

## Offering residency in Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) procedure



### Purpose

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Community Living & Respite Services (CLRS) is a registered National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) provider of Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA).

The NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators (as defined in the National Disability Insurance Scheme (Provider Registration and Practice Standards) Rules 2018) require that SDA providers have policies and procedures in place about how the provider will declare, advertise and fill vacancies in shared-living SDA, including how each participant's views, preferences and needs are documented and considered.

CLRS is committed to ensuring that SDA vacancies will be offered to participants in a fair and transparent manner that demonstrates a commitment to:

- maximising choice and control for participants.
- ensuring compliance with Victorian, New South Wales and Federal legislation.
- ensuring integrity and good outcomes for participants residing in SDA.
- balancing the needs of participants looking for a home with the needs of existing residents; and
- maximising household harmony, resident safety and sustainable living arrangements in SDA.

This process provides:

- an understanding of how CLRS will offer residency in SDA to a participant; and
- participants and their supports with an understanding of their rights to apply for SDA and accept, decline or negotiate any offers.

### Scope

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#### ***In-scope***

This procedure applies to the process of offering residency in CLRS SDA.

Whilst CLRS as SDA provider will make the offer of residency to a preferred applicant, the identification, advertisement, and selection of a preferred applicant to fill a vacancy in an SDA where residents share SIL supports is a collaborative process between current SDA residents, their support network and SIL provider, and CLRS. Roles for each of these parties are outlined in the procedure.

#### ***Out-of-scope***

Where CLRS is building an SDA for a specific person or people (such as the replacement of an existing SDA), the resident/s who the SDA is intended for will not need to apply through this

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policy. Vacant rooms in these new SDA will be managed through this procedure except where the SDA is highly specialised, for example SDA that exceeds the NDIS SDA design criteria due to features required by a very small number of people with disability.

In those circumstances, vacancies will be targeted to individuals with that level of accommodation need rather than being advertised. Residents and their SIL provider will be advised at the time the SDA is established if this exception will apply. Decisions about the vacancy will be made by CLRS in consultation with current residents, their support network and their SIL provider.

## Principles

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The principles below underpin the process to offer residency:

- **Equity:** to ensure that all eligible participants are considered for SDA in a fair and transparent manner.
- **Consistency:** to ensure that decision making is undertaken in a reliable manner and that enough information is provided to make sound decisions.
- **Sustainability:** to ensure SDA offers are part of a long-term and proactive plan that takes into consideration the sustainable operations of the SDA and SIL providers
- **Compatibility:** to ensure the physical, emotional, social and support needs of the current residents are taken into consideration when identifying a participant to offer SDA to.
- **Safety:** to ensure that the support needs of the current and prospective residents are addressed.

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### Definitions

The following terms are used in relation to this document:

Term	Definition
Collaboration Agreement	Refers to the agreement between SIL and SDA providers that meets the requirements of the Disability Act
CSO	Means a community services organisation
Department,	Refers to the Department of Families and Fairness in Victoria
Disability Act	Means the <i>Disability Act 2006 (Vic)</i>
Dwelling	Refers to each SDA property enrolled with the NDIA by a registered SDA provider
National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA)	The NDIA is a Commonwealth statutory agency. The role of the NDIA is to implement the NDIS
NDIS	Means the National Disability Insurance Scheme
Participant	A person with a disability that has met the access requirements to become a participant of the NDIS
Process to offer residency	The process made pursuant to the Disability Act where SDA and SIL providers work together to advertise a vacancy and identify their preferred participant to offer SDA
Purpose-built SDA for a specific person(s)	Refers to Dwellings that are built or refurbished specifically for a participant or group of participants with SDA funding approved in their plans
Residency management	Refers to the mechanisms by which, SDA and SIL providers manage the occupancy of the property in line with service standards (including quality and safeguards) and residential rights including grounds and process for terminating an occupancy agreement
Residential service	The <i>Victorian Disability Act 2006</i> defines a residential service to mean accommodation: (a) provided by, on behalf of or by arrangement with a disability service provider; and (b) provided as accommodation in which residents are provided with disability services; and (c) supported by rostered staff that are provided by the disability service provider; and

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	(d) admission to which is in accordance with a process determined by the Secretary of the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing.
SDA Resident	A participant currently residing in a dwelling
Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA)	Refers to housing provided by a NDIS registered provider of SDA, to participants who require specialist housing solutions to assist with the delivery of their supports. SDA refers to the dwelling itself and not the support that is provided there
Support coordination	Refers to a funded support under the NDIS. Where support coordination is intended to assist a participant with SDA in their plan, support coordination would include assistance to locate, apply for, access, transition and maintain SDA arrangements.
Supported Independent Living (SIL)	Refers to the support of participants including assistance with or supervision of the tasks of daily life in a shared living arrangement
Vacancy Coordination Teams (VCT)	Refers to the CLRS team which coordinate the process to offer residency for all CLRS owned and registered SDA residential services.

