service (ADACAS), the Public Trustee and Guardian, Carers ACT or conduct warm transfers to services that will assist them with the supports they require.
  - Tenant Experience will work with declared supports as required.
4. This underscores the importance of the role that Official Visitors play to ensure the client's needs are always at the forefront of consideration.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Social Policy

Signature:



Date:

19/12/25

By the Minister for Homes, Homelessness and New Suburbs, Ms Yvette Berry MLA