

Program requirements for lead tenant services in Victoria

September 2014

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Introduction

Purpose

Young people from 16 years of age who are transitioning from living in out-of-home care to independence¹ are a particularly vulnerable group in our community. They often have to develop independent living skills and manage on their own much earlier than other young people. Lead tenant services are one of the accommodation and support options that can assist young people in making the “*graduated transition from care to increasing independence as they mature and grow*”².

The purpose of this document is to set out the mandatory program requirements for delivering lead tenant services in Victoria for young people transitioning to independent living. It provides a common benchmark for community service organisations (CSOs) funded by the Department of Human Services (the department) to deliver lead tenant programs to ensure a consistent approach to high-quality service delivery.

The requirements are statements of *what* CSOs providing lead tenant services need to do in order to meet service expectations. In general, the requirements do not outline *how* – this information can be sourced from the range of program guidelines and other documents as referenced throughout this publication. CSOs will also have their own operations and procedural documentation that outline specifically how the program requirements are implemented. However, the appendices of the program requirements include some tools and templates that may assist CSOs in implementing the program requirements.

Service description

Lead tenant³ is an out-of-home care placement option providing medium-term accommodation and support to young people aged 16-18 years⁴ who have been placed away from the care of their families by Child Protection. These young people are generally subject to custody to the Secretary or guardianship to the Secretary orders as defined by the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*⁵ (Children Youth and Families Act).

Lead tenant programs provide a safe semi-independent living environment in which young people are supported by one or two approved adult volunteer lead tenant/s who provide day-to-day guidance and mature role-modelling. The lead tenant volunteer also works collaboratively with program staff members in monitoring and responding to the wellbeing of young people.

¹ Independence is defined as ‘the development of practical, emotional and interpersonal living skills that enable us to cope physically and emotionally and form effective social relationships’ (Dixon J and Stein M 2005, *Leaving care: through care and aftercare in Scotland*, Jessica Kingsley, London). This is often referred to as interdependence.

² Maunders D, Liddell M, Lidell M and Green S 1999, *Young people leaving care and protection*, National Youth Affairs Research Scheme, Hobart

³ The program requirements relate to lead tenant services managed by CSOs and funded through the department under activity 31188 outlined in the Department of Human Services Policy and Funding Plan 2012-2015, Update 2013-14 that can be accessed at <<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/plans.-programs-and-projects/plans-and-strategies/key-plans-and-strategies/policy-and-funding-plan-department-of-human-services>>

⁴ Some CSOs may provide lead tenant programs up to 19 years of age where there is a specific local agreement and funding arrangement.

⁵ The Children, Youth and Families Act can be accessed at <www.legislation.vic.gov.au>

The model is best suited to young people who have the personal readiness to develop independent living skills in a share-house type arrangement, but who require support and encouragement to develop the necessary skills to share accommodation and live successfully in community settings in the future. Usually up to two young people reside in the placement for up to two years.

The program is supported by professional staff including a case manager who has primary responsibility for the young person's case management, development of life skills, and care and transition planning. The model also includes after-hours on-call support for both lead tenants and young people.

Case management for the majority of young people in lead tenant placements is contracted to the CSO, except where there is a particular requirement for Child Protection or Intensive Case Management Services (ICMS) to undertake this role. This is negotiated on a case-by-case basis.

Houses utilised by lead tenant programs are varied and include accommodation wholly owned by a CSO; department-owned residential care units not currently being used for that program; transitional housing stock; and, properties rented via real estate agents.

Some CSOs are funded to provide an enhanced lead tenant program which provides a greater level of support in order to accommodate young people who have more complex issues. Additional support in enhanced lead tenant programs is varied but may include a part-time youth worker, additional brokerage to meet the specialised needs of young people or flexible funding for staffing in the house for the period where this may be required.

Lead tenant cluster models are another lead tenant model provided in some local areas. They are a partnership between the department, CSOs and Transitional Housing Services. In this model there are co-located, purpose built separate units for both lead tenant and transitional housing accommodation, providing some capacity for young people to graduate to a transitional housing unit when they leave out-of-home care.

Partnership in service delivery

Effective practice requires good working relationships between services as well as working in partnership with young people and families. The decision to place a young person into out-of-home care imposes responsibility on all those involved to ensure that, at a minimum, the standard of care provided is significantly better than the care that they would otherwise have received at home.

The department and CSOs delivering lead tenant services must work in partnership to deliver an appropriate standard of care. This document identifies what is expected of CSO lead tenant programs that provide care for young people on behalf of the department.

At a statewide level, the department plays a critical role in specifying the type of services required, the expected service outcomes, the framework under which services are funded, and how service delivery will be monitored.

At a local level, the department undertakes the core monitoring of service delivery and engages with CSOs in relation to service demand and performance issues. The department is also responsible for timely provision of information to CSOs regarding young people in lead tenant accommodation, developing case plans for young people based on best interests principles, participating as active members of care teams and negotiating with CSOs to ensure the best interests of young people are met via the delivery of services in accordance with case plan goals.

CSOs are responsible for recruiting, assessing, training, supervising and supporting lead tenants and the staff who work to manage and support the program.

CSOs support young people placed in lead tenant accommodation and take the lead role in the development and implementation of Looking After Children (LAC) 15+ Care and Transition Plans. Where CSOs have contracted case management responsibility, they are responsible for implementing statutory case plans. Where Child Protection or ICMS are case managers, specific responsibilities should be individually agreed.

Context

These program requirements should be used in conjunction with the:

- overarching *Department of Human Services Standards 2011*⁶
- Children Youth and Families Act
- *Monitoring framework for the health, housing and community service sectors*⁷
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*⁸
- *Department of Human Services Policy and Funding Plan 2012-2015*⁹.

The following policies are also of particular relevance to the provision of lead tenant services:

- *Care and transition planning for leaving care: Victorian Practice Framework*¹⁰ – provides guidance to help CSOs comply with Children Youth and Families Act (section 16) which provides for the provision of services to assist in supporting a young person under the age of 21 years to gain the capacity to make the transition to independent living where the person has been subject to the custody or guardianship of the Secretary, and on leaving the custody or guardianship of the Secretary, is of an age to, or intends to, live independently. This Framework is one of a set of resources to support transition planning which also include the *Guide to developing 15+ Care and Transition Plans* and the LAC 15+ Care and Transition Plan.
- Best interest case practice model¹¹ – which informs and supports professional practice in family services, Child Protection and placement and support services to achieve positive outcomes for and families.

⁶ The *Department of Human Services standards* (June 2011) and companion evidence guides can be accessed at: <<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies.-guidelines-and-legislation/departement-of-human-services-standards>>

⁷ The *Monitoring framework for the health, housing and community service sectors* can be accessed at <<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/facs/bdb/fmu/service-agreement/4.departmental-policies-procedures-and-initiatives/4.10-monitoring-framework>>

⁸ The Charter for Human Rights and Responsibilities 2008 can be accessed at <http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/Domino/Web_Notes/LDMS/PubLawToday.nsf/95c43dd4eac71a68ca256dde00056e7bf/1e66cda63148685ca2577530015f3df!OpenDocument>

⁹ The Department of Human Services Policy and Funding Plan can be accessed at <<http://intranet.dhs.vic.gov.au/resources-and-tools/procedures-and-processes/policy-and-funding-plans>>. The lead tenant program is activity 31188 in this plan.

¹⁰ The *Care and transition planning for leaving care: Victorian Practice Framework* (2012), *Guide to developing 15+ Care and Transition Plans* and the LAC 15+ *Care and Transition Plan* can be accessed at <<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies.-guidelines-and-legislation/care-and-transition-planning-for-leaving-care-framework>>

¹¹ The Best Interests Case Practice Model documents can be accessed at <<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/cpmanual/best-interests-case-practice>>

- Planning for leaving care (Advice 14188)¹² – this advice provides Child Protection practitioners and CSOs with the practice standards, procedures and processes required to prepare and support young people transitioning from care.
- LAC practice framework¹³ – provides guidance and planning tools to ensure young people’s needs are met while they are in out-of-home care.
- *Charter for children in out-of-home care* - outlines principles to promote the wellbeing of children and young people in out-of-home care¹⁴.

Format of the program requirements

Categories

The program requirements are divided into five broad categories:

Section 1: Client care requirements

These requirements concern the central importance of a young person’s safety, healthy development and stability. This section emphasises the importance of catering to and respecting the individual needs and cultural backgrounds of young people.

Section 2: Placement management requirements

These requirements concern the suitability of lead tenant placements for meeting the needs of young people and the need to plan, monitor and review placements. This section emphasises the need for good communication and collaboration between all those involved with the young person, to ensure all are kept informed and have opportunities to participate in decision-making.

Section 3: Lead tenant and care environment requirements

These requirements concern the need to thoroughly select, assess, train, support and supervise lead tenants. This section emphasises the importance of the care environment being suitable, safe and appropriate for young people.

Section 4: Human resources (CSO staff) requirements

These are employment requirements including skills and attributes of staff, training, supervision and complaints procedures. The requirements address what is expected of CSO staff and what staff can expect of their employers.

Section 5: Organisational requirements

These are the requirements for the operation and practices of CSOs that deliver lead tenant services.

¹² Planning for leaving care, Advice 1418, Updated February 2013, Child Protection Practice Manual, Department of Human Services can be accessed at <http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/cpmanual/out-of-home-care/care-and-placement-planning/1418-planning-for-leaving-care/3>

¹³ Further information about LAC can be accessed at <http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-service-providers/children,-youth-and-families/child-and-youth-placement-and-support/lac-in-practice>

¹⁴ More information about the charter can be accessed at http://www.kids.vic.gov.au/publications/parents_resources.htm

Components

Each category contains three components:

- a **principle statement**, which identifies why the particular category of program requirements is important
- a **summary of expectations**, which summarises the program requirements to apply to each category
- the detailed **program requirements**.

As the Children, Youth and Families Act is the foremost legislative foundation for program activity, specific sections are cited when applicable.

The program requirements also include a definitions of terms in the **Glossary**, links to key supporting documents in **Resources and Links**, and **appendices** containing a range of tools and templates to assist implementation of the requirements.

1. Client care requirements

Principle statement

The safety, wellbeing, development and stability of young people making the transition to independence is the primary focus of lead tenant services. Individualised planning and service delivery is essential so that young people will:

- reside in a safe environment that is free from abuse or neglect
- receive high-quality care that aims to meet their physical, emotional, developmental, educational, cognitive, social, cultural and spiritual needs, and provide them with an opportunity to reach their full potential
- be given the opportunity to maintain and form significant, consistent and enduring emotional connections with important people in their life
- be supported to develop independent living skills and effectively transition from out-of-home care.

Summary of expectations

Lead tenants and CSO staff play a vital role in supporting each young person to make the transition to adulthood and to reach their full potential. Lead tenant programs offer a semi-independent opportunity to encourage young people and facilitate their progress towards case plan goals; respect and cater for their individual needs and backgrounds; and focus on preparing them as much as possible for the demands they will face when they leave care. The LAC framework must be used to plan and monitor their care, facilitate the involvement of the young person and their family where appropriate, and coordinate a wide range of services in delivering support.

On a day-to-day basis, lead tenants and CSO staff play a supporting and facilitative role in ensuring a young person's needs are met including health; education, training or employment; familial; social and recreational; community engagement; and, self-care and personal needs.

Program requirements

1.1 Health

- 1.1.1 CSOs will ensure young people entering lead tenant accommodation are registered with a General Practitioner (GP) and undergo a comprehensive health check through this GP on at least an annual basis or as often as required in their Health treatment plan (see requirement 1.1.3). The GP health check should identify if there are medical, dental, optical, auditory, mental health, sexual and reproductive health or specialist needs and if specific assessments or follow-up is required.
- 1.1.2 CSO staff will confirm the last date the young person underwent a health check and will arrange any follow up assessment or treatment required. Where the young person is Aboriginal, referral processes should occur in association with the local Aboriginal Health Service.

