



Inquiry into annual and financial reports 2024–2025

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Chiaka Barry MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Homes, Homelessness and New Suburbs

Reference: Homes, Homelessness and New Suburbs/Health and Community Services Directorate

Hearing: 10 November 2025

In relation to: Public Housing – Waiting lists

Question received: 12 November 2025

Answer Due: 25 November 2025

On 31 March 2025 there were 3,189 applications for public housing on 30 June there were 3,402, on 30 October there were 3,486. These are applications representing vulnerable families desperately seeking safe and secure accommodation in a housing and cost of living crisis.

1. What are the reasons for this deteriorating housing availability situation?
2. What do you consider are acceptable benchmark waiting periods for Public Housing in the three categories?
3. The ACT is clearly lagging other states and territories when it comes to national Public Housing benchmarks, why is that?
4. Given the application rate has, and will likely continue to increase as Canberra's population grows, when do you project your current strategy will reduce the wait time to acceptable National benchmark levels?
5. Given the passage of the Housing as a Human Right Legislation, what legal risks is the ACT exposed to because of unacceptably long Public Housing wait lists?

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

1. Population growth and cost of living pressures have contributed to the demand for Public Housing and therefore an increase in Public Housing wait times.
2. Wait times for Public Housing can be influenced by many factors, including complexity and size of household, property requirements and region preferences, and availability of stock. As such, a specific benchmark is difficult to quantify.
3. Specific data on wait times can vary across jurisdictions due to different definitions, allocation policies, and data collection methods, so direct comparisons should be made with caution.

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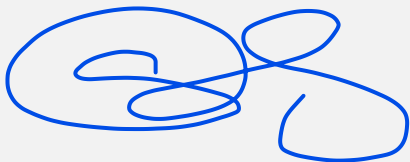
Since December 2024, although the number of applications across all three registers have increased, Housing ACT wait times across all three registers for people applying for Public Housing have improved.

4. Wait times for Public Housing can be influenced by many factors, including complexity and size of household, property requirements and region preferences, and availability of stock. As such, it is difficult to quantify.
5. Housing ACT do not anticipate any legal impacts regarding length of wait times for Public Housing due to the introduction of housing as a Human Right. Public Housing is a scarce resource targeted at low income and vulnerable citizens of the ACT.

Demand continues to exceed supply. Eligibility and allocation of Public Housing is designed to ensure those most in need receive support and assistance, and applicants must meet legislated criteria. Enshrining a right to housing will not eliminate the need to ensure considered allocation of this resource through eligibility criteria, as primary allocation still needs to be offered to those most in need.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Social Policy

Signature:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'S' followed by a series of loops and a final flourish.

Date:

27/11/25

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