



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

**SELECT COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES 2022-2023**

Mr James Milligan MLA (Chair), Mr Andrew Braddock MLA (Deputy Chair),  
Dr Marisa Paterson MLA

**ANSWER TO  
QUESTION ON NOTICE**

Mark Parton MLA to ask the Minister for Homelessness and Housing Services

Ref: Budget Statement G – Housing Services – Social Housing Wait Times BS – G Page 48 – Social Housing Services

Date (Question Lodged by Member): 07/09/2022

Date (Question Sent to DLO): 08/09/2022

**In relation to the steady increase in waiting times for both allocation and transfers in the ACT:**

- 1. What is causing the increase in wait times? Is it decreased stock, stock suitability, increase in applicants?**
- 2. What is being done to address the increasing waiting times?**
- 3. Why isn't there a figure in regards to allocation wait times and number of applications in the Accountability Indicators at page 49**
- 4. Are you worried the increase in wait times will become as severe as other jurisdictions where wait times are 5 years or more even over 10 years?**
- 5. How long does a tenant have after being offered a property to decide before it is offered to another tenant and does this affect wait times?**

MARK PARTON  
Shadow Minister for Transport

Minister Vassarotti: The answer to the Member's question is as follows: –

- Housing ACT is experiencing a significant increase in demand for public housing assistance, consistent with all jurisdictions across Australia. There are many reasons for increased wait-times, including but not limited to, higher financial stress across the community, housing affordability and complex co-morbidities experienced across the ACT. The increase in wait times can also be affected by several

external factors such as housing market and economic conditions.

2. The ACT Housing Strategy identifies the growing need and limited supply of social housing across the ACT and identifies the following priorities/ actions to remedy the current limited supply and large demand issues:
  - Housing ACT is currently undertaking a review of the Priority Housing Waitlist to ensure those in our community who require housing assistance are correctly assessed on current circumstances;
  - Reviewing/streamlining vacant property process to ensure properties are ready to allocate in a timely manner; and
  - The ACT Government is committed to strengthening social housing assistance by delivering better public housing across Canberra and to provide more and better housing options for all, as outlined in the *Parliamentary and Governing Agreement for the 10th Legislative Assembly*. This includes delivering 400 additional public housing properties through the Growing and Renewing Public Housing Program and the recently completed Common Ground Dickson.
3. The accountability indicators provide an overview of the efficiency and effectiveness of Housing ACT operations. The accountability indicator targets and results reflect the outcomes of key activities under the Housing Strategy in terms of both property portfolio growth and renewal and the client centered approach of the Housing ACT as a model social landlord.

The current indicator “a. Allocation of housing to those in greatest need” remains the key focus for public housing. Households in greatest need are identified in Housing ACT data as those who have been assessed as eligible for either the Priority or High Needs waiting lists. The Housing Register is published on the Community Services Directorate website, including the ‘Wait List’ and ‘Waiting Times’ and these are updated regularly. Please see:

<https://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/housing/housing-options/waitlist-and-processing-times>

4. There are a number of complex and complicated issues facing vulnerable Canberrans that the ACT Government is addressing.

As has previously been advised, the ACT Government is undertaking the single largest investment into Public Housing growth.

It is impossible to predict the average wait times in the future however the ACT Government has demonstrated an ongoing commitment to address supply and tenants needs now and into the future.

5. In the process of allocating public housing, a client has 24 hours to accept or decline a property offer. This is a timeframe that provides an opportunity for the client to consider their circumstances and the appropriateness of a property balanced with the need to ensure that valuable resources are managed effectively across the portfolio.

Housing ACT officers can be flexible in their responses depending upon client circumstances however ultimately will ensure that all efforts are made to house those most in need as quickly as possible.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2022-2023

Signature: 

Date: 13/9/2022

By Minister Rebecca Vassarotti, Minister for Homelessness and Housing Services

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR LODGING QUESTIONS ON NOTICES (QON):**

1. Each QON should be emailed to the Committee Support office in **Word format** and **signed PDF (scanned)** to [LACommitteeEstimates@parliament.act.gov.au](mailto:LACommitteeEstimates@parliament.act.gov.au)
2. This should occur within **5 working days of the hearing**. Day 1 of the 5 working days is the next working day after the hearing day. **Example:** *If a hearing was held on Monday, the QON should be submitted by close of business on the following Monday.*
3. \* Number assigned by Committee Support office