- 1.1.3 CSOs will ensure that specific details of any ongoing treatment required in any of the health care areas will be included in a Health treatment plan (see Health treatment plan in the Glossary) developed by the care team as part of care planning processes and also outlined in each young person's 15+ Care and Transition Plan (see 15+ Care and Transition Plan in the Glossary). The health treatment plan should be reviewed at least annually or more frequently if required.
- 1.1.4 CSOs will ensure young people have specific vision, hearing and dental assessments, and that any needs in these areas are addressed.
- 1.1.5 If necessary, CSOs will apply to access brokerage funds to ensure the young person is able to access any health treatment or specialist health assessment identified by the health assessment as being required where Medicare or public health services are not available¹⁵.
- 1.1.6 CSOs will assist young people in lead tenant placements to gradually take responsibility for monitoring and meeting their own health needs in preparation for leaving care.
- 1.1.7 CSOs will gather and maintain records detailing the young person's health care assessments and treatment plans, including records of any immunisations the young person has received. CSOs must ensure young people have access to their own health records.
- 1.1.8 The CSO will have written policies and procedures in place that all staff are familiar with, that are readily accessible to all staff, and that outline the CSO's policy on:
- o sexual and reproductive health
 - o drug and alcohol use
 - o cigarette smoking
 - o infection control procedures.
- 1.1.9 CSOs and lead tenants will comply with relevant guidelines concerning inhalant use and comply with relevant alcohol and drug policies (see *Inhalant use and alcohol and drugs* in Resources and Links)¹⁶.
- 1.1.10 CSOs will ensure care teams explore any substance abuse issues and all young people in lead tenant placements with substance abuse issues must be referred to a drug and alcohol treatment service.
- 1.1.11 CSOs will ensure care teams assess whether young people can have responsibility for safely storing and administering their own medication or make alternative arrangements for dispensing and storage.
- 1.1.12 If necessary, a CSO manager authorised in accordance with section 597 (5) of the Children Youth and Families Act and who holds, or performs or acts in the position specified in the *Instrument of Authorisation – Medical Consents*¹⁷, signed by the Executive Director of the relevant division of the department, may consent to the

¹⁵ Health assessment brokerage funds are managed and accounted for by the divisional Health and Education Assessment Coordinator

¹⁶ The Management Response to Inhalant Use policy can be accessed at <<http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/Management-response-to-inhalant-use:-Guidelines-for-the-community-care-and-drug-and-alcohol-sector>>

¹⁷ The Authority to Provide Medical Consent policy can be accessed at <<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/cpmanual/out-of-home-care/health-issues/1471-authority-of-csos-to-give-medical-consent-for-children-in-out-of-home-care/3>>

treatment, hospital admission, operation or surgery of a young person in out-of-home care including lead tenant under section 597 (3), (4) of the Children, Youth and Families Act. Wherever possible parents must be promptly informed, consulted and appropriately involved in any medical treatment planned for the young person.

1.2 Education, training and employment

- 1.2.1 CSO staff will support young people to enrol, attend and achieve at school, in a training program or at work and encourage them to maximise their education, training and employment opportunities. Specific details of any assistance required in this area will be outlined in each young person's 15+ Care and Transition Plan.
- 1.2.2 CSO staff will comply with the requirements of the *Out-Of-Home Care Education Commitment* 2011 that outlines responsibilities to support a young person in school¹⁸.
- 1.2.3 In accordance with the requirements of the *Out-Of-Home Care Education Commitment*, where a young person in a lead tenant placement attends a government, Catholic or independent school, designated case managers must be a member of the student support group (SSG) as established by the young person's school and also contribute to developing their Individual Education Plan (IEP).
- 1.2.4 CSOs must ensure that young people in lead tenant placements have received an Education Needs Assessment as part of the department's Health and Education Assessments Initiative (See *Health and Education Assessments Initiative* in the Glossary). The CSO will ensure the recommendations arising from the Education Needs Assessment form part of the care team's responsibilities and planning processes including access to education support brokerage if required.
- 1.2.5 CSOs will ensure that all young people in lead tenant placements between the ages of 16 and 18 on custody or guardianship orders and disengaged from education, training or employment are referred to the Springboard program¹⁹ in their division.
- 1.2.6 CSO staff will systematically record (using the Client Relationship Information System for Service Providers (CRISSP)) the outcomes of any liaisons with the young person's school, education or training program.
- 1.2.7 CSOs will ensure young people are provided with an area where they are able to use a computer, to study and to complete other education-related tasks.
- 1.2.8 CSO staff will ensure young people not in formal education are supported to re-engage in education-based programs that provide meaningful pathways to school, training or employment options.

1.3 Family and significant relationships

- 1.3.1 Lead tenant services will be delivered in a young person-centred, family-focused manner that acknowledges many young people will return to live with their families or have significant contact when they exit out-of-home care.

¹⁸ The *Out-of-home care education commitment* 2011 can be accessed at <http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/stuman/wellbeing/A4_partnering.pdf>

¹⁹ Information about the Springboard program can be accessed at <<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/plans,-programs-and-projects/programs/youth-specific/springboard-intensive-education-and-employment>>

- 1.3.2 CSOs will support the development and maintenance of positive family and cultural attachments for young people in accordance with their safety and wellbeing and their case planning goals. Specific details of any action required in this area will be outlined in each young person's 15+ Care and Transition Plan.
- 1.3.3 CSOs will contribute to supporting parents, families and siblings to have opportunities to have contact with the young person in a flexible manner that is in the best interests of the young person, and in accordance with their case plan. Specific details of any action required in this area will be outlined in each young person's 15+ Care and Transition Plan.
- 1.3.4 CSOs will support and encourage the maintenance and strengthening of relationships with the significant people in the young person's life. The identity of significant others will be specified in each young person's 15+ Care and Transition Plan.
- 1.3.5 CSOs will involve the young person's family and appropriate significant others in the care team and other decision-making opportunities as appropriate. Specific details of any action required in this area will be outlined in each young person's 15+ Care and Transition plan.
- 1.3.6 CSOs and lead tenants will always treat and speak about young people and their families respectfully.

1.4 Identity

- 1.4.1 CSOs and lead tenants will support and encourage the expression of each young person's cultural and religious identity.
- 1.4.2 CSOs and lead tenants will support and respect the expression of each young person's gender identity and sexual orientation.
- 1.4.3 Through appropriate consultation, lead tenants will receive advice and information from CSOs on typical development trends for young people, cultural and religious diversity, gender identity and sexual orientation.

1.5 Social and community engagement

- 1.5.1 CSOs will support and encourage young people to build and maintain relationships with their peers by assisting them to participate in age-appropriate activities including school excursions, work experience, camps, overnight stays and other activities (see *Participation in activities* in Resources and Links).
- 1.5.2 Young people will be provided with regular opportunities, and the materials they need to participate in appropriate recreational activities that they enjoy to develop social confidence and skills in interacting with their peers. Specific details of any action required in this area will be outlined in each young person's 15+ Care and Transition Plan.
- 1.5.3 CSOs will support and refer young people to become engaged with community services in their local area and facilitate such involvement. Where possible, these services should also be available to young people when they have left care to ensure continuity of relationships and support.

1.6 Self-care, independent living skills and leaving care

- 1.6.1 CSOs and lead tenants will support young people during their time in placement to develop independent living skills including:
- self-care skills
 - budgeting and managing money
 - managing family and other relationships
 - living with other people and conflict resolution
 - cooking, cleaning and maintenance of a home environment
 - understanding their rights and responsibilities as an adult.
- 1.6.2 CSOs will ensure information and guidance is available for staff and lead tenants on typical adolescent development trends and on the appropriate management and developmental impact of attachment and trauma on young people.
- 1.6.3 CSOs and lead tenants will support and supervise young people in managing any crises and minimising risk-taking in line with departmental policies.
- 1.6.4 CSOs will use the LAC 15+ Care and Transition Plan to help the care team to identify the necessary strategies and actions required to assist each individual young person's transition into adulthood. This plan will be developed in collaboration with the young person, and involve their family where applicable. The 15+ Care and Transition Plan will include a focus on the following areas of need:
- safe and sustainable accommodation
 - education or employment arrangements
 - sustainable income
 - access to health services (medical, dental and other specialist services as required)
 - information and referral to relevant post-care support services, health and community services, legal services, Centrelink, alternative housing options and culturally specific services such as Aboriginal organisations required for the young person including their contact details, timeframes and responsibilities
 - post-care financial support including brokerage
 - opportunities for young people who are leaving care to link with others in the same situation, if desired.
- 1.6.5 CSOs will work collaboratively with leaving care services²⁰ and young people to develop and implement their post-care accommodation goals so that young people do not exit to crisis accommodation services.
- 1.6.6 CSOs will utilise departmental resources developed specifically to assist care and transition planning (see *Leaving care* in Resources and Links).
- 1.6.7 CSOs will ensure a young person's personal possessions are safely stored and made available to them in good condition for when they leave care.

²⁰ More information about leaving care services can be accessed at <<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/children,-families-and-young-people/care-leavers/young-care-leavers>>

- 1.6.8 CSOs are responsible for providing support to young people in accordance with their 15+ Care and Transition Plan, for up to three months after leaving care, unless a shorter timeframe is negotiated with the department.
- 1.6.9 If young people up to 21 years of age who have left care seek assistance from the CSO, details of post-care support services and other relevant supports will be provided to them²¹.

1.7 Aboriginal young people

- 1.7.1 CSOs will ensure Aboriginal young people in lead tenant placements reside in a culturally safe environment that acknowledges, respects and highlights the importance of their cultural identity and heritage²².
- 1.7.2 In accordance with culturally competent practice, CSOs will develop links with appropriate Aboriginal services, community members and networks as soon as possible to enable the most effective response to Aboriginal young people.
- 1.7.3 Aboriginal community controlled organisations (ACCOs) will be involved in delivering services to Aboriginal young people wherever possible.
- 1.7.4 In relation to lead tenant placements contracted to CSOs, the Aboriginal Child Specialist Advice and Support Service (ACSASS) will continue to provide consultation to Child Protection regarding non-delegated decisions and actions, in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle and the *Protocol between Child Protection Service and the Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency 2002*²³.
- 1.7.5 In accordance with the Children, Youth and Families Act (section 12), CSOs will encourage members of Aboriginal communities to be involved in supporting Aboriginal young people.
- 1.7.6 CSOs will uphold the requirements of the Children, Youth and Families Act (section 13) Aboriginal child placement principle to ensure the cultural identity, family and community connections of Aboriginal young people are maintained and strengthened²⁴.
- 1.7.7 CSO staff will work in accordance with an Aboriginal young person's Cultural support plan (see *Cultural support plan* in the Glossary) pursuant to the Children Youth and Families Act (section 176) and ensure a young person's culture and identity is a central consideration in all care and transition planning processes.
- 1.7.8 In circumstances where an Aboriginal young person is residing with a non-Aboriginal lead tenant, at the earliest possible time, CSOs will ensure the lead tenant receives information and training on culturally appropriate caring, to ensure the young person's cultural values, beliefs and practices are respected and upheld (see *Aboriginal children and families* in Resources and Links).

²¹ Leaving care information can be accessed at < <http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/children,-families-and-young-people/care-leavers/young-care-leavers>>

²² The Aboriginal Cultural Competence Framework provides more detailed guidance can be accessed at <<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/plans,-programs-and-projects/plans-and-strategies/children,-youth-and-family-services/aboriginal-cultural-competence-framework-2008>>

²³ The *Protocol between Child Protection Service and the Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency 2002* can be accessed at <<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/dhs-and-victorian-aboriginal-child-care-agency-protocol-2002>>

²⁴ More information about the Aboriginal child placement principle can be accessed at <<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/reports-publications/aboriginal-child-placement-principle-guide-2002>>

- 1.7.9 CSOs will ensure staff and lead tenants are aware of significant dates and events within the Aboriginal community. CSOs will assist staff and lead tenants to build awareness of specific aspects of a young person's Aboriginal culture, while supporting the ongoing development of their cultural competence.

1.8 Young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

- 1.8.1 CSOs will ensure when a young person from a culturally and linguistically diverse background is placed in lead tenant accommodation, specific aspects of the young person's culture or religious identity are well understood and lead tenants fully informed. This may include dietary requirements, religious customs, beliefs and expectations such as appropriate dress and behaviour.
- 1.8.2 At the earliest possible time, lead tenants will receive additional information and training concerning specific cultural issues to make certain a young person's cultural values, beliefs and practices are respected and upheld.
- 1.8.3 CSOs will involve relevant members of the young person's community and extended family as appropriate, and, where necessary, use interpreters in communication with the young person and family.
- 1.8.4 CSOs will develop links with culturally appropriate services as soon as a young person is placed in the lead tenant placement, or as soon as they become aware of their linguistic, cultural or religious identity.

1.9 Stability

- 1.9.1 CSOs will make every effort to maintain the stability of a young person's placement; minimise the number of staff and lead tenants involved in their lives; minimise placement changes; and promote positive, caring, consistent and enduring relationships with their family, peers, lead tenants and significant others.
- 1.9.2 Where there are indications that a lead tenant placement might be disrupted, CSO staff will meet with departmental staff and other relevant parties in order to develop plans aimed at stabilising and securing the existing placement.
- 1.9.3 Where a decision is made that a placement change is required, the CSO will maintain responsibility for care of the young person until an alternative placement is found or a case planning decision is made to terminate the placement.
- 1.9.4 Where a placement change occurs, CSO staff will
- work cooperatively and sensitively with the person young person's case manager, the young person, their family and all other parties concerned, in order to ensure a smooth transition
 - make every effort to maintain the stability of a young person's school, training or employment and their connections with local support services
 - work cooperatively with the new placement provider to ensure all of the young person's personal belongings and other materials are safely transferred to the subsequent living arrangement
 - ensure all relevant information concerning the young person is passed on to staff/carers at a new placement, as well as the young person's case manager.

2. Placement management requirements

Principle statement

Good individual placement planning, strong partnerships and clear administrative procedures are essential to ensuring that young people are safe, well supported and able to make the most of the opportunity a lead tenant placement provides. CSOs must ensure placements meet a young person's individual and varying needs through good communication, collaboration and inclusive decision-making processes.

Summary of expectations

CSO staff and lead tenants play a vital role in contributing to the achievement of each young person's case planning goals. They will provide appropriate levels of support and supervision to young people through the placement and transition planning process, acknowledging the individuality of each young person. Young people's cultural identity, religion and language will be recognised and respected in the planning and provision of each placement.

Lead tenant placements will be delivered through a partnership between the young person, their family, CSO staff, lead tenants and the department to maximise the quality of planning and service provision each young person receives. The care team approach and LAC framework must be used to facilitate this collaboration and the involvement of the young person, their family and significant others in planning for their care and ensuring all their needs are well understood and met.

