

**Policy Review Date – 11 May 2010**

**HOW Contractor Policy**

**Endorsed by:**

HOW Board of Management at ordinary meeting held .....

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*Name*

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## Homes Out West Contractor Policy

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## 1. Introduction

Homes Out West (HOW) is a community housing provider that manages 390 properties, located from Albury across to Wentworth, with the head office located in Deniliquin. These properties are managed under 3 main programs – capital, leasehold and fee for service.

This document provides the guidelines that govern the relationship that HOW has with its contractors to ensure a satisfactory service for its clients.

## 2. Property Program Maintenance

HOW may have different maintenance contractors for each of its property programs. For capital properties the contractors selected through the tender process will be allocated to undertake responsive maintenance. For fee for service properties and leasehold properties, the landlord may choose who they want to carry out the maintenance, or they may decide to use the HOW contractors.

## 3. Maintenance Contracts

Every 2 years HOW will conduct a tender process to select maintenance contractors in the regions where HOW manages properties. These maintenance contracts are only to service the responsive needs of capital properties. HOW may choose to select alternate contractors for any specialised work or for upgrades. Any work above \$3000 must receive 3 quotes, as per the HOW Policy manual section 3.3.

The trades that will be selected for contracts are:

- Electrical
- Plumbing
- General Maintenance
- Pest Control
- Lawn Mowing and Ground Maintenance

## 4. Trade Duties

### Electrical

- (a) Any electrical installation required by Homes Out West as landlord or managing agent of the above properties.
- (b) Any electrical fault.
- (c) Removal of rubbish incurred during installation or maintenance.
- (d) Quotes for any electrical installations or maintenance if requested

### Plumbing

- (a) Any plumbing installation required by Homes Out West as landlord or managing agent of the properties.
- (b) Any plumbing maintenance as required.
- (c) Removal of rubbish incurred during installation or maintenance.
- (d) Quotes for plumbing installations or maintenance if requested

### General Maintenance

- (a) Any general maintenance required by Homes Out West as landlord or managing agent of the properties.
- (b) Removal of rubbish incurred during installation or maintenance.
- (c) Quotes for general installations or maintenance if requested

### Pest Control

- (a) Annual termite inspection and report
- (b) Removal of rubbish incurred during pest control maintenance.
- (c) Quotes for pest control if requested.

### Lawn Mowing and Ground Maintenance

- (a) Maintenance of all outside areas as required by Homes Out West as landlord or managing agent of the properties including - Mowing of all grassed areas
  - two cuts per month from September - April
  - one cut per month May - August

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- Lawn edging (Use of Round up on edges is not acceptable)
- Light pruning and garden maintenance as required in conjunction with tenants

- (b) Removal of all rubbish incurred during maintenance. (ie: clippings, prunings, etc)
- (c) Quotes for extra garden maintenance work if requested.

## 5. Insurance

Contractors are required to maintain appropriate insurances. Public Liability insurance must be to a level of at least \$10,000,000.00. Contractors must have Workers Compensation insurance if they are an employer, sufficient to cover the wages of an injured employee. If the contractor is self employed they must have Income Protection / Disability insurance to cover themselves if they are injured at work. The contractor must hold these insurances for the duration of the contract period.

Contractors are required to annually furnish HOW with their current Certificates of Currency. Any contractor who does not have these insurance covers, or has not furnished HOW with a copy of the current Certificate of Currency, will not be able to perform trades work for HOW.

## 6. Occupational Health and Safety

The safety of HOW employees and contractors is of paramount importance. HOW is of the attitude that all risks can be mitigated and that any accident is preventable. HOW's policies state that any risks to safety are to be eliminated or minimised to an acceptable level.

Contractors will be aware of and meet the requirements of the Occupational Health & Safety Act 2001 and OH&S regulations 2000. Responsibilities under this act are:

- Employers (Contractors) - must ensure the health, safety and welfare at work of all the employees of the employer.

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- Employees (Contractors Employees) - must, while at work, take reasonable care for the health and safety of people who are at the employee's place of work and who may be affected by the employee's acts or omissions at work. They must also co-operate with his or her employer or other person so far as is necessary to enable compliance with any requirement under this Act or the regulations that is imposed in the interests of health, safety and welfare on the employer or any other person.

Contractors are responsible for ensuring their own and tenants safety while they are carrying out repairs and maintenance on Homes Out West properties. This includes, but is not limited to, ensuring safe standards in regards to:

- Conduct and behaviour
- Qualifications and training
- Personal protective equipment
- Fire hazards
- Housekeeping and storage
- Hazardous substances and dangerous goods
- Alcohol and other drugs
- Working at heights
- Manual handling

### **6.1. Safe Work Method Statement**

Contractors are to perform their own safe work method statements for all works assessed as having high risk, in order to mitigate risks associated with individual jobs. On the HOW work order there is a section that contractors are to fill in detailing the nature of work to be performed and the associated risks.