### Procedure

### Rights and Responsibilities

**CLRS as an SDA provider** (operating with a SIL provider as a residential service), is required to enter into a Collaboration Agreement with the SIL provider. The Collaboration Agreement will stipulate that both parties agree to co-operate with each other in complying with the requirements of any relevant legislation and meeting the needs of the residents in their household.

**Supported Independent Living providers** (operating with an SDA provider as a residential service), are required to be registered as a Disability Service Provider under the Disability Act and have a Collaboration Agreement with a SDA provider stipulating that both parties agree to fully co-operate with each other in complying with the requirements of the Disability Act and meeting the needs of the residents in their household.

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The **CLRS Vacancy Coordination Team (VCT)**, in consultation with the relevant SIL provider(s), **coordinate** the process to offer residency in all CLRS registered SDAs in accordance with the standards outlined in this policy.

The VCT will not accept responsibility for:

- costs incurred by the SIL providers during the process to advertise, receive and consider applications for residency in their Dwellings, in respect to any vacancy; or
- costs or losses incurred by the SIL providers where complexities or delays arise in identifying a preferred participant to whom a vacancy will be offered including if a participant declines an offer; or
- resolving disputes with the SIL providers where they cannot reach an agreement in relation to whom a vacancy will be offered to; or
- coordinating and supporting a participant's transition into SDA once the participant has accepted an offer; or
- resolving issues once a participant has signed agreements with the SIL providers; or
- resolving issues arising from the residency composition or support requirements of residents.

**Participants**, with SDA funding approved in their plans, will be looking for a home in consultation with their informal supports and/or support coordinator (if funded). This will mean considering advertised dwellings, selecting which ones to apply for and considering, accepting, negotiating or declining any offers. Participants must be 18 years old by the time they move into SDA.

**NDIS Support Coordinators**, where funded in a participant's plan, play a critical role in supporting participants to determine which Dwellings to apply for and to consider, accept, negotiate or decline any SDA offers. NDIS Support Coordinators also play an important role in supporting participants to provide accurate and current information about their support needs and preferences in an application for a dwelling.

**Informal supports (e.g. families and carers)**, use their detailed knowledge and understanding of a participant's support needs, preferences and aspirations to support a participant to determine which dwellings to apply for, and to consider, accept, negotiate or decline any SDA offers.

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## Process to offer residency.

This section outlines the process to offer residency in SDA.



## Part One

This part outlines the process when a vacancy occurs in:

- Multi-bedroom SDA – where SIL supports are shared by residents.
- Single bedroom SDA – where SIL supports may be shared with residents in nearby or co-located SDA.

And

- There is at least one resident in these arrangements who has a SIL provider currently delivering supports to them.

Refer to Part Two for other vacancy scenarios.

### Stage 1: Declaring a vacancy.

A vacancy may arise if:

- a resident advises that they will be vacating.
- a provider issues a notice to vacate or notice of temporary relocation (pursuant to the Disability Act); or
- a resident pass away.

Stakeholder	Rights and responsibilities
CLRS SDA provider	<p>CLRS to notify the NDIA Chief Executive Officer of the vacancy <b>within five days</b> of a resident giving a notice of intention to vacate, a resident having been issued with a notice to vacate or a vacancy arising for any other reason.</p> <p>Request an updated SDA dwelling profile from the SIL Provider. This is to be provided within five business days of the vacancy arising (except where an on-hold process is being considered).</p>

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	<p>CLRS will notify residents and their nominated contact person in writing that a vacancy has been declared and provide information about the offering residency process.</p> <p>CLRS will consult with the resident's SIL provider to identify maintenance or other works required to prepare the vacant bedroom for a new occupant, including professional cleaning and repair of any damage (such as replacement of carpet due to wear and tear).</p>
SIL provider(s)	<p>SIL provider to advise CLRS <b>within two business days</b> of a vacancy or pending vacancy using the <b>vacancy notification form</b>. Note: This notice is required so CLRS can meet NDIA reporting timeframes and cease rent collection from the resident who has died or left the SDA and is required even when an on-hold request is likely to be made.</p>

### Stage 2: Advertising a vacancy.

Vacancies in CLRS SDA Dwellings may be advertised in a variety of ways. This may include public advertisements such as the local paper or online or through existing networks.