Service planning, monitoring and strong administration also contribute to program quality, effectiveness and the capacity to support young people making the important transition from out-of-home care to adulthood. The CSO will also appropriately respond to complaints and quality of care concerns in a timely and efficient manner.

Program requirements

2.1 Target group and eligibility

2.1.1 CSO program documentation for their lead tenant service must clearly articulate the target group and eligibility criteria to ensure appropriate young people are accommodated and supported in placement. Individual lead tenant programs, including enhanced and cluster model programs, may have a specific target group (eg. pregnant or parenting young women, young people with a disability) that CSOs have negotiated with their departmental division, however, the broad target group and eligibility criteria will include that young people:

- are aged 15¾ at minimum at time of referral (to enable transition by 16 years of age)
- are preferably aged no older than 17¾ at the time of referral in order to allow sufficient time in the placement to develop skills for later independence
- currently reside in out-of-home care (there may be exceptional circumstances where a young person moves to lead tenant accommodation immediately when placed in out-of-home care)

- have been identified by the CSO or division as being ready to progress to a semi-independent living arrangement
- have been identified by Child Protection via case planning as not able to return to their family or extended kinship network
- are interested in participating in a program that will assist them in life skill development and transition to independent living
- have a level of maturity that enables them to further develop independence and social skills
- are participating in education, training or employment or have agreed to engage with services²⁵ to facilitate their access to education, training or employment in the short-term future
- will be expected to reside in the lead tenant placement for between 6-24 months
- if they have high-risk behaviours²⁶, the referral will be subject to a joint assessment by the CSO and the department to consider whether these behaviours can be appropriately managed in the lead tenant (including enhanced or cluster model) placement or a more supported accommodation option is required.

2.2 Pre-referral, assessment and transition

- 2.2.1 CSO program documentation for their lead tenant service must clearly articulate the pre-referral and referral processes for the program to ensure appropriate young people are identified and prioritised to transition into the placement. The specific referral pathways will be negotiated divisionally, however, should specify that department Placement Coordination Teams, in collaboration with Child Protection and CSOs, will identify and prioritise referrals.
- 2.2.2 The CSO must document their assessment process to determine the young person's suitability for the lead tenant program and assist with placement matching and care planning. The assessment will occur prior to finalising the plan for the young person to move into the placement and will explore their:
- interests, motivations and personal readiness to move to a lead tenant placement
 - their compatibility with the existing lead tenant house vacancies (location; model ie. general, enhanced or cluster model; availability of support etc.)
 - personal, support and material needs in order to move to the placement
 - education, training or employment commitments and how they will be supported.
- 2.2.3 Young people's transition into their lead tenant placement will be well planned and coordinated by the CSO to ensure good continuity of care. The transition should occur within a 4-6 week period from the point of referral unless negotiated with the department in order to meet the individual needs of the young person.

²⁵ The most common support service to assist young people in residential care or lead tenant placement to access education, training or employment is the Springboard Program. Information about this program can be accessed at <<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/plans,-programs-and-projects/programs/youth-specific/springboard-intensive-education-and-employment>>

²⁶ High-risk behaviours may include serious substance abuse, suicidal or serious self-harming behaviours, emerging or diagnosed serious mental illness, sexualised behaviours, or aggressive/violent behaviours among others.

- 2.2.4 The CSO and the young person will have a clear understanding of their needs and issues to be addressed during the transition period including:
- health and counselling assessments, treatment plans and appointments
 - financial issues including receipt of Centrelink income support where eligible
 - legal matters
 - education, training or employment commitments
 - the roles and responsibilities of all the services and individuals supporting the young person
 - case management and case contracting arrangements
 - personal and household items required by the young person
 - the timeline for transition into the placement.
- 2.2.5 The LAC 15+ Essential Information Record, Assessment and Progress Record and 15+ Care and Transition Plan should be fully up to date prior to transition to a lead tenant placement.
- 2.2.6 The CSO should sign a formal agreement with young people entering lead tenant accommodation outlining the expectations of the young person while in the placement (see Appendix 1: Example CSO agreement with a young person).
- 2.2.7 CSOs will accept the referral and create the placement in CRIS or CRISSP within one working day of the placement commencing (see *CRIS and CRISSP* in the Glossary). At the conclusion of a placement, the CSO will close the placement on CRIS or CRISSP within one working day.

2.3 Care and placement planning and review

- 2.3.1 CSOs will work in collaboration with the department²⁷ to develop, contribute to, and implement the statutory case planning directions for young people in their lead tenant program.
- 2.3.2 CSO staff will work collaboratively with relevant agencies involved with each young person and foster effective linkages between these agencies. Case management provided by other agencies will be recognised and supported by CSOs where applicable.
- 2.3.3 CSOs have the lead responsibility for care and transition planning including coordinating and chairing specifically constituted care team meetings for each young person and managing, actioning and reviewing day-to-day care arrangements.
- 2.3.4 CSOs will ensure the agreed tasks allocated to care team members are completed in accordance with the 15+ Care and Transition Plan and each member must receive a copy of the plan and any future revised plans in a format that is accessible and understandable for all members.
- 2.3.5 CSOs will invite and communicate with the young person's Child Protection worker or case manager and other appropriate care team members.

²⁷ The department holds the legal responsibility for case planning for all statutory clients in out-of-home care (with the exception of a delegation made to an Aboriginal organisation under section 18 of the Children, Youth and Families Act).

- 2.3.6 CSOs will use care and placement planning models and guidelines demonstrating consistency with the *Best interests framework* (see *Best interests case practice model* in Resources and Links).
- 2.3.7 CSOs will use the LAC framework (see *Looking After Children* in the Glossary) to support the best interests of a young person using a collaborative care team approach. The CSO must ensure:
- the young person's LAC records are transferred from their previous placement to the lead tenant program and to future placements
 - the *Essential information record* (see *Essential information record* in the Glossary) is updated within 14 days of the young person transitioning to the lead tenant program and the record is kept up to date
 - the *15+ Care and Transition Plan* (see *15+ Care and Transition Plan* in the Glossary) is updated within 14 days of the young person transitioning to the lead tenant program and the record is updated at least every six months
 - the *Assessment and Progress Record 15+* (see *Assessment and Progress Record 15+* in the Glossary) is updated within the first six months of the placement and at least annually thereafter.
- 2.3.8 CSOs will have written policies and practices in place that outline appropriate trauma-informed intervention and support in response to a crisis, risk-taking or challenging behaviour displayed by young people in lead tenant placements including:
- utilising prevention and de-escalation strategies to diminish the risk of harm to the young person, their peers or others
 - understanding and responding appropriately to young people's individual triggers
 - positively supporting self-regulation by young people when they are faced with challenging/stressful situations/triggers.
 - avoiding the use of physically intrusive or restrictive practices.
- 2.3.9 CSOs will ensure their policies and procedures are readily accessible and observed by all staff and lead tenants, and supervision and training is utilised to support implementation.

2.4 Inclusive practice and decision-making

- 2.4.1 CSOs will support the development and maintenance of positive relationships for young people with family and significant others, in accordance with their safety and wellbeing and case planning goals. Specific details of any action required in this area will be outlined in each young person's 15+ Care and Transition Plan.
- 2.4.2 CSOs will ensure young people and their families and significant others (as appropriate) are encouraged and supported as far as possible to have direct involvement in all planning and decision-making processes that concern them.
- 2.4.3 CSOs must give consideration to the 'decision-making principles' that are outlined in part 1.2 division 3 of the Children, Youth and Families Act.
- 2.4.4 CSOs will follow part 1.2 division 4 of the Children, Youth and Families Act, 'Additional decision-making principles for Aboriginal children' that depicts the consideration given in

making a decision or taking action in relation to an Aboriginal young person. In addition, and in recognition of the principles of Aboriginal self-management and self-determination, members of the Aboriginal community to which an Aboriginal young person belongs will be consulted in decision-making processes.

- 2.4.5 CSOs will develop strategies to support the cultural needs of young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and encourage the expression of their identity in this regard.
- 2.4.6 CSOs will ensure their practice is sensitive to the needs of a young person with a disability including:
- seeking to understand the impact of the disability on the young person
 - providing a flexible service that recognises the needs of the young person
 - seeking secondary consultation from disability service providers where required.
- 2.4.7 The *Charter for children in out-of-home care* (see *Charter for children in out-of-home care* in Resources and Links) will be provided to and accessible to young people, CSO staff, and lead tenants.

2.5 Privacy and confidentiality

- 2.5.1 CSOs will have written policies and procedures concerning the need to protect a young person's right to privacy and confidentiality. These policies and procedures must be readily accessible and familiar to staff and lead tenants and will comply with relevant legislation and departmental guidelines (see *Privacy, confidentiality and communication* in Resources and Links).
- 2.5.2 Young people, family members and lead tenants all have the right to privacy. Their wishes will be respected and considered by CSOs and the department, wherever possible, while balancing the responsibility to protect young people from harm and to act in their best interests.
- 2.5.3 CSOs will ensure members of the care team are provided with information relevant to the care of the young person. Information is only disclosed outside of the care team on a need to know basis in order to maintain the safety and good care of the young person.
- 2.5.4 The CSO will ensure the living environment supports the privacy and confidentiality of the young person in culturally-, gender- and age-appropriate ways.
- 2.5.5 CSO policies, procedures and practice guidelines must provide for young people to access private space as appropriate and have their belongings kept in a safe and private place.
- 2.5.6 All personal information concerning young people and their families will be securely managed and stored by the CSO. This information will only be provided to appropriately authorised people.
- 2.5.7 CSOs should ensure staff and lead tenants are aware of restrictions applicable to providing information to a young person's parents as stated in the Children, Youth and Families Act (section 178(2)).

- 2.5.8 CSOs are obliged to comply with the *Information Privacy Act 2000*²⁸ under the funding and service agreement with the department (see *Service agreement* in Resources and Links). This includes an obligation in information privacy principle 1.3 to take reasonable steps when collecting personal information to ensure a person is aware of the purposes for which the information is being collected, and to whom the information may be disclosed, among other requirements.
- 2.5.9 A collection notice must be included on every form where information is collected about a young person in a lead tenant placement. The collection notice must include information about:
- the purposes for which the information is being collected
 - the main consequences for the person (if any) if information is not provided
 - the types of individuals or organisations to whom the information is likely to be disclosed
 - any law that requires the information to be collected
 - contact details for the CSO collecting the information including who to contact to access the information.
- 2.5.10 When promoting services to the public, publishing photographs, information, advertising or promotional material (including print or social media), CSOs will ensure young people in out-of-home care are not identifiable unless permission is granted by the department in compliance with provisions of section 534 of the Children, Youth and Families Act.

2.6 Records and information management

- 2.6.1 CSOs will arrange the collection of essential identification records and documentation for young people including birth certificates, Medicare and health care cards, tax file numbers, bank accounts and other documentation as appropriate.
- 2.6.2 CSOs will ensure that LAC and other personal records of a young person are securely stored and maintained to aid preservation. Personal records include details of a young person's placement, their experiences and achievements, photographs of meaningful and significant events, school reports, memorabilia, and the names of significant people involved in their life. This information will be available at all times to the young person, their family²⁹ and the department. CSOs will also ensure this information accompanies them to any future living arrangements.
- 2.6.3 CSOs will ensure a young person's records are stored in accordance with relevant legislation and departmental guidelines concerning information gathering and privacy. The information management policies and systems of a CSO must be in accord with the *Public Records Act 1973*, the *Information Privacy Act 2000*³⁰ and the *Health Records Act 2001*³¹.

²⁸ The *Information Privacy Act 2000* can be accessed at <<http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/>>

²⁹ Note: Section 178 (2) of the Children, Youth and Families Act describes circumstances where information may not be shared with parents

³⁰ The *Public Records Act 1973* and the *Information Privacy Act 2000* can be accessed at <http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/pr1973153/> and <<http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/>>

³¹ The *Health Records Act 2001* can be accessed at <<http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/>>

- 2.6.4 At the conclusion of a placement client records and other information are safely and indefinitely stored by the CSO. This will enable subsequent retrieval should the young person re-enter care or otherwise require access to their records.
- 2.6.5 The CSO must have policies and systems in place to allow young people, families and former clients to appropriately access records regarding services provided to them in a timely manner. CSOs will ensure young people and families are aware of the policies and systems in place to access records.
- 2.6.6 CSO staff will use the Client Relationship Information System (CRIS) or CRISSP to store and maintain client records (see *CRIS and CRISSP* in the Glossary).
- 2.6.7 Client records, case notes, reports and other key documents and records for each young person will be aligned with statutory case planning and care planning and will be stored and maintained in CRIS and CRISSP.
- 2.6.8 CSOs will have written policies and procedures that are readily accessible and familiar to staff and lead tenants and identify the type of information to be recorded and stored on a lead tenant's file. This information will be gathered and stored in line with relevant legislation and departmental guidelines (see *Record keeping* in Resources and Links).

2.7 Case contracting

- 2.7.1 The CSO, where contracted³² by the department to undertake case management or case management tasks and functions, will:
 - o work in a manner that reflects that the primary client of the agency or professional is the young person to whom the case plan or case functions relate
 - o work with the young person's family and significant others to achieve the goals listed in the case plan
 - o operate in a manner that is consistent with the legislation, principles, regulations and standards that govern statutory Child Protection services
 - o acknowledge and accept the department's statutory responsibilities
 - o provide supervision, staff training and accountability mechanisms related to case management
 - o be party to a written case management agreement specifying goals, timelines, monitoring and review requirements
 - o report any barriers to effective case contracting to the nominated Child Protection worker.

