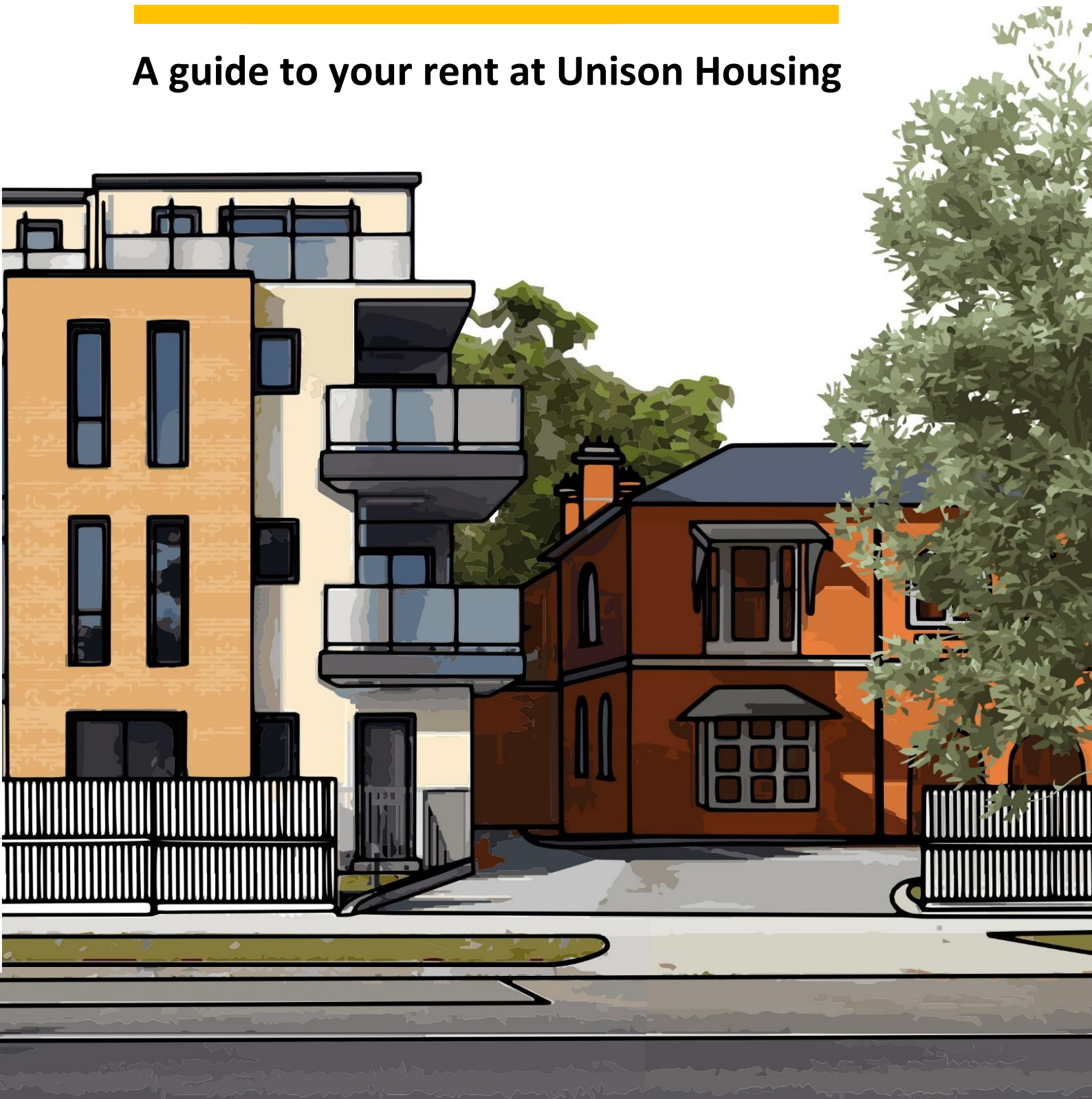




Rent

A guide to your rent at Unison Housing



Contents

1.	Rent at Unison Housing.....	3
1.1	Unison Rent policy	3
1.1.1	Social Housing rent – Amount that you need to pay.....	3
1.1.2	Affordable Housing – Amount you need to pay	7
1.1.3	Annual reviews.....	9
2.	National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS)	10

1. Rent at Unison Housing



Unison’s mission is to create vibrant, sustainable communities that meet the needs of renters, owners and people who are homeless by developing, managing and providing access to affordable housing.

As part of this mission Unison aims to ensure that information about rent is clear, transparent and consistent for all renters. This guide is a resource for renters which explains how rent is determined, assessed and reviewed at Unison.