- Housing Hub website <https://www.housinghub.org.au>
- NDIS SDA finder <https://www.ndis.gov.au/participants/home-and-living/specialist-disability-accommodation-explained/sda-finder>
- Go Nest website <https://gonest.com.au/>

CLRS will advertise the vacancy for at least ten business days.

A vacancy advertisement will include:

- SDA design category, location, property features, floorplans, and photographs
- if there is a specific target group for the vacancy (such as people with a neurological condition)
- high-level information about existing residents (such as age range, gender)
- information on local amenities
- SDA funding requirements and rent charge for the vacancy.

CLRS will ensure the dwelling is available to prospective residents for open inspections at a mutually convenient and agreed time. This will ensure that all eligible participants have an opportunity to view and apply for a vacancy and that information is available and accessible to all participants.

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CLRS may commence advertising a vacancy prior to a resident exiting a dwelling if the resident and CLRS have agreed to an exit date. This is to prevent unintended pressures on the resident to exit the dwelling earlier than the agreed date.

### Open inspections

CLRS will collaborate with the SIL provider to coordinate open inspections. CLRS will work with the SIL provider to ensure that the SIL Provider:

- provides reasonable notice to the existing residents of the dates for the inspections; and
- minimises disruptions to the existing residents; and
- ensures the inspection does not cause any security or safety problems to the existing residents; and
- respects existing residents' privacy, including the outgoing resident if they are still residing in the dwelling, by restricting access to their private rooms during inspections; and
- ensures inspections are only available to prospect residents and/or their supports.

CLRS may consider organising private inspections for a participant and their supports. These decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis to ensure the needs and privacy of the existing residents are properly considered.

### SDA applications

After considering an advertisement and attending an inspection (if the participant wishes to), participants, in consultation with their supports, can then decide whether or not they wish to apply to live in the dwelling. If the participant decides to apply, they should apply by completing the CLRS SDA application form.

Stakeholder	Rights and responsibilities
CLRS	Ensure the vacancy is advertised. Respond to enquiries. Acknowledge receipt of application and follow up any incomplete actions. Receive applications. Coordinate open inspections
SIL provider(s)	Cooperate with the coordination of open inspections. Direct applications to the SDA provider
Participants	Consider advertisements. Attend open inspections (optional) Decide whether to apply to live in a dwelling

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Stakeholder	Rights and responsibilities
Support coordinators	Assist participants to decide whether to apply to live in a dwelling. Assist participants to complete the application process
Informal supports	Assist participants to decide whether to apply to live in a dwelling. Assist participants to complete the application process

### Stage 3: Identifying a preferred participant.

Identifying a preferred applicant for a vacancy in SDA where SIL supports are shared is a complex process that needs input from current residents, their support networks and their SIL provider to ensure sustainable and long-term tenancies of all people living in the SDA.

During the advertising period, SDA providers will receive applications from participants interested in living in the dwelling. SDA providers must have clear and appropriate procedures for working with the SIL provider, to review applications and to identify a preferred participant to offer residency.

#### Eligibility

The NDIA is responsible for assessing SDA eligibility. CLRS will ensure that any participant applying for a vacancy is approved for SDA and what their level of SDA funding approved by the NDIA is prior to making an offer to that participant. CLRS may choose to accept a participant that does not have SDA funding.

#### Screening

CLRS and the SIL providers will review all applications received to determine who will be the best fit for the household.

During the screening process, the SIL provider is responsible for representing the:

- views, preferences and needs of both current residents and the applicants (where residents have not expressed their views, the team will consider screening factors listed in [Appendix 2](#))
- risks to the health and safety of current residents, applicants and workers, including the extent to which these can be practically mitigated.
- whether the building fabric is suitable to meet the support requirements of the applicant or if it can be modified with funding identified and approved for this purpose
- whether the applicant's support funding matches the vacancy, unless otherwise agreed by both the CLRS and SIL provider.

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- extent to which the applicant's support requirements, health management and personal goals can be met by either the existing model of support or a modified or supplemented model of support with funding identified and approved for this purpose.
- whether applicants are willing to enter a service agreement with the current resident's SIL provider.

### Making a decision

CLRS, SIL providers and current residents will work together to identify a preferred participant to offer residency. As established by the Collaboration Agreement, CLRS and SIL providers agree to fully co-operate with each other in meeting the needs of the residents of the household. This will include communicating with each other and sharing information about the existing residents and the services. If a consensus is unable to be reached after both parties attempt to resolve the disagreement, the SIL provider will make a final decision on ranking of vacancies to be offered to participants.