2.8 Quality of care concerns

- 2.8.1 CSOs will comply with relevant legislation and the department's *Guidelines for responding to quality of care concerns in out-of-home care*³³ and *Responding to*

³² Case management for the majority of young people in lead tenant placements is contracted to the CSO, however, Child Protection or ICMS may provide case management in some specific circumstances. Information regarding agency case contracting can be accessed at <<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/cpmanual/best-interests-case-practice/planning-for-best-interests/1315-case-contracting-processes/3>>

³³ The *Guidelines for responding to quality of care concerns in out-of-home care* can be accessed at <<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/Guidelines-for-responding-to-quality-of-care-concerns-in-out-of-home-care>>

*allegations of physical or sexual assault – departmental instruction*³⁴ when responding to issues reported as quality of care concerns (see *Quality of care* in Resources and Links). Concerns will range from minor quality issues through to physical or sexual abuse of a young person in care.

- 2.8.2 CSOs will ensure information about the mandatory processes required for investigating quality of care concerns and allegations of abuse in care and are known to staff and lead tenants as part of their induction with the CSO.
- 2.8.3 When a concern about possible physical or sexual abuse, neglect, or poor quality care of a young person comes to the attention of a CSO staff member, the program manager must consult with the department's divisional Quality of Care Coordinator within 24 hours of receiving the reported concern to determine the most appropriate response.
- 2.8.4 CSO program managers must participate in quality of care screening consultations, planning and review meetings, interviews, panels and formal care reviews as required in a timely manner.
- 2.8.5 CSOs will ensure the lead tenant is aware they may be required to leave the home while a quality of care matter is assessed or investigated as the requirement for young people's stability will take precedence.
- 2.8.6 CSOs will inform lead tenants (as much as possible) about the progress and outcome of a quality of care concern investigation and of the process to appeal decisions that are made.
- 2.8.7 CSOs will provide lead tenants who are the subject of a quality of care concern with the appropriate level of support, liaison, debriefing or counselling.
- 2.8.8 CSOs will provide young people who are the subject of a quality of care concern with additional support as required.
- 2.8.9 CSOs must clearly document in lead tenant files relevant details of all quality of care concerns raised, including those managed to an outcome. The support and supervision provided to the lead tenant throughout the process should also be documented.
- 2.8.10 Any historical quality of care concern regarding a current or previous lead tenant that is brought to the attention of a CSO will be subject to the requirements of the *Guidelines for responding to quality of care concerns in out-of-home care*.
- 2.8.11 CSOs will regularly review the quality of care concerns raised in relation to their lead tenants and the young people in their care and will consider their outcomes to inform policy and practice improvement.

³⁴ The *Responding to allegations of physical or sexual assault – departmental instruction* is available at <http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/funded-agency-channel/about-service-agreements/incident-reporting/human-services>

3. Lead tenant and care environment requirements

Principle statement

The competencies, skills and personal attributes of lead tenants are central to providing high-quality services. Sound working relationships are essential between CSOs and the lead tenants they are supporting, based on mutual respect and trust.

CSOs providing lead tenant services are required to recruit, assess, train, supervise and support volunteer lead tenants who are able to meet the varied needs of young people making the transition to adulthood. People seeking to be lead tenants must be mature and responsible adult role models as they are required to provide general guidance, encouragement and support to young people in the placement as well as supporting them to develop and consolidate independent living skills.

The physical environment where young people reside and the material goods they are provided have a significant impact on their physical, emotional and psychological development and wellbeing. CSOs must make certain the care environment is suitable to ensure a safe and appropriate environment for young people.

Summary of expectations

To ensure the provision of high-quality lead tenant services, CSOs are required to:

- have an effective lead tenant recruitment strategy
- utilise appropriate assessment tools, approval and review processes for lead tenants
- provide pre-service training prior to a lead tenant taking on their role and thereafter identify suitable, targeted training and information sessions for lead tenants and facilitate their participation
- supervise and support lead tenants effectively
- ensure the physical living environment reflects community expectations of a 'home'. Young people should not be placed at risk of harm due to the physical environment in which they reside.

Program requirements

3.1 Lead tenant role

- 3.1.1 CSOs will have a clear role description for lead tenants outlining their attributes and the expectations of the CSO. Lead tenants will be supported to understand their role and responsibilities toward young people and be clear regarding boundaries and duty of care issues. The lead tenant responsibilities should be clearly outlined in the CSOs individual program documentation and may include:

- act as a positive, mature and responsible role model to young people, demonstrating appropriate independent living skills, engagement in education/training/employment, recreation, self-care, communication and behaviour
 - provide general direction, encouragement and support within the household
 - establish and maintain appropriate boundaries and rapport with young people who have experienced trauma
 - provide informal personal support to the young people in the house
 - assist and encourage young people to develop independent living skills, household routines and manage their day-to-day needs
 - coordinate household routines including young people's participation in cooking, cleaning and maintaining the house and gardens
 - participate in house meetings, meals and activities with the young people
 - be at the lead tenant house for periods negotiated with the CSO based on the needs of the young people residing in the house
 - report house maintenance and repairs issues to the CSO and ensure someone is present at the house while work is carried out
 - access the program's on-call system for emergencies or support
 - regularly liaise with the key worker about issues affecting the residents or household
 - participate in regular supervision and maintain open and honest communication with program staff
 - participate in information sessions and training provided by the CSO
 - ensure the policies and procedures of the CSO are adhered to at all times.
- 3.1.2 The selection capabilities for lead tenants should be documented by the CSO and available to prospective applicants (see also requirement 3.3.5 – key competencies).
- 3.1.3 The essential role of lead tenants must be acknowledged in meaningful ways by CSOs and the department. CSO policies should state how lead tenants:
- will be treated respectfully and with dignity at all times and their needs will be recognised and considered
 - will be acknowledged as possessing unique knowledge regarding the young people they are supporting
 - will receive adequate support to enable them to perform their role
 - will receive training to develop their skills
 - will be offered opportunities to inform decision-making about young people
 - will be protected from harmful behaviours by young people or their families
 - will be assisted in resolving conflict or issues of concern
 - will receive relevant information and access to a timely grievance and appeal system that is fair and equitable
 - will be protected from discrimination.

3.2 Recruitment of lead tenants

3.2.1 CSOs will have an effective lead tenant recruitment strategy that:

- is based on the individual, age, cultural and special needs of the client group
- enables CSOs to meet placement demand and service agreement obligations
- provides prospective lead tenants with timely and accurate information about the skills and personal attributes required of them, as well as the roles and expectations
- provides an information session for prospective lead tenants (may be a group for individual basis) that clearly outlines the expectations of the role including approval, training, supervision and monitoring requirements. It is essential that prospective lead tenants attend at least one information session before applying for the role.

3.3 Assessment of lead tenants

3.3.1 CSOs must ensure that prospective lead tenants (and their partners if they will reside in the home or regularly stay overnight) are thoroughly screened and assessed to ensure their suitability to reside with young people in out-of-home care and ensure they possess the attitudes, skills, cultural competence and personal attributes required for the role. Screening and assessment must be fully completed prior to a young person residing with a lead tenant.

3.3.2 A competency-based lead tenant assessment should be used in the assessment of potential lead tenants by CSOs (see requirement 3.3.5 for key competencies). This includes an interview with the lead tenant (see Appendix 2: Example lead tenant interview questions).

3.3.3 CSOs must comply with the following suitability and screening checks when considering a lead tenant application:

- an up to date Working with Children Check for the prospective lead tenant and their partner if they will reside in the house must be completed (see *Working with Children Check* in the Glossary and Resources and Links). This must be updated every five years
- direct contact must be made (face-to-face or telephone) with three responsible people to act as referees to the applicant. Referees must have known the applicant for a minimum of two years, must still be in contact with the applicant, must not be directly related and must have observed the applicant's interaction with children and young people
- asking if an applicant has previously applied or been a lead tenant or in another carer role with another CSO in Victoria, interstate or overseas. If so, CSOs must seek permission to contact these other agencies to seek advice as to the applicant's suitability and competencies
- a new police check is required upon application to a CSO for every prospective lead tenant and their partner if they will reside in the home or regularly stay overnight (see *Police checks* in the Glossary and Resources and Links). This must be updated every three years
- for applicants (and their partner if they will reside in the home or regularly stay overnight) who have spent 12 months or more overseas during the past five years, an

international police check must be conducted³⁵. If the CSO confirms this is not possible, three additional referee checks from people who knew the applicant while in that country must be conducted

- if CSOs become aware of a disclosable police record in relation to an applicant or their partner if they will reside in the home or regularly stay overnight (see *Disclosable record* in the Glossary), they must proceed in accordance with current departmental policy (see *Police checks* in Resources and Links).
- 3.3.4 CSOs must ensure prospective lead tenants provide evidence they are medically fit (physically and mentally fit) including providing a medical report from their general medical practitioner³⁶.
- 3.3.5 CSOs will assess potential lead tenants based on five key competencies identified as essential when undertaking the role effectively:
- ensures a safe environment that is free from abuse
 - demonstrates a personal readiness and capacity to become a lead tenant
 - has a good understanding or willingness to learn about adolescent development and trauma
 - promotes the positive development and independent living skills of young people in lead tenant accommodation
 - has the ability to work as part of a team.
- 3.3.6 An assessment report on the potential lead tenant (and their partner if they are to reside in the home) should be completed by the CSO, documenting the assessment against the key competencies, the screening and referee checks undertaken, training requirements and the recommendation about their suitability for the role (see Appendix 3: Example lead tenant assessment report template). This should be signed by the case worker and endorsed by the program manager³⁷.
- 3.3.7 CSOs and successful applicants will sign an agreement acknowledging their understanding of their role, responsibilities and expectations (see Appendix 4: Example CSO agreement with a lead tenant).
- 3.3.8 CSOs will initially engage a new lead tenant for a three-month probation period before conducting a review to determine their ongoing suitability.
- 3.3.9 CSOs will ensure prospective lead tenants have a back-up accommodation option to ensure they would be able to leave the lead tenant house if they were deemed to be unsuitable for the role during the probation period or if there were future issues, quality of care concerns or closure of the house.
- 3.3.10 CSOs will ensure unsuccessful applicants are provided with a rationale.

³⁵ Note: Victoria Police does not conduct international checks. International checks are subject to the legislation of the country where the person was a resident. Any applicant from overseas should contact the relevant overseas police force to obtain a police check.

³⁶ CSOs could consider using or adapting the health checklist and medical questionnaire from the foster care Step By Step Victoria resource. Information about Step By Step Victoria is available at <<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-service-providers/children,-youth-and-families/child-and-youth-placement-and-support/step-by-step-user-login-only>>

³⁷ Some CSOs also utilise a peer review process whereby another lead tenant program or a program within their own organisation with relevant expertise reviews the assessment of the prospective lead tenant before they are engaged.

3.4 Lead tenant training

- 3.4.1 CSOs must ensure prospective lead tenants (and their partner if they will reside in the home or regularly stay overnight) are fully trained to ensure their suitability to perform the lead tenant role. Induction/pre-service training must be completed prior to taking on the role.
- 3.4.2 A lead tenant induction/pre-service and new starter training package should be utilised by CSOs to ensure potential lead tenants are aware of the role, responsibilities and issues they may experience. Due to the small size of the program, this training may be tailored and delivered individually or to a small group, potentially in partnership with another CSO.
- 3.4.3 CSOs will ensure induction/pre-service training provided to lead tenants at minimum includes:
- overview of the characteristics and needs of the young people in lead tenant placements
 - overview of lead tenant roles and responsibilities
 - overview of CSO and departmental structures, roles and responsibilities
 - infection control procedures
 - fire risk management procedures
 - procedures to be followed in medical and non-medical emergencies and accidents (in this regard, CSOs should encourage lead tenants to hold an approved CPR and first aid certificate)
 - quality of care processes (see requirements under 2.8).
- 3.4.4 CSOs will ensure new starter training provided to lead tenants at minimum includes:
- adolescent development and trauma-informed work with young people
 - alcohol and drug issues
 - leaving care.
- 3.4.5 After commencing in the role, CSOs will ensure lead tenants have timely access to support, information and ongoing, targeted training that ensures they are competent to meet the specific needs of the young people placed within the lead tenant program. For example, training may be required to ensure effective management of a medical condition, a disability, sexual assault, specific drug and alcohol issues, mental health issues, a therapeutic and trauma-informed approach to care, cultural competency or other particular need (see also to requirements 1.4.3, 1.7.8 and 1.8.2).
- 3.4.6 CSOs will facilitate the participation of lead tenants in training such as scheduling sessions to accommodate the commitments of lead tenants (as far as possible), and be offered after hours and on week-ends as appropriate.

3.5 Monitoring and review of lead tenants

- 3.5.1 CSOs will monitor the quality of support provided to young people by lead tenants on an ongoing basis, using home visits and regular contact.