### **6.2. Incident Reporting**

Any incidents that have resulted in an injury or damage or may have resulted in an injury or damage must be reported to the HOW Asset Officer. The Asset Officer will investigate the incident to determine the cause and whether HOW needs to manage and minimise any risks.

### ***6.3. Reporting Unsafe Situations***

Contractors safety is paramount and HOW strives to provide a safe working environment. Any hazards, such as:

- Unsafe areas
- Savage dogs
- Difficulties with clients
- Any other unsafe situations

are to be reported to the Asset Officer or Housing Manager immediately.

## **7. Code of Behavior**

HOW has expectations about how contractors perform their work and treat tenants. At all times tenants have the right to be treated with respect, in a fair and non-discriminatory manner.

The following rules must be followed when performing maintenance work at a HOW property.

- The confidentiality of tenants must be maintained at all times.
- Do not become engaged in an argument with a tenant. If a situation becomes hostile, remove your equipment, leave the premises, and contact the HOW Asset Officer immediately.
- Do not use tenants facilities without permission.
- Be mindful of the presence of children.
- Keep the site clean and do not leave rubbish behind.
- Respect the tenants privacy.
- Ensure tenants and contractors are safe at all times, and that property is protected from damage.
- Minimise inconvenience and disturbance to tenants.

If a tenant's behaviour is inappropriate, when you attend the premises, please notify the Asset Officer immediately. Contractors have a right to complain about inappropriate behaviour by a client. Any complaint about a contractor, tenant or

representative of HOW will be handled in accordance with the Complaints and Appeals Policy.

### *8. Leaving Dwellings in a "Safe State"*

After any works have been performed on a HOW property, the dwelling must be left in a "Safe State" before leaving the site each day. The property is in a safe state when:

- Water, sewerage, gas, and electricity services are restored back to a able condition.
- The premises are protected from the elements.
- External doors and windows can be closed and locked.
- Fencing and gates are secured to keep children away from traffic.
- Any safety hazards have been controlled.

If a safe state cannot be achieved contact the HOW Asset Officer or Housing Worker Immediately.

### *9. Protocol*

Notification regarding maintenance required will most commonly come from the Asset Officer or Housing Manager during office hours.

A work order will be produced for each job required with a priority rating listed.

Priority ratings are -

- Emergency - to be carried out immediately within 24 hours
- Urgent - within 5 working days
- Routine - within 28 days or by arrangement with the Asset Officer or Housing Manager.

For emergencies on weekends and out of office hours clients are given your contact number. If they call you out of hours they must also notify the office by leaving a message on the answering machine or ringing in office hours so that a work order can be produced.

Emergencies include:

- A blocked or broken lavatory
- A burst water service

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- A serious roof leak
- A gas leak
- A dangerous electrical fault
- Serious flood, fire or storm damage
- Breakdown in supply of gas, electricity or water supply to the premises
- Failure or breakdown of any essential service on the premises for hot water, cooking, heating or laundering.
- Any fault or damage that causes the premises to be unsafe or not secure.

If a tenant requests that other work be carried out when you are present you must first contact the Asset Officer or Housing Worker before undertaking the work.

If on inspection of the repair job it appears to be more extensive than the original request please notify the Asset Officer or Housing Worker before undertaking any works.

The work order sent to you for each job will have a contact number for the tenant for you to arrange a mutually convenient time to carry out the work. If there is no contact number, please liaise with the Asset Officer or Housing Worker.

Once the repair is completed and you furnish HOW with an account, the job will be inspected by a representative of the organisation. If there are no problems you will then receive payment within twenty eight (28) days.

### *10. Post Work Inspection*

HOW will perform inspections on selected finished properties to ensure that the standard of work is acceptable. The work that will be inspected will be determined by a number of factors including cost and importance of work, as well as random inspections. Any work that is deemed to be unacceptable will need to be completed by the tradesman before any payment is made.

### *11. Sub Contracting*

In order to guarantee the quality of the work, contractors are not to use any sub contractors to perform work orders allocated to them, unless the contractor receives prior consent from HOW. Any approved subcontractors must comply with all aspects

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of the HOW contractor policy, with relevant insurance details being submitted to HOW before work can be commenced.

## 12. Breaches of Contractors Obligations

The conduct and performance of contractors is essential in order to maintain the standards of HOW, to secure their own safety, and to provide tenants with quality service. HOW treats any breach of contractor obligations seriously and reserves the right to withhold payments until a job is performed satisfactorily, or to discontinue any business with the contractor in the event of a serious breach.