The obligation to communicate and share information only applies so far as is necessary and where lawful to do so. Any exchange of information is subject to the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1988*, *Health Records Act 2001 (Vic)* and Disability Act. It is the responsibility of the parties involved to understand their legislative obligations and ensure compliance with them.

When a preferred applicant and a next preferred applicant is identified, arrangements should be made for a meet and greet opportunity with current residents, including the consideration of the nature of the meeting, if participation of other parties can support a positive experience for participants and if more than one meet and greet opportunity is likely to be required.

The current resident's SIL provider arranges the meet and greet opportunity for the preferred applicant to meet with current residents. The resident's SIL provider documents the outcome of the meeting, including the applicant's and current residents' responses.

Following the meet and greet, the panel makes a final decision about whether the offer of residency can proceed or if the panel must meet further to discuss issues, including a possible decision to re-advertise.

### Funding

If a preferred applicant does not have SDA funding that matches the advertised vacancy (for example, not the same design category), CLRS will seek approval from the CEO to offer residency to the preferred applicant.

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The offer of residency will be contingent upon the preferred applicant having sufficient SIL funding. The SIL provider will work with the applicant and their support network to get approval for their SIL funding in a timely manner, if SIL funding is not already included in their plan. If the applicant is not approved for the required SIL funding, the offer of residency may be withdrawn.

### Documenting the application process

Decision making will be retained on file in an appropriate electronic document management system. Documentation will include a clear explanation of the process taken to consider the factors outlined above for all participants who apply to live in the dwelling.

Stakeholder	Rights and responsibilities
SDA provider	Review all the applications. Record minutes of all meetings of the VCT
SIL provider(s)	Review all the applications. Represent the needs of the current residents. Document the application process. Document the decision-making process, including notes for the meet & greet outcome.

### Stage 4: Communicating the outcome.

A formal offer of SDA will be made to the preferred participant at which time the participant, in consultation with their support coordinator and/or their informal supports, may elect to accept, decline or negotiate the offer. The applicant will have **seven days** to advise if they accept or decline the offer.

If the participant declines the offer, CLRS, the SIL provider and the current resident (if applicable) will choose to offer SDA to their next preferred participant or readvertise the dwelling.

CLRS, as the SDA Provider, will notify any unsuccessful participants and their supports, of the outcome of their application. Communication will be provided using a method that best suits the participant's needs.

Stakeholder	Rights and responsibilities
SDA	Offer SDA to the preferred participant. Notify unsuccessful participants of the outcome
SIL Provider	Support the offer to the preferred applicant. Engage with the preferred applicant regarding SIL supports required

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Participants	Accept, decline or negotiate any offer
Support coordinators	Assist a participant to consider and if required negotiate any offers
Informal supports	Assist a participant to consider and if required negotiate any offers

### Confirmation that the residency will proceed.

Once CLRS has received confirmation residency will be proceed, CLRS will:

Provide the resident and their support network with:

- the SDA residency agreement information statement to NDIS participants
- easy English materials that explain roles and responsibilities of SDA residents and CLRS,
- SDA service agreement, rent collection process, complaint process, and house rules form.
- other information about living in CLRS SDA.

Work with the resident and their support network, prior to their move-in date, to:

- establish an SDA service agreement as required by the NDIS Act
- establish an SDA residency agreement as required by the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997*
- establish the rent collection process.
- establish a Collaboration Agreement with the residents chosen SIL provider.

The SIL provider will:

- contact the person to arrange for them to move into the SDA, including developing a 'Move-in' plan that includes the planned move-in date and considers the needs of both the successful applicant and current resident group (such as further opportunities to meet and become familiar before the person moves in)
- provide CLRS with the planned move-in date so they can issue the SDA residency agreement, start charging rent and collect SDA payments for the person.

### Delays or withdrawal of an offer of residency

If there are issues that will significantly delay the move-in date (such as extended transition arrangements) or issues that may lead to an offer of SDA being withdrawn (such as SIL funding not being approved), CLRS will consult with the applicant, their support networks and the SIL provider to decide on next steps.

CLRS and the SIL provider will work collaboratively and with commitment to resolve the issues where possible.

If an offer of residency is unable to proceed, CLRS will notify the resident and their nominated contact person in writing that the offer of residency is withdrawn. The letter will include information about the next steps the person can take to find SDA.

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### Stage 5. If no preferred applicants are identified

If no preferred applicants have been identified, or there have been no applications for a vacancy, the vacancy will be immediately readvertised.

CLRS will consider opportunities to further promote the vacancy in consultation with the current resident's SIL provider, such as additional marketing platforms or improvements to the advertisement.