- 3.5.2 CSOs will formally review the lead tenant annually using visits to the lead tenant home and other checks in order to confirm their continuing appropriateness, availability and capacity to perform the role. The review will be documented and will highlight their strengths, learning needs and any issues for resolution.
- 3.5.3 CSOs will formally review lead tenants at the end of their three-month probation period, at least six-monthly during the early stages of their role, at least annually thereafter, and also when any issues of concern require a review. Reviews must include:
- evaluation of any issues arising during the placements of young people during the review period
 - training received and required
 - currency of police check
 - currency of Working with Children Check
 - currency of medical check
 - assessment of the lead tenant's capacity to continue in the role as reviewed against the key competencies (see requirement 3.3.5)
 - the views of the young people residing in the house about their placement and relationship with the lead tenant.
- 3.5.4 CSOs will ensure Working with Children Checks for lead tenants, and their partner if they will reside in the home, are updated every five years.
- 3.5.5 CSOs will ensure police checks for lead tenants, and their partner, if they will reside in the home or regularly stay overnight, are updated every three years.
- 3.5.6 CSOs will ensure processes are in place for lead tenants to request that a partner moves into the household or stays overnight regularly, and for a police check, Working with Children Check (if partner is to reside in the house), and an assessment to be undertaken by the CSO regarding the impact of this change on the safety and wellbeing of young people.
- 3.5.7 If CSOs become aware of a disclosable police record in relation to an existing lead tenant, or their partner if they will reside in the home or regularly stay overnight (see *Disclosable record* in Resources and Links), CSOs will ensure they proceed in accordance with current departmental policy (see *Police check* in Resources and Links).
- 3.5.8 CSOs policies will clearly outline the process to cease the role of a lead tenant and this policy should be made available to lead tenants upon commencement. The policy and agreement with a lead tenant agreement (see Appendix 4: Example CSO agreement with a lead tenant) should be clear that if a CSO deems that the lead tenant is no longer suitable for the role, whether this is due to an unfavourable review of their performance in the role, or breaches of agreements and guidelines, a notice period should be provided to the lead tenant to vacate the lead tenant home. If the lead tenant poses a serious risk to other residents, the notice period can be waived (as noted in Appendix 4: Example CSO agreement with a lead tenant). The policy will also specify the period of notice a lead tenant should give the CSO when advising they wish to cease the role.

3.6 Lead tenant support and supervision

- 3.6.1 CSOs will have written supervision policies in place which specify that each lead tenant has an appropriately skilled CSO worker as an identified supervisor or key contact.
- 3.6.2 CSOs will determine the level of supervision and support (see *Supervision* in the Glossary) for a lead tenant. The CSO will ensure the lead tenant receives formal and informal support at least fortnightly through supervision, house meetings and informal contact. New lead tenants should receive formal supervision at least fortnightly for the first six months.
- 3.6.3 CSO policy and procedures will be readily accessible and familiar to lead tenants and include:
 - arrangements for after-hours on-call support for both lead tenants and young people
 - supervision and debriefing after a critical incident
 - access to a CSO key contact (including when designated worker is not available) to obtain advice and support as needed.
- 3.6.4 CSOs will ensure that supervision is used to identify or raise any issues of concern regarding the lead tenant and to provide an opportunity to address these issues (as appropriate).
- 3.6.5 CSOs will ensure that issues identified during supervision are recorded and acted upon appropriately to ensure the ongoing safety and wellbeing of young people in the placement.
- 3.6.6 CSOs will provide mechanisms for lead tenants to link with other lead tenants to receive and provide support.

3.7 Lead tenant participation and inclusion

- 3.7.1 CSO policies and practices will reflect a participatory relationship with lead tenants, where collaboration and good communication occurs and where the needs of the lead tenant are recognised and respected.
- 3.7.2 CSOs will have systems in place for lead tenants to provide feedback about their experience of service delivery and management.
- 3.7.3 CSOs will continually seek to identify issues that may have an impact on the health, safety and wellbeing of lead tenants and develop strategies to reduce risk.
- 3.7.4 CSOs will offer exit interviews or debriefing sessions (in a confidential environment) following a lead tenant ceasing their role with an opportunity to express their opinions, reflect on their experience, and provide information that could assist the CSO to refine its policies and practices.

3.8 Lead tenant complaints procedures

- 3.8.1 CSOs will have written policies and procedures for resolving disputes, complaints or grievances made by lead tenants that are readily accessible and familiar to staff and lead tenants. These policies and procedures will meet all legislative and departmental guidelines and should cover:
 - natural justice principles (see *Natural justice* in the Glossary)

- where to direct disputes or complaints made by lead tenants
 - the process for lodging and managing complaints made by lead tenants
 - the steps to follow in assessing and resolving disputes or complaints made by lead tenants
 - confidentiality
 - timeframes for responding
 - the process to appeal decisions.
- 3.8.2 CSOs and lead tenants will ensure they have fully utilised the CSO dispute resolution procedures prior to accessing external bodies regarding a complaint or appeal process.
- 3.8.3 CSOs will regularly review complaints and their outcomes to inform policy and practice.

3.9 Home environment

- 3.9.1 The location of the lead tenant home will provide young people with ready access to public transport, shopping facilities and community services to promote their participation in the community and development of independent living skills.
- 3.9.2 Young people will reside in 'reasonably clean', hygienic and appropriately furnished premises that comply with reasonable community standards and expectations (see *Definitions of property terms* in the Glossary). Standards and expectations of the physical environment of the lead tenant home must be fully documented by the CSO including:
- the suitability of the home for the purpose of providing lead tenant accommodation
 - the expected standard of cleanliness and order
 - the minimum furnishings and linen to be provided
 - how the privacy of young people and lead tenants is provided for including the safe storage of their personal belongings
 - the process to report maintenance concerns.
- 3.9.3 Premises will be kept in 'good repair' (see *Definitions of property terms* in the Glossary). Young people and lead tenants will not be placed at risk of harm due to poor property maintenance. Any property damage that poses a potential threat to the safety and wellbeing of young people or lead tenants will be rectified immediately.
- 3.9.4 CSOs will meet reasonable community standards, and comply with all legal requirements affecting the physical and environmental safety of young people. This includes fire safety, motor vehicle safety, water safety, swimming pool safety (if relevant), and public health requirements. CSOs will implement a regular review process and update their compliance with community standards and legal requirements.
- 3.9.5 CSOs will ensure that the safety of the lead tenant home and environment is monitored regularly through home visits and is formally reviewed annually (see Appendix 5: Lead tenant placement and environment check for an example format that CSOs may use).
- 3.9.6 The CSO will work with the lead tenant and young people to establish a clear household routine and responsibilities including budgeting, shopping, cooking and cleaning.

- 3.9.7 CSO policies and procedures will clearly specify that the lead tenant home will be smoke-, alcohol- and drug-free.
- 3.9.8 Young people will be supported to maintain a diet that promotes good health and complies with reasonable community standards and expectations, as well as with their cultural/religious background. Young people will have reasonable access to a variety of food while residing in a lead tenant placement.

3.10 Fire Risk Management

- 3.10.1 The CSO will provide appropriate levels of fire safety for young people, lead tenants, staff, and any other occupants of a lead tenant premises building subject to the department's *Capital Development Guidelines – Series 7 Fire Risk Management 2013*³⁸ (*Capital Development Guidelines*).
- 3.10.2 The lead tenant house must be fully assessed³⁹ to determine fire risk management requirements and compliance with the *Capital Development Guidelines* prior to being utilised. All fire safety systems, Essential Safety Measures (ESM) and equipment must be in place prior to commencement. Fire safety systems and ESM must be present in every house including a Fire Safety Handbook for the specific premises; hard-wired smoke detectors; fire extinguishers and fire blankets.
- 3.10.3 The CSO must determine whether the lead tenant premises are suitable for young people to be evacuated safely and must take into account the individual capacity of each young person to evacuate. Young people with any history of fire-lighting behaviours must be assessed to determine the currency of the behaviour and the level of risk. Where it is determined that a young person is at risk of lighting fires, they are not suitable to be placed in lead tenant accommodation.
- 3.10.4 The CSO should ensure all new lead tenant accommodation utilises single-storey homes and all double-storey premises are phased out of use.
- 3.10.5 The CSO must ensure there are two means of exit to evacuate a lead tenant home. There must be no deadlocks used and doors must be readily opened without a key from the side that faces a person seeking exit⁴⁰
- 3.10.6 CSOs must ensure that lead tenants, young people and staff supporting the placements are trained⁴¹ to implement fire safety procedures including evacuation.
- 3.10.7 CSO procedures must outline how lead tenants are to regularly check the smoke detectors, ensure exit doors and paths are not obstructed, and report any maintenance requirements to the CSO.

³⁸ The Department of Human Services *Capital Development Guidelines – Series 7 (2013)* can be accessed at <http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/fire-risk-management-policy,-procedures-and-guidelines>. Lead tenant accommodation is generally subject to *Capital Development Guideline – Series 7: Fire Risk Management for Accommodation Buildings 7.10* where young people are not provided with full-time care; staff are not present at all times, or required to be present; and young people and lead tenants are mobile and able to understand and respond to an alarm and independently evacuate. However, in an enhanced lead tenant model or where a young person or lead tenant has a temporary or permanent disability, this should be assessed based on the individual client profile. Contact the department's Fire Risk Management Unit for specific advice.

³⁹ The CSO should contact the department's Fire Risk Management Unit to arrange the assessment of the building.

⁴⁰ Readily opened means the door can be opened by a single hand downward action which must be located between 900mm and 1.1m from the floor or pushing or pulling action on a single device which is to be located between 900mm and 1.1m from the floor.

⁴¹ The CSO should contact the department's Fire Risk Management Unit for information about appropriate training.

- 3.10.8 Where a young person or lead tenant has a condition (temporary or ongoing) that would impede their capacity to evacuate safely, the placement must be reassessed immediately and appropriate action taken as soon as possible.
- 3.10.9 Fire Safety Audits of the facility must be undertaken at least once every five years by auditors, who are accredited⁴² by the department in accordance with the *Capital Development Guidelines* applicable to the facility. The fire safety audit must include a review of the occupancy characteristics for each functional area of the building.
- 3.10.10 All young people residing lead tenant placements in extreme or higher risk bushfire areas as identified by the Country Fire Authority to be most vulnerable are required to have developed and maintained endorsed Client bushfire leaving early plans that will inform actions to relocate young people to a safer area no later than the evening before a declared 'code red' day (see *Bushfires* in Resources and Links).
- 3.10.11 Details of all outbreaks involving a fire to which the Fire Brigade is called must be reported promptly (within 48 hours) by the CSO to the department's Fire Risk Management Unit (FRMU). Serious fires involving death, serious injury, closure and/or damage to parts of a building or its contents, must be reported immediately. In the first instance, a Fire Damage to Asset Form (refer *Capital Development Guidelines 7.1*⁴³) must be sent promptly to the FRMU and Director Corporate Services or other Senior Executive of the relevant division.
- 3.10.12 Any works that require a Building Permit⁴⁴ must be issued by an accredited building surveyor⁴⁵ pursuant to the *Capital Development Guidelines*.

3.11 Financial support

- 3.11.1 CSOs will assist young people to develop budgeting and financial management skills.
- 3.11.2 CSO's lead tenant program documentation should clearly outline:
- expectations about young people receiving an income through employment, Commonwealth benefits or another source
 - what the CSO will or will not provide financial assistance towards eg. utilities, food, cleaning products, maintenance items, clothing
 - the amount or proportion of weekly income young people are expected to contribute to rent, utilities, food.
 - the CSOs policy with regard to refunding rent payments to the young person when they leave care in order to purchase items for independent living
 - what the lead tenant may be expected to financially contribute to eg. phone, internet, food etc.
 - sources of funding support young people may access eg. zero TAFE tuition fees, State Schools Relief Fund, Springboard program brokerage, leaving care brokerage

⁴² The fire risk management accreditation list is available at <<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/forms-and-templates/capital-development-guidelines-series-7-accreditation-application>>

⁴³ The Fire Damage to Asset Form is at Appendix 7 of the *Capital Development Guidelines 7.1* available at <<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/fire-risk-management-policy,-procedures-and-guidelines>>

⁴⁴ The *Building Act 1993* is available at <http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/ba199391/>

⁴⁵ The fire risk management accreditation list is available at <<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/forms-and-templates/capital-development-guidelines-series-7-accreditation-application>>

(for more information on these funding supports, see *Education* and *Leaving Care* in Resources and links)

- the process to manage issues or disputes about financial matters.

3.11.3 All lead tenant properties will have the rental agreement (if this applies) and utilities registered in the name of the CSO who will therefore be responsible for the collection and payment of these bills.

4. Human resource (CSO staff) requirements

Principle statement

The values, skills, knowledge and experience of CSO staff have a significant impact on the outcomes for young people in lead tenant placements. The structure of the lead tenant program and support CSO staff receive from their employers has a direct impact on their ability to fulfil their role, and therefore on the lives of the young people they are working with.

The philosophies, practices and organisational structures of the CSOs delivering lead tenant services also affect the standard of care young people receive.

Summary of expectations

CSOs must ensure that lead tenant services are delivered by staff who have the qualifications, knowledge, values, personal skills, attributes and cultural competence to meet the needs of the young people in their care.

Staff must be supported by their employers through: program and organisational structures; professional development opportunities; acceptable working conditions that comply with occupational health and safety and other legal requirements; and regular supervision and support. Those providing supervision and support must also possess skills and personal attributes that adequately equip them for this role.

