Shared Supported Accommodation – your rights and responsibilities

Shared Supported Accommodation (SSA) provides care and support for people with disabilities. SSAs are houses with paid carers that provide personal care, nursing, rehabilitation, housekeeping, meal and laundry services.

SSAs are usually private businesses. Sometimes, the company who owns or leases the house (the “landlord”) is different to the company that provides support to you in the house (the “support provider”). The aim of this information sheet is to explain your rights and responsibilities in Shared Supported Accommodation.

YOUR RIGHT TO CHOOSE

Moving into Shared Supported Accommodation can be a big life change. It is your responsibility to choose a service that suits you, so it’s important to do your research. Important things to consider when choosing a SSA include:

- The objectives and policies of the support provider
- The number of residents in the house
- The types of services provided
- The fees and charges
- How and when you will be informed of changes to fees and charges and the provision of goods and services
- Your rights and responsibilities in the house
- Whether the timetable and routine of the SSA suits you, e.g. meal times
- Procedures for receiving and handling complaints, including the external avenues of complaint available to residents
- Options for ongoing management of the resident’s financial and legal affairs.
- Whether the house is located near things that are important eg: parks, shops, cinema, public transport
- The house rules, including visitors.

YOUR RIGHT TO INFORMATION

When you move into a SSA, you also have rights and responsibilities under the Residential Tenancies Act 1997. Your rights include the right to information. Before you move into a SSA, it is important that the landlord provides you with:

- A Tenancy Agreement which both you and the landlord sign outlining each party’s responsibilities in regards to your tenancy
- A contact name and number for any maintenance problems with the house

It is your responsibility to ensure that you receive all this information.
YOUR RIGHT TO QUALITY CARE
You have the right to:

- Be treated with respect and dignity
- Be served balanced, varied and nutritious food
- Privacy in safe, home-like surroundings
- Choose your own recreational activities
- Have visitors and be socially active
- Look after your own finances where appropriate

YOUR RIGHT TO THE SAFE ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION
If you need assistance with administering your medication, the support coordinator of the home must make sure your medications are:

- Safely and securely stored at all times
- Taken at the right times in the right doses, as prescribed by your doctor
- Kept in the container supplied by the chemist

YOUR RIGHT TO COMPLAIN
Under the Residential Tenancies Act 1997 it is your right and responsibility to make a complaint if you are unhappy with any aspect of your stay at a SSA. If you have a complaint, first tell the staff at the house. If the problem relates to your residential agreement or the building environment, your complaint should go to the landlord.

If the problem is related to the services or support (including meals and activities) your complaint should be forwarded to the support staff at the house. You have the right to have your complaint heard and adequately responded to.

WHERE TO GET HELP

- The staff at the SSA service
- Your TAC support coordinator

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- If you live in a SSA, you have rights and responsibilities.
- If you have a complaint, first tell the staff at the home.
- If staff at the home do not respond to your complaint adequately, contact your TAC support coordinator.
- To take your complaint about your tenancy further, contact the Tenants Union of Victoria on 9416 2577. This organisation employs a team of trained and experienced workers with expertise in tenancy matters across all accommodation types.

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