### Long-term vacancy

If the vacancy has been advertised for **60 days** with no suitable applications or a suitable applicant has not been identified, it will be considered a long-term vacancy.

CLRS will arrange a meeting with the SIL provider to:

- confirm all marketing and improvement opportunities have been considered.
- consider other strategies that may help the vacancy be filled.
- where other options have been exhausted, consider a time-limited reduction in SDA places. The purpose of this time-limited capacity reduction is to enable the current residents SIL provider review their roster according to the current resident's support needs, allow time for other strategies and to give current residents clarity about when the vacancy may be re-advertised.

CLRS or the current resident's SIL provider can seek a review of the time-limited reduction in SDA places if there are changed circumstances that are likely to result in a vacancy being filled, such as an increase in demand for vacancies in that area.

## Part Two

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This part outlines the process when a vacancy occurs in:

- Multi-bedroom SDA – where SIL supports will be shared but all rooms are currently vacant.
- Single person SDA – the resident's SIL supports will not be shared with any other resident.

### Process to offer residency.

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This section outlines the process to offer residency in SDA when SIL supports will not be shared, or where there are no current SIL providers in place.

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### Stage 1: Declaring a vacancy.

A vacancy may arise if:

- A resident in an SDA that does not share supports with others gives a notice of intention to vacate, is given a notice to vacate by the CLRS or dies.
- A new SDA is built.

Stakeholder	Rights and responsibilities
CLRS SDA provider	<p>CLRS to notify the NDIA Chief Executive Officer of the vacancy <b>within five days</b> of a resident giving a notice of intention to vacate, a resident having been issued with a notice to vacate or a vacancy arising for any other reason.</p> <p>Immediately upon being advised of a vacancy, CLRS will prepare the SDA for advertisement (except where an on-hold process is being considered).</p> <p>CLRS will identify maintenance or other works to be completed before advertising and to prepare the vacant SDA for a new occupant, including professional cleaning and repair of any damage (such as replacement of carpet due to wear and tear).</p> <p><b>Note:</b> CLRS will consult with the successful applicant if painting or replacement of curtains or blinds is requested to meet the successful applicant's preferences.</p>

### On-hold process

On occasion, a vacancy may need to be placed on hold for a period of time. This may be due to:

- a decision to re-enrol the SDA with fewer bedrooms.
- where a long-term vacancy has been advertised multiple times and has attracted no applicants. Refer to [Stage 5](#) for more information about long-term vacancies.

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- the need to repair or renovate the vacant room or SDA (**note:** advertising and applicant selection of can happen through the on-hold period, with the new occupant moving in after the work has been completed)
- CLRS decides not to advertise a room in an SDA for any other reason.

### Stage 2: Advertising a vacancy.

Vacancies in CLRS SDA dwellings may be advertised in a variety of ways. This may include public advertisements such as the local paper or online or through existing networks.

- Housing Hub website <https://www.housinghub.org.au>
- NDIS SDA finder <https://www.ndis.gov.au/participants/home-and-living/specialist-disability-accommodation-explained/sda-finder>
- Go Nest website <https://gonest.com.au/>

CLRS will advertise the vacancy for at least ten business days.

A vacancy advertisement will include:

- SDA design category, location, property features, floorplans, and photographs
- if there is a specific target group for the vacancy (such as people with a neurological condition)
- high-level information about existing residents (such as age range, gender)
- information on local amenities
- SDA funding requirements and rent charge for the vacancy.

The advertisement will also include information about finding a SIL provider, including how CLRS will support residents and their networks in a multi-bedroom SDA to contact each other in order to choose their shared SIL provider.

### Open inspections

Open inspections are an integral feature of advertising SDA and provide a valuable opportunity for prospective applicants to view the SDA and seek more information about the building features and local amenities (such as parks, shops and other services).

CLRS will coordinate the open inspection. In some cases, additional private inspections may be arranged.

### SDA applications

After considering an advertisement and attending an inspection (if the participant wishes to), participants, in consultation with their supports, can then decide whether they wish to apply

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to live in the dwelling. If the participant decides to apply, they should apply by completing the CLRS SDA application form.