Effective recruitment, training and supervision of staff is vital in providing high-quality services. Every effort will be made to ensure staff are provided with opportunities to develop their skills and maximise the quality of services they provide for young people and lead tenants. Emphasis will also be placed on providing staff with a safe and rewarding work environment.

Program requirements

4.1 Lead tenant program staffing

4.1.1 The CSO must establish a staffing model to ensure the lead tenant program can deliver high-quality services and support to young people and lead tenants. The program must have the capacity and expertise to:

- provide case management for young people transitioning to independence
- supervise and support volunteer lead tenants
- deliver life-skills coaching to young people
- work with other services, families and significant others using a care team approach.

4.1.2 Lead tenant services will have a team leader to oversee the day-to-day operations of the program. The CSO must have an up-to-date role description for the team leader whose responsibilities will include at minimum:

- supervision and support of other staff in the lead tenant program including oversight of professional learning needs and plans

- ensuring there are good quality 15+ Care and Transition Plans in place for young people in the program
- liaison with the department regarding case planning, care and transition planning, program referrals, and program development
- managing referrals, assessments and entry of young people to program
- overseeing contracted case management where appropriate
- recruitment, accreditation and training of lead tenants
- maintaining support systems for lead tenants including supervision, emergency procedures and safety planning
- oversee a case load and delivering case work as appropriate
- overseeing and participating in on-call and re-call systems.

4.1.3 Lead tenant services will have one or more case workers who have the qualifications, skills and expertise to work collaboratively with young people, lead tenants, families and significant others. The CSO must have an up-to-date role description for case workers whose responsibilities will include at minimum:

- day-to-day support of young people who have experienced trauma
- development and implementation of LAC records including a 15+ Care and Transition Plan for each young person
- ensuring that young people are actively engaged in education, training or employment
- working with young people's families and significant others to achieve case plan goals
- day-to-day support of lead tenants
- oversight of household budget
- ensuring houses are maintained to an appropriate standard including fire safety requirements
- liaison with Child Protection
- providing coaching and guidance to young people in independent living skills
- fulfilling case management responsibilities where contracted to do so.

4.1.4 CSOs will review the lead tenant program's staffing model regularly to ensure there is continued capacity to deliver high-quality services.

4.2 Pre-employment

4.2.1 CSOs will have clear role descriptions for program staff including key competencies and selection capabilities.

4.2.2 CSOs will have written policies and procedures that are readily accessible and familiar to staff and ensure all applicants for positions within the CSO are thoroughly assessed prior to being offered employment. This applies to paid employees, subcontracted workers, volunteers and student placement staff. Assessment will include:

- confirmation of qualifications and experience

- interviews to assess the applicant's skills, personal attributes and competencies
 - direct contact (either face-to-face or telephone contact) with at least two referees to confirm the applicant's suitability, including contact with their most recent employer
 - confirmation of an up-to-date Working with Children Check
 - completion of a police check in compliance with the current departmental policy (see *Police checks* in the Glossary and Resources and Links).
- 4.2.3 CSOs will ensure that any staff employed via an employment agency have been subjected to a police check by Victoria Police and possess an up-to-date Working with Children Check.
- 4.2.4 For staff who have spent 12 months or more overseas during the past ten years, the CSO must conduct international police check. If the CSO confirms that an international police check cannot be made for an applicant, referee checks must be conducted with three nominated referees who personally knew the individual while they were residing in the other country.

4.3 New employees

- 4.3.1 CSOs will ensure all new staff receive appropriate orientation and induction to the organisation, where relevant information is provided on the:
- CSO policies and procedures
 - CSO mission statement and values
 - CSO structure, including lines of accountability and the roles and responsibilities of staff, lead tenants and management.
- 4.3.2 CSOs will ensure all new staff are introduced to relevant people, including lead tenants, young people and their families.
- 4.3.3 CSOs will maintain records of the academic qualifications and work history of staff. Non-identifying information concerning staff shall be made available to the department upon request.

4.4 Training and supervision of staff

- 4.4.1 CSOs will provide supervision to staff (see *Supervision* in the Glossary) and ensure as a minimum that:
- every staff member has an identified supervisor, with whom they have regular contact
 - staff are provided with regular supervision (at least fortnightly) that is:
 - uninterrupted
 - professional and confidential
 - documented in supervision or staff files
 - based on mutually defined expectations
 - based on clear and open communication
 - a responsibility shared between supervisor and staff

- issues identified in supervision are acted on appropriately
 - a formal process is put in place for debriefing after critical incidents.
- 4.4.2 Staff providing supervision should have the appropriate skills and qualifications required for this task. Staff providing supervision should also receive regular, ongoing supervision in their role from appropriately qualified and skilled senior staff.
- 4.4.3 CSOs will identify the developmental needs of staff and provide opportunities and resources required for their ongoing professional development.
- 4.4.4 CSOs will ensure staff have timely access to information and training that ensures they are competent to meet the specific needs of young people in the care of the CSO. For example, training may be required in LAC, sexual assault, adolescent development, trauma and risk-taking, management of drug and alcohol issues, and a therapeutic approach to care.
- 4.4.5 CSOs will ensure staff who undertake assessments of potential lead tenants have the skills and expertise to perform this role.
- 4.4.6 CSOs will ensure staff receive information and training on culturally appropriate caring to ensure every young person's cultural values, beliefs and practices are respected and upheld.
- 4.4.7 CSOs will have policies and procedures to assess the performance of staff and address performance issues.

4.5 Complaints procedures

- 4.5.1 CSOs will have documented procedures for resolving disputes or complaints made by staff, lead tenants, young people, families and the community.
- 4.5.2 CSO policies and procedures should be readily available and cover:
- natural justice principles (see *Natural justice* in the Glossary)
 - where to direct disputes or complaints
 - the process for lodging and managing complaints
 - the steps to follow in assessing and resolving disputes or complaints confidentiality
 - timeframes for responding
 - the process to appeal decisions
 - under what circumstances the *Guidelines for responding to quality of care concerns in out-of-home care* will take precedence.
- 4.5.3 CSOs will record all complaints and allegations made including the follow-up and outcomes.
- 4.5.4 CSOs will regularly consider complaints and allegations and their outcomes to inform policy and practice improvement where appropriate.

5. Organisational requirements

Principle statement

The program model, philosophies, practices and organisational structures of CSOs delivering lead tenant services must support the provision of high-quality care for young people.

Summary of expectations

CSOs must have philosophies, procedures and program documentation, as well as management and organisational structures, that support providing high-quality lead tenant placements, the responsible use of funding, compliance with reporting requirements and ongoing quality improvement.

Program requirements

5.1 Lead tenant program model

5.1.1 The CSO must establish a program model to ensure the lead tenant program can deliver high-quality services and support to young people and lead tenants. Program model documentation must include at minimum information about:

- the specific target group and philosophy of the lead tenant program
- the staffing model to support the program
- recruitment and retention of suitably qualified and experienced case work/case management staff
- lead tenant recruitment, selection, approval, monitoring and review procedures
- staff and lead tenant support and monitoring, training and development
- referral, assessment and transition processes for young people
- case management and case work expectations
- care and transition planning processes
- provision of coaching and programs for young people that contribute to the development of independent living skills
- ensuring young people are engaged in education, training or employment
- after hours on-call support for young people and lead tenants
- provision of good quality and safe premises for lead tenant houses
- repairs and minor maintenance of lead tenant houses
- budgeting and financial management of lead tenant homes

- debriefing processes after critical incidents
 - occupational health and safety requirements
 - fire risk management
 - management of quality of care concerns
 - records and information management
 - complaints procedures
 - how the program requirements for lead tenant services will be implemented, monitored and reviewed.
- 5.1.2 CSOs will review the lead tenant program model regularly to ensure there is continued capacity to deliver high-quality services. It is essential that service provision is reviewed to identify areas of possible improvement in systems, processes and practice approaches that meet the needs of young people while they are residing in, or leaving, lead tenant placements.

5.2 Agency registration and accreditation

- 5.2.1 CSOs delivering lead tenant services must be registered community services and meet quality standards in order to deliver out-of-home care services as required by the Children Youth and Families Act 2005⁴⁶.
- 5.2.2 CSOs are required to achieve and maintain accreditation through the following processes:
- undertaking an independent review against the Department of Human Services Standards once every three-year service agreement period, regardless of the number of departmental programs they are funded to provide
 - achieve and maintain accreditation against the Department of Human Services Standards and the governance and management standards of an approved independent review body (see *Department of Human Services Standards and Monitoring Framework* in Resources and Links).

5.3 Service management

- 5.3.1 CSOs will comply with all Commonwealth and state legislation and regulations and local government requirements applicable to the lead tenant activity.
- 5.3.2 CSOs will maintain effective governance policies that clearly document roles and responsibilities and delegations of authority for the governing body, management, staff and lead tenants, and defines acceptable behaviours and practices.
- 5.3.3 CSO selection policies and procedures must be aimed at recruiting board members with the skills, professional expertise, cultural competence and knowledge to fulfil the board's

⁴⁶ The registration requirements, procedures and forms for the registration of community services can be accessed at <http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/policy,-procedures-and-forms-for-registration-of-disability-service-providers-and-community-services>

role. A code of ethics must be in place for the board of management including procedures to manage conflicts of interest.

- 5.3.4 People involved in managing CSOs will have the necessary management, financial and business skills to manage the work efficiently and effectively.
- 5.3.5 People involved in managing CSOs will have the necessary knowledge and experience of out-of-home care to work in a professional manner in the leadership of staff. CSOs will ensure systems are put in place to determine priorities, monitor workloads and assign tasks to appropriate staff.
- 5.3.6 CSO policies, processes and practice guidelines must be in place to promote the cultural competence of the board, management, staff and lead tenants.
- 5.3.7 CSOs will adopt sound management practices that support effective service delivery, maximise positive outcomes for young people and acknowledge the lead tenant's role.
- 5.3.8 The roles, responsibilities and delegations of authority of the board, management, staff and lead tenants must be documented by CSOs and available to staff, lead tenants and the department.

5.4 Financial viability and reporting

- 5.4.1 CSOs will manage their financial resources in a responsible, accountable and prudent manner that maintains financial and organisational viability.
- 5.4.2 CSOs will comply with financial accountability requirements for funding received and submit the required financial reports in a timely fashion.
- 5.4.3 CSOs will adhere to all reporting requirements stipulated in the funding and service agreements (see *Service agreement* in Resources and Links).
- 5.4.4 CSOs will collect, collate and submit minimum data sets and financial monitoring data in compliance with departmental requirements.
- 5.4.5 CSOs will use administrative systems and practices that adequately support staff to undertake effective service delivery.
- 5.4.6 CSO financial management and accounting practices must meet Australian accounting standards and be aligned with the organisation's vision, strategic plan and goals.

5.5 Service agreement, monitoring and review

- 5.5.1 CSOs are required to deliver services in line with their service agreement with the department. Performance reporting and monitoring forms part of the agreement (see *Service agreement* in Resources and Links).
- 5.5.2 CSOs are required to regularly report on their service outputs through data collection and other reporting requirements as detailed in their service agreement and required as part of the *Department of Human Services monitoring framework*⁴⁷. The specific requirements for monitoring, review and reporting are set out in the CSO's funding and service agreement (see *Service agreement* in Resources and Links).

⁴⁷ The *Monitoring framework for the health, housing and community service sectors* can be accessed at <http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/facs/bdb/fmu/service-agreement/4.departmental-policies-procedures-and-initiatives/4.10-monitoring-framework>

5.6 Incident reporting

- 5.6.1 CSOs must report critical incidents as defined in the department's *Critical client incident management instruction 2011*⁴⁸. This is to ensure the department complies with the requirements and expectations associated with public accountability, its legal obligations, and insurance requirements (see *Incident reporting* in Resources and Links).

5.7 Occupational health and safety

- 5.7.1 CSOs must provide a safe working environment for staff and lead tenants and meet their obligations to protect the health and safety of their employees⁴⁹ and volunteers under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*⁵⁰.
- 5.7.2 CSOs must have policies and procedures governing occupational health and safety that comply with the relevant legislation (see *Occupational health and safety* in Resources and Links).
- 5.7.3 The office premises used by the CSO should be suitable and appropriate for the purpose of the service and have effective information technology, communication and security systems.

5.8 Insurance

- 5.8.1 CSOs will encourage lead tenants to insure their property against theft or damage which is not covered by the CSO's insurance⁵¹.

