

## M15 Abandoned Items

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### 1. Purpose

YWCA Housing and YWCA National Housing (YWCA) are committed to taking all steps to allow clients to collect any items they have at or around a property they are vacating and ensuring compliance with any legislative, regulatory or statutory requirements. This policy outlines YWCA’s responsibilities regarding abandoned items, also known as goods left behind, in or around its properties.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all housing owned and/or managed by YWCA and will always consider the YWCA and/or other program guidelines associated with the specified dwelling.

This policy applies to all YWCA staff, contractors and volunteers involved in tenancy management and property maintenance (Employees). The policy applies to both residential rental agreements and rooming house agreements. Unless stated otherwise, references to “renters/tenants” include rooming house residents and references to “tenancies” include rooming house residencies.

### 3. Policy Aim

This policy aims to ensure that fair and equitable approaches are taken to dealing with items abandoned or left behind in and/or around YWCA properties at the end of a tenancy by a renter/tenant and they are provided with opportunity to collect and remedy any abandoned items issues.

### 4. Definitions

Abandoned items	Any items left behind in or around a YWCA property after a tenant has vacated their home. This can include furniture, vehicles, electrical goods, household items, clothes, etc. These are also known as goods left behind.
Disposal	The act of clearing the items form the property. This can include throwing items out, having them destroyed, having them collected by a third party or the sale of items
Holding period	The amount of time that YWCA is required to store items prior to being able to dispose of remaining items
Renter/tenant	A person who is a signatory to the lease/rental agreement with YWCA for the home they live in and includes rooming house residents
Vehicle	Any motor vehicle or motor vehicle attachment that requires registration with a state transport authority such as a car, caravan, trailer, motorbike or scooter

### 5. Policy Statement

YWCA has a commitment to ensure that its renters/tenants meet their property standards responsibilities at the

end of their tenancy and return their place of residence to YWCA in an acceptable condition. This includes ensuring that all items belonging to the renter/tenant are removed when they vacate their home. YWCA complies with all regulations, legislation and guidelines in any jurisdiction that it operates in relation to the storage and disposal of abandoned items.

## **6. Holding period**

YWCA will meet all of its statutory and regulatory obligations regarding abandoned items, including vehicles, and will hold items that cannot be disposed of for the statutory period specified by the state and jurisdiction of the property where a renter/tenant has left items behind, from the conclusion of a tenancy. Personal documents will be held as per the specified timeframes for these items.

YWCA will make all efforts to contact and notify the renter/tenant and provide an opportunity for collection of the abandoned items.

## **7. Item Collection**

YWCA will make all efforts to reunite renters/tenants with any items or goods left behind in or around a property. If YWCA have incurred costs associated with the storage and holding of items or goods left behind, YWCA may seek reimbursement from the renter/tenant in line with statutory guidelines of the state and jurisdiction where the property is located.

## **8. Item Disposal**

YWCA will remove items left behind by a renter/tenant deemed disposable by state regulations. This may include items such as perishable foods, dangerous goods and goods of no monetary value as per state-based Consumer Affairs guidelines, excluding personal documents.

If items that have been abandoned are estimated to have a monetary value, they will be stored, assessed, valued and/or disposed of and proceeds of items sold dispersed as per the regulations for items of value as per state requirements. This includes abandoned vehicles.

## **8. Complaints, Feedback, and Appeal of decisions**

YWCA has an effective and appropriate response in place to deal with complaints and ensures that accurate information and records of investigations are maintained. YWCA will ensure that privacy principles are followed at all times and tenant confidentiality is maintained throughout the incident management process.

YWCA welcomes anyone to query any decisions we make and/or ask questions about our work practices. If a customer wishes to provide feedback to YWCA and/or believes a decision made by us is incorrect, they can register their feedback and/or lodge an appeal using the YWCA Feedback and Appeals Policy.

Document Control Data			
Policy Framework			
Responsible Body	Chief Executive Officer		
Accountable Officer	General Manager, Community Housing		
Application	All employees of YWCA		
Supersedes	All previous local policies		
Associated documents	YWCA Housing Policies and Procedures YWCA Feedback and Appeals Policy and Procedures YWCA Privacy Policies and Procedures YWCA Customer Service Charter		
Legislation, Frameworks, Standards, Codes and Agreements	Housing Assistance Act 1996 (COM) Housing Act 1983 (VIC) Housing Act 2003 (QLD) Housing Regulations 2015 (QLD) Housing Act 1982 (NT) Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (VIC) Residential tenancies & Rooming Accommodation Act 2008 (QLD) Residential Tenancies Act 1999 (NT) National Affordable Housing Agreement Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 Queensland Human Rights Act 2019 National Community Housing Standards Department of Human Services Standards (VIC) Consumer Charter for Community Managed Housing and Homelessness Services (VIC) National Community Housing Regulatory Code Victorian Community Housing Regulatory Code State based agreements between YWCA and statutory bodies		
Approval and Amendment History			
Review period – 2 years			
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June 2022	1.0		June 2024