### Stage 3: Identifying a preferred participant.

#### Offering Residency Panel process

At the end of the advertising period, CLRS will convene an Offering Residency Panel meeting according to the following steps:

1. Confirm panel members (CLRS SDA Coordinator and CEO) arrange the panel meeting (which could be face to face, online, by email or a combination of methods).
2. CLRS will review and shortlist applications for consideration. Applications that do not meet the application criteria or the specific requirements for the vacancy will not be considered by the panel.
3. The panel will consider applications giving consideration to:
  - views, preferences and needs of the applicants (where applicants have not expressed their views, the panel will consider screening factors listed in [Appendix 2](#))
  - risks to the health and safety of the applicants, including the extent to which these can be practically mitigated.
  - whether the building fabric is suitable to meet the support requirements of the applicants or if it can be modified with funding identified and approved for this purpose
  - whether the applicant's SDA funding matches the vacancy
  - urgency of housing need.
2. The panel identify a preferred applicant and next preferred applicant.
3. CLRS keeps records that show how decisions have been made – **note:** a record showing an offer of residency was made with due care, skill and diligence may be needed as part of an investigation by the NDIS Quality and Safety Commission, the Disability Services Commissioner or as part of the review of a reportable incident.

### Stage 4: Communicating the outcome.

A formal offer of SDA will be made to the preferred participant at which time the participant, in consultation with their support coordinator and/or their informal supports, may elect to accept, decline or negotiate the offer. The applicant will have **seven days** to advise if they accept or decline the offer.

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CLRS will notify any unsuccessful participants and their supports, of the outcome of their application. Communication will be provided using a method that best suits the participant's needs.

On acceptance the successful applicant must immediately commence looking for a SIL or Support provider.

If more than one resident has been identified for a multi-room SDA, CLRS will facilitate contact between the residents and their support networks so they can jointly find a new SIL provider.

### Confirmation that the residency will proceed.

Once CLRS has received confirmation residency will be proceed, CLRS will:

Provide the resident and their support network with:

- the SDA residency agreement information statement to NDIS participants
- easy English materials that explain roles and responsibilities of SDA residents and CLRS, SDA service agreement, rent collection process, complaint process, house rules and pet request form.
- other information about living in CLRS SDA.

Work with the resident and their support network, prior to their move-in date, to:

- establish an SDA service agreement as required by the NDIS Act
- establish an SDA residency agreement as required by the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997*
- establish the rent collection process.
- establish a Collaboration Agreement with the residents chosen SIL provider.

**Develop** a 'move-in' plan in consultation with the resident and their SIL provider that includes the move-in date (which will trigger rent and SDA payment collection), arrangements for resident's furniture or equipment to be delivered, arrangements for the SIL provider to be ready for service delivery (such as delivery of furniture or equipment, development of safe working procedures for resident equipment if required, etc).

### Delays or withdrawal of an offer of residency

If there are issues that will significantly delay the move-in date (such as extended transition arrangements or difficulty finding a SIL provider), CLRS will meet with the resident and their support networks to decide on next steps.

If an offer of residency is unable to proceed, CLRS will notify the resident and their nominated contact person in writing that the offer of residency is withdrawn. The letter will include information about the next steps the person can take to find SDA.

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### Stage 5: If no preferred applicants are identified.

If no preferred applicants have been identified, or there have been no applicants for a vacancy, the vacancy will be immediately readvertised.

CLRS should consider any opportunities to further promote the vacancy, such as through additional marketing platforms or improvements to the advertisement.

### Long-term vacancy

If the vacancy has been advertised for **60 days** with no suitable applications or a suitable applicant has not been identified, it will be considered a long-term vacancy.

CLRS will:

- confirm all marketing and improvement opportunities have been considered.
- consider other strategies that may help the vacancy be filled.

### Evidencing the Process to Offer Residency

CLRS will ensure the completion of the documents detailed below to evidence the process to offer residency.

Stage	Evidence: Documented policy/procedure	Evidence: Example Template
Stage 1: Declaring a vacancy	Procedure to notify the NDIA of an impending vacancy	Notification template
Stage 2: Advertising a vacancy	Procedure to advertise a vacancy to all prospective participants SIL procedure for open inspections	Advertising template House profile template Application form
Stage 3: Identifying a preferred participant	Procedure to engage representatives from CLRS and SIL providers to identify a preferred participant. Practice instructions for screening participants Procedure for recording decisions	Screening tool Minute template for meetings between CLRS and SIL providers
Stage 4: Communicating the outcomes	Procedure to formally advise all participants of the outcome	Offer letter. Letter to advise unsuccessful participants. SDA Residency Agreement SDA Service Agreement

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Stage 5: If no preferred applicants are identified

Procedure to determine if this should be declared a long term vacancy

## Complaints

If an applicant, current resident or their SIL provider has a complaint about how the offering residency process has been managed they should:

1. Discuss the complaint with the CLRS staff they had contact with through the process.
2. If this has not resolved concerns, contact the CLRS Executive Director of Operations or CEO, either in person or by completing a *Have Your Say Form* or if preferred by a written letter.