⁴⁸ Incident reporting guidelines, forms and further information can be accessed at <<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/funded-agency-channel/about-service-agreements/incident-reporting/human-services>>

⁴⁹ The Work Safe Victoria guide, *A handbook for community service organisations – volunteer health* can be accessed at <<http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/wsinternet/worksafe/home/forms+and+publications/publications/a+handbook+for+community+service+organisations+-+volunteer+health+and+safety>>

⁵⁰ The *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* can be accessed at <<http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/>>

⁵¹ Lead tenants are included as 'persons insured' in the Victorian Managed Insurance Authority's Community Service Organisation Voluntary Care Givers Property Policy available at <<http://www.vmia.vic.gov.au/Insurance/Policies-and-Manuals/Community-Service-Organisations-Program.aspx>>

Glossary

15+ Assessment and Progress Record	This is a key tool within the LAC framework that is used to monitor how a young person is progressing towards developmental objectives across the seven LAC life areas. Information from the 15+ Assessment and Progress Record should update the 15+ Care and Transition Plan to ensure young people in out-of-home care achieve good outcomes.
15+ Care and Transition Plan	<p>A LAC 15+ Care and Transition Plan records the detailed day-to-day arrangements for care of a young person in out-of-home care. It identifies their long and short-term needs and sets out who must do what and by when in order for their needs to be met. It is developed and updated by the care team for young people aged 15-18 years.</p> <p>This plan aims to capture the aspirations, individual needs and supports required for young people as they transition into adulthood. It aims to prepare young people to the best of their abilities for leaving care and for the expiry of a Children’s Court order.</p> <p>It is guided by the young person’s case planning goals under the seven LAC domains of health, emotional and behavioural development, education, family and social relationships, identity, social presentation, and self-care skills.</p>
Aboriginal	A person of Aboriginal descent. The term Aboriginal within this document includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.
Aboriginal child placement principle	A nationally agreed standard in determining the placement of Aboriginal children and young people in out-of-home care. The principle aims to enhance and preserve Aboriginal young people’s cultural identity by ensuring they maintain strong connections with family, community and culture.
Aboriginal Child Specialist Advice and Support Service (ACSASS)	This refers to the service specifically funded by the department to provide an Aboriginal perspective of risk and good care for all Aboriginal children and young people who have been notified to Child Protection. ACSASS is a funded service that carries out the operational roles and responsibilities and obligations of the Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA) under section 2 of the <i>Protocol between Child Protection Service and the Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency 2002</i> (see <i>Aboriginal children and families</i> in Section 7: Glossary).
Best interests framework	The <i>Best interests framework</i> presents the best interests principles in a coherent framework to assist professionals to apply the principles in their day-to-day practice.

Best interests principles	The best interests principles apply to the Children's Court, Child Protection and CSOs operating under the Children, Youth and Families Act (section 10). The principles prescribe that decisions and actions must be taken to protect a young person from harm, protect their rights and promote their development in an age appropriate way. From this foundation, additional consideration must be given to supporting and assisting families to keep young people safe and meet their needs, promoting a young person's stability and promoting a young person's cultural identity.
Care team (out-of-home care team)	A care team is the group of people who jointly provide the care for a young person while they are in out-of-home care. The care team has a specific focus on meeting the young person's needs – its members have a shared responsibility for the practical 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week care of a vulnerable young person. A care team should always include the young person's case manager, key workers from various agencies working with them, the young person's family (if appropriate), any other appropriate adults who play a significant role in the life of the young person, and importantly, the young person (as appropriate).
Case manager and contracted case manager	The case worker allocated the primary responsibility of overseeing implementation of the case plan. This can be a departmental employee or a CSO employee where case management responsibility for a young person has been contracted to a CSO.
Case plan	The statutory plan required by the Children, Youth and Families Act (section 166) prepared for children and young people following the making of a Children's Court order. The case plan sets out general and specific goals to be worked towards for young people in the coming year.
Child Protection	Statutory Child Protection services delivered by the department, in accordance with the Children, Youth and Families Act.
Children, Youth and Families Act 2005	Victorian legislation that governs the way the Children's Court, Child Protection and community-based services make decisions in relation to the care of children and young people.

Collection notice	<p>A collection notice (privacy statement) informs people about how the information they provide about themselves may be used or disclosed. A collection notice must include information about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the purposes for which the information is being collected ○ the main consequences for the person (if any) if information is not provided ○ the types of individuals or organisations (including the department) to whom the information is likely to be disclosed ○ any law that requires the information to be collected ○ details of the organisation collecting the information including who to contact to access the information.
Community service organisation (CSO)	<p>A non-government organisation funded to deliver out-of-home care services on behalf of the department, including lead tenant services.</p>
<p>Client Relationship Information System (CRIS)</p> <p>and</p> <p>Client Relationship Information System for Service Providers (CRISSP)</p>	<p>CRIS is the electronic client and case record management system used by Child Protection, disability services and CSO staff with case-contracting responsibilities.</p> <p>CRISSP is the electronic client and case record management system used by all CSOs providing out-of-home care.</p>
Custody order	<p>A custody to the Secretary order is a type of protection order made by the Children’s Court that grants custody of the young person to the Secretary of the department without affecting guardianship (Children, Youth and Families Act, section 287).</p>
Cultural competency	<p>Cultural competence is a set of behaviours, attitudes and policies that come together in a system, organisation or among professionals to enable the system, organisation or professionals to work effectively in a cross-cultural situation.</p>
Cultural safety	<p>An environment that is welcoming, safe and respectful of a young person’s culture and identity.</p>

<p>Cultural support plan</p>	<p>The Children, Youth and Families Act (section 176) requires a cultural support plan to be developed for each Aboriginal child or young person subject to a guardianship to the Secretary order or a long-term guardianship to the Secretary order.</p> <p>Good practice is that a cultural support plan should be developed and continually reviewed for all Aboriginal young people placed in out-of-home care, whether placed with Aboriginal carers or non-Aboriginal carers, to ensure the maintenance of the young person's connections to their family, community and culture.</p> <p>A cultural support plan addresses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the identity of the young person's traditional Aboriginal community ○ the continuing efforts to identify a suitable placement within the young person's extended family or Aboriginal community ○ the involvement of the young person's family and extended family in cultural support, placement planning and decision making ○ the maintenance of contact between the young person and members of their family, extended family and community ○ establishing or maintaining links with Aboriginal services ○ ensuring the young person's participation in cultural and community events.
<p>Department/department</p>	<p>The Department of Human Services.</p>
<p>Disability</p>	<p>Disability is defined in the <i>Disability Act 2006</i> as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) a sensory, physical or neurological impairment or acquired brain injury or any combination thereof which – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) is, or is likely to be, permanent; and (ii) causes a substantially reduced capacity in at least one of the areas of self-care, self-management, mobility or communication; and (iii) requires significant ongoing or long-term episodic support; and (iv) is not related to ageing; or b) an intellectual disability; or c) a developmental delay.

<p>Disclosable record</p>	<p>In Victoria, police have an information release policy that governs what information is released in a police check. The release of information may take into account the age of the police record, the purpose for which the information is being sought and the relevance of the criminal history. This is called the disclosable record. Disclosable records include all court outcomes that are findings of guilt.</p> <p>Any disclosable records, court outcomes, outstanding charges or other information gained from a police check will be a key factor in relation to assessing risk to a young person. An adverse police check result does not necessarily preclude a person from becoming a lead tenant; however, the assessment process will need to proceed in accordance with departmental police check policies.</p>
<p>Essential Information Record</p>	<p>This LAC record holds important reference information about the young person such as: Medicare numbers; school details; parents' names and contact information; birth dates; and professionals' contact information.</p> <p>It contains both current and historical information, so, for example, it records both current school details and previous schools attended. In general, this record provides a place to keep the information that will always remain true about the young person, although it will need to be added to over time, such as with the birth of a sibling or a period of hospitalisation. It also provides a place to note where some other important reference information is being kept such as the young person's birth certificate.</p> <p>It is organised into sections covering each of the LAC life domains: health; emotional and behavioural development; education; family and social relationships; identity; social presentation (including interests, leisure and recreation); self-care skills.</p>
<p>Guardianship order</p>	<p>A Guardianship to the Secretary order is a type of protection order made by the Children's Court that grants custody and guardianship of a young person to the Secretary of the department (Children, Youth and Families Act, section 289).</p>
<p>Health and Education Assessment Initiative</p>	<p>The Health and Education Assessment Initiative aims to provide all children and young people entering or already in residential out-of-home care placements (lead tenant placements are included in this initiative) with thorough assessments of their health (including medical, dental, optical, auditory, mental health, sexual and reproductive health and specialist needs) and education needs, and to ensure further specialist assessment, treatment and support needs are followed up in a timely manner. Health and Education Assessment Coordinators in divisions oversee this initiative including access to brokerage to address issues identified through the assessments.</p>

Health treatment plan	<p>The plan developed in response to a young person's health issues as identified through their health assessment or other medical assessment. Health treatment plans are holistic dealing with all aspects of health and developed by the care team as part of care planning processes.</p> <p>There may also be an additional need for a specialist plan such as an Asthma action plan (see http://www.nationalasthma.org.au/asthma-tools/asthma-action-plans), an Allergy action plan or an Anaphylaxis action plan (see http://www.allergy.org.au/health-professionals/anaphylaxis-resources/ascia-action-plan-for-anaphylaxis).</p>
Incident reporting	<p>The process to report incidents or alleged incidents to the department that involve or impact upon young person in a lead tenant placement.</p> <p>The department's client incident report forms and supporting materials are available on the Funded Agency Channel at http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/funded-agency-channel/about-service-agreements/incident-reporting</p>
Intensive Case Management Service (ICMS)	<p>Specialist multi-disciplinary intensive case management and outreach support services for young people involved with child Protection who are identified as being at 'high risk'.</p>
Looking after children (LAC)	<p>LAC provides a framework for identifying the needs of children and young people and developing plans to meet these needs. The LAC framework attempts to strengthen communication and collaboration between, departmental staff, CSO staff, other associated professionals, and young people and their families. It prompts all parties involved to consider the things any good parent would naturally consider when caring for their own children. It also provides CSOs with a common framework for their client records systems that contains all the information they require to look after a young person in the care of their organisation.</p>
Natural justice	<p>The principles of natural justice concern procedural fairness and aim to ensure a fair decision is reached by an objective decision-maker.</p>
Out-of-home care	<p>Out-of-home care includes kinship and foster care, residential care and lead tenant arrangements.</p>
Police check	<p>A mandatory screening tool required by the department and CSOs prior to employing a lead tenant or staff member (may also be called a criminal records check).</p>
Policy	<p>A framework of principles that guide decision making and practice.</p>
Procedure	<p>Written prescription of behaviours.</p>

Stability	Stability is a core dimension for considering a young person's best interests. A young person experiences stability through their positive connections to their family, school, friends, community and culture. These connections are made by developing and maintaining a young person's key relationships through opportunities to participate in the normal contexts of school, community and culture. All young people need stability to thrive, develop and learn and to build resilience. Stability plans (Children, Youth and Families Act, section 169) for young people outline their long-term care plan.
Staff	A paid worker (full time, part time or casual).
Supervision	Direction, performance monitoring and support, including teaching and accountability functions typically provided by a senior staff member to a less senior staff member. Supervision is also provided to volunteers such as lead tenants who provide guidance and role-modelling to young people and require support in this role.
Volunteer	Unpaid person who donates their time to working for a particular CSO. Lead tenants are volunteers.
Working with Children Check	The Working with Children Check is administered by the Victorian Department of Justice. It helps to protect children and young people from sexual or physical harm by checking a person's criminal history for serious sexual, serious violence or serious drug offences and the person's history with specific professional disciplinary bodies for certain findings. The Working with Children Check is a mandatory minimum checking standard across Victoria for adults to engage in child-related work.
Young person	A young person aged 15-18 years.
Definition of property terms	
Sourced from the department's <i>Housing standards policy manual</i> available at: http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/housing-standards-policy-manual	
Good repair	The fixtures or fittings are in a satisfactory and safe condition and that the property is at a lettable standard and any required urgent repairs have been completed.
Normal repairs	Maintenance works that are not urgent or priority in nature, with no health and safety concerns, but which require action within 14 calendar days.
Priority repairs	Works, that if not actioned within seven calendar days, will significantly decrease the level of service provided by an appliance, fitting or surface, and are likely to become an urgent repair if not attended to.

Urgent repairs	<p>Urgent repairs as defined in the <i>Residential Tenancies Act 1997</i> means any work necessary to repair or remedy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a burst water service • a blocked or broken lavatory system • a serious roof leak • a gas leak • a dangerous electrical fault • flooding or serious flood damage • serious storm or fire damage • a failure or breakdown of any essential service or appliance provided for hot water, water, cooking, heating or laundering • a failure or breakdown of the gas, electricity or water supply • an appliance, fitting or fixture that uses or supplies water and that is malfunctioning in a way that results, or will result, in a substantial amount of water being wasted • any fault or damage that makes the premises unsafe or insecure • a serious fault in a lift or staircase • any damage of a prescribed class. <p>In addition to the above, any fault or damage that makes the property unsafe or insecure is considered an urgent repair.</p>
Reasonably clean condition	<p>The property is free from rubbish and refuse and that all internal appliances, fittings and surfaces are free from dust or contaminating matter.</p>
Structurally sound	<p>There is no evidence of a noticeable degree of slope in walls, floors and other supports, or of defects such as major rot and decay.</p>

Resources and links

The following resources and links provide useful additional documents, websites and resource materials.

