

Modifications Policy

Purpose

This policy explains how CatholicCare Victoria Housing Ltd (CCVH) manages requests for property modifications.

Scope

This policy applies to all properties managed by CCVH.

This policy applies to both residential rental agreements (rental agreements) and rooming house agreements. Unless stated otherwise, references to “renters”, “tenancies” and “rental agreements” also applies to rooming house residents.

Policy Statement

Guiding Principles

CCVH is committed to:

- Meeting our contractual, regulatory, and legal duties,
- Supporting renters to remain in their current property where possible,
- Meeting the needs of applicants and renters with disability,
- Maintaining the quality and financial viability of our properties.

General Modifications

General modifications are any changes made to the property that are at the request of the renter. Under the *Residential Tenancies Act 2021* (RTA), renters can make certain modifications to their home without our consent. A full list of these modifications is available on the [Consumer Affairs Victoria website](#).

Renters can decorate to their taste as long as the property can be returned to its original condition at the end of the lease. This includes adding curtains, floor rugs and pictures.

For any other modifications to the property, the renter must first request permission from CCVH in writing **before** undertaking the change. This includes garden sheds, painting, and any other major alterations. CCVH may refuse permission if:

- The property has heritage protections
- The changes mean that the property no longer complies with legal requirements
- The modification impacts other premises, common areas or would significantly change the property.

If a renter makes a general modification to their home, they are responsible for:

- Obtaining written permission for the modification (if required) and abiding by any conditions
- Paying for the modification and for any ongoing costs,
- Reversing the changes at the end of the tenancy and returning the property in its original condition

- Supplying evidence of the modification/s meeting any applicable standards and having been completed by a licensed tradesperson.

Disability Modifications

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) defines disability modifications as changes to the structure, layout, or fittings of a property so that a renter or applicant can safely access it and move around.

CCVH requires supporting information from a qualified allied health professional, for example an occupational therapist, before approving a disability modification. The information provided must confirm the need and urgency for the changes. It must also detail the type of disability modifications needed.

Where the health and safety of a household is placed at serious risk, CCVH will classify works as urgent (see *Asset Maintenance Policy*). Where major disability modifications are required, for example specialised work that needs a structural permit or council approval, CCVH will assess the property to make sure it is suitable before any works can start. If the modification is not possible, we will discuss alternative options with the applicant or renter.

Requests for Modifications

Requests for general and disability property modifications can be made using the *Property Modification Request Form*. CCVH will assess each application on a case-by-case basis and respond to all requests in writing within 28 days.

When assessing an application, CCVH will consider:

- The property attributes (e.g., long term value, whether the property is to be retained) and any impact on the property's structural integrity, heritage listing or neighbours.
- Costs and suitability of any alternative approaches, including relocation (see *Transfer Policy*).
- The current and future needs of the household and future applicants.
- Any funding sources available (e.g., The NDIS may pay for disability modifications such as ramps, handrails or lever taps to make the property safe and accessible).

Where properties are not owned by CCVH, we will request permission from the property owner.

Related Information

- CCVH Asset Maintenance Policy
- CCVH Transfer Policy
- CCVH Sustainable Tenancies Policy
- Property Modification Request Form
- Housing Act 1983 (Vic)
- Residential Tenancies Act 2021(Vic)
- Victorian Housing Registrar Performance Standard 2 (Housing Assets)

Transparency and Accessibility

This policy will be publicly available on our website.

Version Control

Version	#1	Review frequency	Approved: June 2023 Next Review: June 2025
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