*Have Your Say Forms and Easy Read* copies can be found at all CLRS sites or can be completed online at the CLRS website [www.clrs.org.au](http://www.clrs.org.au).

If the concern is still not resolved, the person can contact the following one bodies:

Who	How
All residents	<p>Victorian Community Visitor program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phone: 1300 309 337</li> <li>• <a href="https://www.publicadvocate.vic.gov.au/your-rights/in-your-home/community-visitors">Public Advocate's Community Visitors page</a> <a href="https://www.publicadvocate.vic.gov.au/your-rights/in-your-home/community-visitors">https://www.publicadvocate.vic.gov.au/your-rights/in-your-home/community-visitors</a></li> </ul> <p>NSW Community Visitor Program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phone: (02) 9407 1831</li> <li>• Email: <a href="mailto:OCV@adc.nsw.gov.au">OCV@adc.nsw.gov.au</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://ageingdisabilitycommission.nsw.gov.au/official-community-visitors.html">https://ageingdisabilitycommission.nsw.gov.au/official-community-visitors.html</a></li> </ul>
NDIS participants Disability Support for Older Australians Program clients (formerly called the Commonwealth Continuity of Support Program)	<p>NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phone: 1800 035 544</li> <li>• <a href="https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/about/complaints">NDIS Commission's How to make a complaint about a provider page</a> &lt;<a href="https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/about/complaints">https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/about/complaints</a>&gt;</li> </ul>

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Who	How
Residents who are <b>not</b> NDIS participants or clients of Disability Support for Older Australians Program	<p>Victorian Disability Service Commissioner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phone: 1800 677 342</li> <li>• <a href="https://www.odsc.vic.gov.au/making-a-complaint/how-to-make-a-complaint">Disability Service Commissioner's Make a complaint page</a> <a href="https://www.odsc.vic.gov.au/making-a-complaint/how-to-make-a-complaint">https://www.odsc.vic.gov.au/making-a-complaint/how-to-make-a-complaint</a></li> </ul> <p>NSW Ageing and Disability Commissioner</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phone: 1800 628 221</li> <li>• <a href="https://ageingdisabilitycommission.nsw.gov.au/contact-us/submit-an-online-report.html">https://ageingdisabilitycommission.nsw.gov.au/contact-us/submit-an-online-report.html</a></li> </ul>
Where the complaint is about a breach of the SDA residency agreement (Victoria only)	<p>Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phone: 1300 558 181</li> <li>• <a href="https://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/contact-us/resolve-your-problem-or-complaint">CAV's Complaints in SDA page</a> &lt;<a href="https://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/contact-us/resolve-your-problem-or-complaint">https://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/contact-us/resolve-your-problem-or-complaint</a>&gt;</li> </ul>
Where the complaint is about a breach of the NSW Tenancy agreement	<p>NSW Fair Trading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phone: 13 32 20</li> <li>• <a href="https://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/housing-and-property/renting">https://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/housing-and-property/renting</a></li> </ul>

## References and associated documents

NDIS Specialist Disability Accommodation 2021 (SDA Rules)  
 NDIS Quality & Safeguards Commission  
 NDIS SDA Design Standards  
 NDIS SDA Operational Guideline  
 NDIS SDA Pricing Arrangements & Pricing Limits  
 The Privacy Act 1998  
 Health Records Act 2001 (Vic)  
 Disability Act 2006 (Vic)  
 Residential Tenancies Act 1997(Vic)  
 Consumer Affairs Victoria  
 NSW Fair Trading

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**Amendments**

<b>Version Date</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Description of Key</b>
July 2025	Leah Taaffe	Update to key details and addition of NSW information

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### Appendix 1: SDA dwelling profile

The SDA dwelling profile collects information about the SDA and current residents, if SIL supports will be shared. The profile assists in the advertising of a vacancy and identification of preferred applicants by the VCT.

#### Details of vacancy:

- SDA provider name
- SIL provider name (if applicable)
- Address of the vacancy
- Bedroom number of the vacancy

#### Property features and local area profile

- Type of SDA e.g., house, apartment, villa
- Nearest public transport for example train, tram stop, bus stop
- Nearest shopping centre
- Nearest park
- Nearest medical practice (General Practitioner) and public hospital with an emergency department

Other information to help the vacancy to be found on advertising platforms (for example key features that people might be looking for in their SDA).

#### Current resident information:

- Age and gender identity
- Disability (physical, intellectual, sensory, psychosocial or neurological)
- Strengths, likes and interests
- Communication skills
- Support requirements – including support needed with activities of daily living and night-time supports
- Health needs
- Behaviours of concern
- Mobility support needs
- Day activities

#### Support model information (if applicable):

Current roster and staff profile – staff ratios during the week and weekends, overnight support, staff skill and experience (like experience with epilepsy, behaviour support, dual disability).