1.1 Unison Rent policy

Unison’s rent policy can be found on our website at <https://unison.org.au/cms/uploads/docs/rent-policy.pdf>. The policy ensures that the rent setting and review process:

- keeps rents affordable
- is transparent, fair, promoted and consistently applied
- is compliant with State and Federal government requirements

1.1.1 Social Housing rent – Amount that you need to pay

Unison subsidises rents to ensure they are affordable. For each renter, the subsidy is the difference between the **market rent** and the **income assessed rent** based on household income.

a. Market rent

The market rent for a property is the amount of rent that a renter in the private rental market would be expected to pay. Unison uses market rents determined by the Victorian Government through the Department of Fairness, Families and Housing (DFFH).

To ensure that rents are always affordable for people on low or moderate incomes, Unison caps the Maximum Chargeable Rent for renters at 74.99% of market rent.

b. Income Assessed rent

Income assessed rent has three parts:

- (1) A fixed percentage (capped at 30%) of assessable household income.

For social renters in Victorian Government-owned properties, and for rooming houses with shared kitchens and bathrooms, the percentage is 25%. For all other renters, the percentage is 30%.

The types of income which are considered assessable include wages, Abstudy and Austudy payments, most pensions and sickness allowances, youth allowances, Jobseeker, JobKeeper and Newstart payments, and income from investment and savings. A full list of assessable and non-assessable income types is shown in Appendix 1 of Unison’s Rent Policy.

and

(2) 15% of Family Tax payments (Family Tax A and Family Tax B)

and

(3) 100% of Commonwealth Rent Assistance

The minimum subsidy for renters is 25%, which is the difference between the market rent for a property and the Maximum Chargeable Rent. If the income assessed rent is less than the maximum chargeable rent, then the subsidy will be greater than 25%.

c. Additional property charge

In many Unison properties there are additional property charges which are a condition of living in the Unison property. These could include:

- Electricity
- Gas
- Water
- Cleaning
- Gardening
- Furniture
- Laundry facilities



The amount payable is summarised in the Table below:

Amount you pay each week – Total Weekly Amount Payable	Income Assessed rent <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Up to 30% of gross Assessable income• 15% of Family Tax payments (Family Tax A and Family Tax B)• 100% of Commonwealth Rent Assistance	+
	Additional property charges e.g. gas, electricity, common area cleaning – depending on which property you live in	
	=	Amount payable

Examples of social housing rent calculation



Case Study One

Josef is a single person household on the Disability Support Pension.

How Unison calculates Josef's rent is set out in the below table:

#	Category	Explanation	Amount per week
A	Market rent	The amount Josef would pay if this was private rental	\$315.00
B	Market rent cap – or Maximum Rent chargeable	Unison applies a market rent cap to ensure that properties are affordable for people on low or moderate incomes. This is set at 74.99% of market rent	\$236.20
C	Assessable household income	30% of assessable household income is calculated as part of the weekly rent payment Josef is in receipt of the Disability Support Pension and the Energy supplement	\$142.65
D	Plus Commonwealth Rent Assistance	Unison assesses the amount of Commonwealth Rent Assistance that Josef is eligible to receive from Centrelink	\$75.80
E	Income Assessed rent (C+D)	Note that if (C+D) is more than B, Unison will only charge B	\$218.45
F	Rental subsidy (A-E)	The rental subsidy is the discount between the market rent and the income assessed rent	\$96.55
G	Additional property charges	Josef's unit is not separately metred for Gas or Electricity, so Josef pays an additional property charge to cover gas, electricity and common area cleaning	\$45.00
H	Total Weekly Amount payable (E + G)	This is the amount that Josef will pay to Unison every week.	\$263.45

Case Study Two

Karla is a sole parent and lives in a two-bedroom Unison property. How Unison calculates Karla's rent is set out in the below table:

#	Category	Explanation	Amount per week
A	Market rent	The amount Karla would pay if this was a private rental	\$508.00
B	Market rent cap – or Maximum Rent chargeable	Unison applies a market rent cap to ensure that properties are affordable for people on low or moderate incomes. This is set at 74.99% of market rent	\$380.95
C	Assessable household income	30% of assessable household income is calculated as part of the weekly rent payment Karla is in receipt of Jobseeker Allowance, Family Tax Benefit A and Family Tax Benefit B, the Energy supplement and maintenance payments	\$171.20
D	Plus Commonwealth Rent Assistance	Unison assesses the amount of Commonwealth Rent Assistance that Karla is eligible to receive from Centrelink	\$89.15
E	Income Assessed rent (C+D)	Note that if (C+D) is more than B, Unison will only charge B	\$260.35
F	Rental subsidy (A-E)	The rental subsidy is the discount between the market rent and the income assessed rent	\$247.65
G	Additional property charges	Karla's unit is not separately metred for Gas or Electricity, so Karla pays an additional property charge to cover gas, electricity and common area cleaning	\$25.00
H	Total Weekly Amount payable (E + G)	This is the amount that Karla will pay to Unison every week.	\$285.35

1.1.2 Affordable Housing – Amount you need to pay



Unison also subsidises Affordable Housing rents to ensure they are affordable. In Affordable Housing the rent charged will be:

- No more than the Market Rent Cap or Maximum Rent Chargeable (74.99% of market rent)
- Enough to keep the amount payable no higher than 30% of gross Assessable income.

