



STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND COMMUNITY WELLBEING
Mr Johnathan Davis MLA (Chair), Mr James Milligan MLA (Deputy Chair), Mr Michael Pettersson MLA

Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2020-2021
QUESTION ON NOTICE

[Mark Parton]: To ask the [Minister for Homelessness and Housing Services]

[Ref: CSD Annual Report 2020/21 Page 93]

In relation to: Those on the greatest need allocation

1. Why is the 99% calculation of those housed in 3 months not calculated on how quickly those in greatest need category are being housed;

Greatest need allocation results are published annually in the Housing Chapter Table 18A.15 of the Productivity Commission's annual Report on Government Services (ROGS) based on the proportion of new allocations that are made within certain timeframes to applicants in greatest need. The allocation timeframes range from within 3 months of application to more than 2 years. CSD annual reporting of the proportion of new allocations made to greatest need applicants within 3 months is aligned with the shortest allocation timeframe of this nationally consistent ROGS calculation method. Additionally, this approach matches the indicator result calculation method for Housing ACT's Budget Statement reporting against its Strategic Objective 1 – Appropriately housing people most in need.

2. How are those on the greatest need category assessed;
 - a. Is it rough sleepers only, who may be placed in temporary brokerage;

Applicants that are assessed as 'greatest need' or as potentially meeting the criteria and qualifying for Priority Housing are referred via the Multi-Disciplinary Panel (MDP) and may present with a number of risk and/or need. While rough sleepers are one cohort considered for priority housing assistance, other groups often include: women with or without children escaping family and domestic violence; those housed in overcrowded, unsafe or unstable accommodation; those in the crisis and transitional housing sector; people living with a disability, health condition or mental health issue which makes them particularly vulnerable; or those who are frail aged.

These risks and needs are then presented to the MDP for the Priority Housing Consideration process (please see below).

2.a

No. People in a range of situations can meet the criteria to be provided brokerage. OneLink will assess each presentation on a case-by-case basis. Reasons for providing brokerage include the requirement to isolate due to COVID-19 when accommodated in a group setting or experiencing domestic and family violence. Brokerage can also be used for cases where OneLink assesses that the client's situation is critical or present risks or vulnerabilities i.e., children sleeping in car. Brokerage considerations can also include factors such as small children at risk, and significant medical factors.

3. What is the criteria used to place those on the greatest need allocation list?

The MDP is made up of senior officers from the ACT Government and community organisations, with expertise regarding issues that relate to the Priority Housing Category. When assessing an application for Priority Housing Consideration, the MDP must be satisfied that the applicant/s has demonstrated *"exceptional, urgent and critical needs that cannot be met by any reasonable means other than the early provision of housing assistance"*. Noting that:

Exceptional needs- must be considered relative to the needs of housing applicants in general.

Urgent- requires a clear and demonstrable time constraint that impacts on need.

Critical- must demonstrate extreme risk that has a direct causal relationship with housing need.

Housing ACT may also receive what's referred to as a *Priority Needs Recommendation* form from a residential homelessness or other community sector organisation which will also be referred to, and considered by, the MDP for Priority Housing consideration.

 29/3/2022

[MEMBER'S SIGNATURE] [DATE]