Any important dynamics among existing residents that need to be considered.

Other specific issues that need to be considered.

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**Strengths, interests and preferences the current residents would like in a new housemate (in shared SDA):**

Resident’s SIL providers will collect the views and preferences of residents and the people who support them (such as a family member or guardian) about the preferred characteristics of applicants.

If residents are not able to communicate views and preferences themselves and do not have people to support them with decisions, the resident’s SIL provider can include their views based on what they know about the residents likes, dislikes and preferences. The SDA dwelling profile will clearly indicate that this is the staff member’s view based on observation.

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## **APPENDIX 2: Factors for consideration in screening**

As part of a thorough resident screening process CLRS considers the factors that may impact on the likelihood of a sustainable and long-term residency. Understanding these factors allows CLRS to assess the applications received and identify their preferred participant to whom SDA will be offered.

One of the key considerations impacting on sustainable and long-term residencies is the extent to which a participant is likely to live harmoniously in the household with the other residents. Some of the factors that may impact household compatibility are outlined below.

### ***Age***

Age-related compatibility refers to personal, developmental and support needs as well as chronological age. Age-related life changes occur for all people, including people with a disability. People of the same age and stage in life are more likely to share the same interests. Consideration may be given to compatibility on the basis of shared interests. Interests are usually affiliated with age and ability however for some participants; chronological age is not representative of developmental ability. As such, there may be a situation where two participants share a common interest and are developmentally similar but may be of significant difference in age.

### ***Gender***

The gender mix of the household may be considered when assessing compatibility of a participant. This consideration also applies to the gender mix or profile of the SIL staff.

Factors that may be considered include:

- staff capacity to provide support to all residents and to ensure the safety and well-being of everyone in the household;
- acknowledgement and understanding of any cultural differences or issues that may impact on gender issues;
- factors in a resident's personal history or background that may impact on feelings of safety and well-being.

### ***Cultural background***

A participant's cultural background and beliefs may mean that adaptations may be required to routines and procedures. Similarities and differences between the current residents and participants should be noted enabling these factors to be considered as part of considerations about compatibility and transition planning.

### ***Support needs***

Offering SDA to a participant on the basis of having the same disability or similar support needs or behaviours of concern is not necessarily advantageous to the residents. In fact,

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evidence suggests that deliberately having people with a disability with behaviours of concern together in the same residence overwhelms staff ability to provide individualised care. However, if the Dwelling offers specialist types of support, then participants with those support needs may be considered as a priority for offering SDA. Health related needs may also be considered when screening participants to ensure that the SIL provider, in consultation with the relevant health practitioners, can meet the needs of the participants.

### ***Communication skills, style and preference***

The opportunity for people to communicate with each other and not just staff is important to supporting participant's independence and opportunities for development. Ensuring that all strategies are in place to support people to maximise their own communication skills, supports everyone in the house to communicate with each other using preferred methods of communication and ensures staff understand and can support resident's preferred methods of communication.

### ***Behaviours of concern***

Behaviour of concern refers to any behaviour that causes harm to the person or another person. CLRS may require a behaviour support plan that documents behavioural history, any current legal orders, the risks to self or others, relevant risk indicators, protective factors and strategies for low, moderate and severe escalation.

On occasion, it may be that the other residents may be more independent but may have support needs resulting from behaviours of concern. In this instance CLRS will determine where there are likely issues of incompatibility and potential risk of harm and ensure appropriate measures can be implemented to ensure the safety of all the residents in the household.

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### APPENDIX 3: Vacancy notification

This form is used by SIL providers to notify CLRS SDA services of a:

- notice to vacate from a provider.
- notice of temporary relocation from a provider
- notice of intention to vacate by a resident.

All SIL providers operating in CLRS SDA are required to complete this form.

#### *Information about the person completing this form.*

<b>Date form completed</b>	
<b>SIL provider</b>	
<b>Name</b>	
<b>Position</b>	
<b>Contact phone number</b>	

#### *Vacancy details*

<b>Address of SDA</b>	
<b>SDA provider</b>	
<b>SDA contact phone number</b>	

#### *Details of person vacating*

<b>Name of person exiting SDA</b>	
<b>Person's date of birth</b>	
<b>Date of exit</b>	
<b>Reason for exit</b>	

#### **INTERNAL OFFICE USE ONLY**

<b>Date received</b>	
<b>NDIS participant ID</b>	
<b>Person receiving form</b>	

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