The amount payable is summarised in the Table below

Amount you pay each week - Total Weekly Amount Payable	Capped market rent – or Maximum rent chargeable (74.99% of market rent)	+	
	Additional property charges e.g. gas, electricity, common area cleaning – depending on which property you live in		
		=	Amount payable

Examples of affordable housing rent calculation

Case Study One

Linh is a single person who works 30 hours a week as a cleaner. Linh's gross annual income is \$59,571.00 per annum (\$1,146.00 per week).

style	Category	Explanation	Amount per week
A	Market rent	The amount Linh would pay if this was private rental	\$287.10
B	Market rent cap – or Maximum Rent chargeable	Unison applies a market rent cap to ensure that properties are affordable for people on low or moderate incomes. This is set at 74.99% of market rent	\$215.30
C	Assessable household income	30% of assessable household income is calculated as part of the weekly rent payment Linh's weekly income is \$1,146.00	\$343.80
D	Plus Commonwealth Rent Assistance	Unison assesses the amount of Commonwealth Rent Assistance that Linh may be eligible to receive from Centrelink	\$75.80
E	Income Assessed rent (C+D)	Note that if (C+D) is more than B, so Unison is Unison will only charge B In this instance C + D is significantly more than B, so B is used.	\$215.30
F	Rental subsidy (A-E)	The rental subsidy is the discount between the market rent and the income assessed rent	\$71.80
G	Additional property costs	Linh's unit is not separately metred for Gas or Electricity, has a common laundry and a fridge is supplied so Linh pays an additional property charge to cover these services.	\$45.00
H	Total Weekly Amount payable (E + G)	This is the amount that Linh will pay to Unison every week.	\$260.30

Case Study Two

Achol lives in a 1-bedroom Affordable Housing unit

#	Category	Explanation	Amount per week
A	Market rent	The amount Achol would pay if this was private rental	\$578.00
B	Market rent cap – or Maximum Rent chargeable	Unison applies a market rent cap to ensure that properties are affordable for people on low or moderate incomes. This is set at 74.99% of market rent	\$433.45
C	Assessable household income	30% of assessable household income is calculated as part of the weekly rent payment Achol's weekly income is \$555.20	\$166.55
D	Plus Commonwealth Rent Assistance	Unison assesses the amount of Commonwealth Rent Assistance that Achol may be eligible to receive	\$0.00
E	Income Assessed rent (C+D)	Note that if (C+D) is more than B, Unison will only charge B In this instance C + D is significantly less than B, so C+D is used.	\$166.55
F	Rental subsidy (A-E)	The rental subsidy is the discount between the market rent and the income assessed rent	\$411.45
G	Additional property costs	Achol's unit is not separately metred for Gas or Electricity and has a common laundry so Achol pays an additional property charge to cover these services.	\$25.00
H	Total Weekly Amount payable (E + G)	This is the amount that Achol will pay to Unison every week.	\$191.55



1.1.3 Annual reviews

a. Market Rent review

Once a year, Unison reviews the market rent to capture changes in the private rental market. Usually the market rent increases each year, although sometimes it decreases in some parts of Victoria. If the market rent increases, Unison will write to you and provide 60 days notice of the increase. If the market rent decreases, Unison will adjust the rent of people who are paying maximum rent chargeable.

b. Income review

Once a year, Unison also reviews the incomes of all renters to ensure that you are paying the correct amount.

More information on the income review is included in the Fact Sheet which is available on the Unison website.

2. National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS)

Some Unison properties have been funded under the Commonwealth Government's National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS). NRAS provides Unison with financial incentives when these properties are let to eligible households. If you move into an NRAS property you must prove you are eligible by providing to Unison:

- an income statement for a full 12 months (to confirm that you are on a low or moderate income)
- a signed NRAS Tenant Consent Form (which gives Unison consent to submit the information to NRAS)
- a completed NRAS Tenant Demographic form (which provides non identifying information on who lives in your household such as ages, gender etc.)

Eligibility is then reassessed every 12 months when renters in NRAS properties must provide to Unison:

- an income statement for a full 12 months (to confirm that you are still on a low or moderate income)
- an updated NRAS Tenant Demographic form

You need to provide this information every year, even if nothing has changed and your Place Manager will be in touch to collect it.