Aboriginal children and families

Aboriginal child placement principle guide: for child protection and care workers (November 2002) can be found on the department's website and the Department of Human Services *Victorian child protection policy and practice manual*:

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/reports-publications/aboriginal-child-placement-principle-guide-2002>

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/cpmanual/out-of-home-care/placement-of-aboriginal-children-and-young-people/1432-aboriginal-child-placement-principle>

Aboriginal cultural competence framework (November 2008) can be found on the Department of Human Services website:

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/plans,-programs-and-projects/plans-and-strategies/children,-youth-and-family-services/aboriginal-cultural-competence-framework-2008>

Caring for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care can be found on the Secretariat of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Care website:

http://www.snaicc.org.au/_uploads/rsfil/02301.pdf

Protocol between the Department of Human Services Child Protection Service and the Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency can be found on the Department of Human Services website:

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/dhs-and-victorian-aboriginal-child-care-agency-protocol-2002>

Best interests case practice model

The *Best interests case practice* model – summary guide 2010 and related resources can be found on the department website and via the Department of Human Services Victorian child protection practice manual:

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-service-providers/children,-youth-and-families/child-protection/specialist-practice-resources-for-child-protection-workers/best-interests-case-practice-model-summary-guide-2010>

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/cpmanual/best-interests-case-practice/best-interests-case-practice-advice>

Bushfires

The *Department of Human Services Emergency Preparedness Clients and Services Policy* provides advice about hazards associated with the summer season, such as heatwave, bushfire and flood.

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/dhs-clients-and-services-policy>

The Country Fire Authority (CFA) provides information about bushfire preparedness, escape plans and local area information and advice.

<http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare/>

Case contracting

Advice to CSOs undertaking case management of children or young people in out-of-home care

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/cpmanual/best-interests-case-practice/planning-for-best-interests/1315-case-contracting-processes/3>

Charter for children in out-of-home care

The Charter for children in out-of-home care can be found on the Commission for Children and Young People's website:

http://www.cryp.vic.gov.au/childsafetycommissioner/publications/orgs_resources.htm

Charter for Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

The *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* (the Charter) is a Victorian law that sets out the basic rights, freedoms and responsibilities of all people in Victoria. The Charter requires state and local government departments and agencies, and people delivering services on behalf of government, to act consistently with the human rights in the Charter. The Charter can be found at:

<http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au>

Child protection policy and practice manual

The Department of Human Services *Victorian child protection policy and practice manual* contains advice accessible to CSOs and may be accessed at:

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/cpmanual>

Children Youth and Families Act

The Children Youth and Families Act 2005 can be found on the Victorian Legislation and Parliamentary Documents website:

<http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au>

Child Wellbeing and Safety Act

The Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 can be found on the Victorian Legislation and Parliamentary Documents website:

<http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au>

Department of Human Services Standards

The Department of Human Services Standards are a single set of service delivery standards for a range of department-funded programs providing services to clients. The *Department of Human Services Standards* (June 2011) and the *Department of Human Services Standards evidence guides December 2011* are available for download at:

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/department-of-human-services-standards>

Education

The *out-of-home care education commitment – a partnering agreement between the Department of Human Services, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Catholic Education Commission of Victoria and Independent Schools Victoria* can be found on the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development website:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/oohc.aspx>

The Springboard program is an intensive support service for young people transitioning from residential out-of-home care (including lead tenant) who are not engaged in education, training or employment. The program assists young people aged 16-21 on Victorian custody or guardianship orders who are in residential out-of-home care, or who have recently left care. More information can be found at:

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/plans,-programs-and-projects/programs/youth-specific/springboard-intensive-education-and-employment>

In Victoria, zero-fee training places are available to young people in out-of-home care, under custody or guardianship orders, or those aged 21 and under who have recently transitioned from out-of-home care and have been referred to training under the Young People Transitioning From Care Initiative. More information can be found at:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/training/learners/vet/pages/feeexemptions.aspx>

State Schools Relief (SSR) is a Victorian charity that can provide students attending government schools with non-branded school clothing and footwear free of charge or subsidise branded uniform items. Requests for assistance from SSR can be made from principals, assistant principals and welfare coordinators. For further information, contact the school or visit:

<https://www.ssr.net.au/>

Fire risk management

The Department of Human Services *Capital Development Guidelines – Series 7 (2013)* are available at:

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/fire-risk-management-policy,-procedures-and-guidelines>

Incident reporting

Critical client incident management instruction (2011) as well as other incident reporting forms and information can be found online through the Department of Human Services Funded Agency Channel:

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/funded-agency-channel/about-service-agreements/incident-reporting/human-services>

Inhalant use and alcohol and drugs

Management response to inhalant use guidelines for the community care and drug and alcohol sector can be found on the Department of Human Services website:

<http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/Management-response-to-inhalant-use:-Guidelines-for-the-community-care-and-drug-and-alcohol-sector>

The *Chroming, alcohol and drug policy* (February 2002) can be found in the Foreword section of the *Management response to inhalant use guidelines for the community care and drug and alcohol sector*.

Kinship care

Advice number 1435: *Kinship care and assessment* may be accessed via the Department of Human Services *Victorian child protection policy and practice manual*:

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/cpmanual/out-of-home-care/kinship/1435-kinship-care-and-assessment>

Leaving care

Information related to transitioning to adulthood and leaving care including the *Care and Transition Planning for Leaving Care Framework* and access to various resources for download can be found on the Department of Human Services website at:

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-service-providers/children,-youth-and-families/child-and-youth-placement-and-support/leaving-care>

Information about leaving care services can be found on the Department of Human Services website at:

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/children,-families-and-young-people/care-leavers/young-care-leavers>

Advice number 1418: *Planning for leaving care* may be accessed via the Department of Human Services *Victorian child protection policy and practice manual*:

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/cpmanual/out-of-home-care/care-and-placement-planning/1418-planning-for-leaving-care>

Looking after children

Information and documentation for download related to LAC can be found on the Department of Human Services website:

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/plans,-programs-and-projects/programs/children,-youth-and-family-services/looking-after-children-in-victoria-lac>

Monitoring framework

The *Monitoring framework for the health, housing and community service sectors* is utilised by department staff with responsibility for monitoring service agreements with CSOs. The framework applies risk management principles to monitor organisation and service sustainability and quality. Further information is available in section 4.10 of the Service Agreement Information Kit for Funded Organisations found at:

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/facs/bdb/fmu/service-agreement>

National standards for out-of-home care

An outline of national standards for out-of-home care – a priority project under the national framework for protecting Australia's children 2009–2020 (July 2011):

<http://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/families-and-children/publications-articles/an-outline-of-national-standards-for-out-of-home-care-2011>

Occupational health and safety

The *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* can be found on the Victorian Legislation and Parliamentary Documents website:

<http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au>

Department of Human Services occupational health and safety information can be found online in section 4.7 of the *Service agreement information kit for funded organisations*:

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/facs/bdb/fmu/service-agreement/contents>

Participation in activities

Guidelines for consent for participation of children and young people in out-of-home care in school excursions, camps and other non-school activities (1 March 2008) are available at the Department of Human Services *Victorian child protection policy and practice manual*:

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/cpmanual/out-of-home-care/delegations-and-consents/1469-participation-in-excursions,-activities-and-overnight-stays-with-friends>

Guidelines for overnight stays for children and young people in out-of-home care (1 November 2007) are available in the Department of Human Services *Victorian child protection policy and practice manual*:

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/cpmanual/out-of-home-care/delegations-and-consents/1469-participation-in-excursions,-activities-and-overnight-stays-with-friends>

Peak bodies

Create Foundation is the peak body for children in out-of-home care in Victoria.

<http://www.create.org.au/home>

The Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare is the peak body for registered community service organisations providing out-of-home care in Victoria.

<http://www.cfecfw.asn.au>

Police checks

The department's *Police records check policy* can be found online in section 4.6 of the *Service agreement information kit for funded organisations*:

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/facs/bdb/fmu/service-agreement/contents>

Advice number 1524: *Criminal records check* may be accessed via the Department of Human Services *Victorian child protection policy and practice manual*:

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/cpmanual/practice-context/child-protection-program-overview/1524-criminal-records-check>

Policy and funding plan

The *Department of Human Services policy and funding plan 2012–2015* can be found on the Department of Human Services website:

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/plans,-programs-and-projects/plans-and-strategies/key-plans-and-strategies/policy-and-funding-plan-department-of-human-services>

Privacy, confidentiality and communication

Advice number 1403: *Information sharing in out-of-home care* may be accessed via the Department of Human Services *Victorian child protection policy and practice manual*:

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/cpmanual/out-of-home-care/overview-of-placement-of-children-and-young-people/1403-information-sharing-in-out-of-home-care>

For the Department of Human Services *Privacy policy* please visit the Department of Human Services website:

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/department-of-human-services-privacy-policy>

The *Health Act 1958* can be found on the Victorian Legislation and Parliamentary Documents website (*note: Information about HIV and AIDS is governed by a specific provision – section 128 of this Act*):

<http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au>

The *Health Records Act 2001* applies to health information, which is broadly defined to include information and opinion relating to physical and mental health, disability and aged care services, and can be found on the Victorian Legislation and Parliamentary Documents website:

<http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au>

The *Information Privacy Act 2000* can be found on the Victorian Legislation and Parliamentary Documents website:

<http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au>

The *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* can be found on the can be found on the Victorian Legislation and Parliamentary Documents website:

<http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au>

Note: information about the right to privacy can be found in section 13 of this Act.

Quality of care

The *Guidelines for responding to quality of care concerns in out-of-home care* is the primary reference to be used when a quality of care concern is raised and can be found on the Department of Human Services website:

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/Guidelines-for-responding-to-quality-of-care-concerns-in-out-of-home-care>

Responding to allegations of physical or sexual assault – departmental instruction can be found online through the Department of Human Services Funded Agency Channel:

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/funded-agency-channel/about-service-agreements/incident-reporting/human-services>

Record keeping

For further information and advice in relation to record keeping, and the retention and disposal of child protection and family services records please refer to:

Managing records of outsourced activity 2010, [PROS 10/10 G2] Public Record Office of Victoria

<http://prov.vic.gov.au/government/standards-and-policy/all-documents>

Authority: Retention and disposal authority for records of child protection and family services functions 2009, Public Record Office Victoria can be found on the Public Record Office Victoria website:

<http://prov.vic.gov.au/government/disposal-and-transfer/retention-and-disposal-authorities>

Service agreement

The *Service agreement information kit for funded organisations* can be downloaded from the Department of Human Services Funded Agency Channel:

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/facs/bdb/fmu/service-agreement>

Working with Children Checks

For all information about Working with Children Checks please visit the Department of Justice website:

<http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au>

Other relevant resources

The whole-of-government *Victoria's Vulnerable Children – Our Shared Responsibility strategy* designed to drive transformational change across government and the community to improve outcomes for vulnerable children and families is available on the department's website at:

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/plans,-programs-and-projects/plans-and-strategies/victorias-vulnerable-children-strategy-2013>

Appendix 1. Example CSO agreement with a young person

The purpose of the agreement with a young person is to specify and obtain acceptance of the expectations of a placement in a lead tenant home. The agreement should be included as part a range of information provided to the young person about the lead tenant program.

Responsibilities of the young person are to:

- Participate in discussions, house meetings and training sessions.
- Respect the rights and privacy of all residents of the household and their guests and not abuse others in any way.
- Adhere to the agreed group decisions and house rules.
- Participate in cleaning, washing, cooking and shopping rosters and arrange any required swaps.
- Keep the house and bedroom in a clean and tidy state.
- Pay the agreed weekly rent.
- Keep music and noise to a level considerate of other residents and neighbours.
- Behave respectfully towards neighbours and engage appropriately with the local community.
- Advise the agency of any prescribed medication and negotiate arrangements for its safe storage.
- Not bring any illegal substance, alcohol, or dangerous weapons the property or allow the premises to be used for any illegal purposes.
- Take care of the house and furnishings and not to inflict wilful damage on them.
- Attend an education, training or employment program.
- Access an income through employment or Centrelink.
- Return to the house by the curfew outlined in the house rules.
- Stay at the house a minimum of 4 nights per week and inform the lead tenant before any evening meal preparation time (as applicable) of any alternative arrangement if not staying at the house including provision of a contact number.
- Ensure any visitors abide by the house rules and are not in the house alone.
- Not have any overnight visitors unless previously negotiated with the agency.
- Not keep any pets at the home unless agreed with the agency.
- Not enter into any sexual relationship or arrangement with any other resident.

Responsibilities of the agency are to:

- Provide ongoing training and support in the development of independent living skills.

- Provide case management (where contracted by the Department of Human Services).
- Provide good quality and secure residential premises.
- Conduct regular house meetings.
- Arrange repairs and maintenance of the house.
- Support the resolution of any issues of concern to the household.

Responsibilities of the lead tenant are to:

- Be a positive role model to young people living in the house.
- Respect the rights of all young people regardless of ethnicity, gender or religious persuasion and not verbally, physically or emotionally abuse anyone.
- Assist and encourage young people to develop household routines and manage their day-to-day needs.
- Participate in house meetings, meals and activities with the young people.
- Not smoke or consume alcohol or drugs in the home.
- Not keep any pets at the home unless agreed with the agency.
- Contact the on-call worker in the case of emergency or if the household members are at risk to themselves or others.
- Not enter into any arrangements with the young people for personal advantage or gain.
- Not engage in sexual activity with any resident.

Signatures:

Young person

I accept the placement in the lead tenant program based on the above expectations which I have read and fully understood. I understand that failure to adhere to the agreement may result in me being asked to leave the lead tenant house.

Young person name:

Signature:

Date:

Agency

I have read through and explained the expectations with the young person to ensure they have understood the agreement.

Agency representative name:

Signature:

Date:

Appendix 2: Lead tenant example interview questions

The below lead tenant example interview questions are structured around the five key competencies required of the role (see requirement 3.3.5). CSOs may use the questions or selection of questions when conducting lead tenant selection processes.

Competency 1: Ensure a safe environment that is free from abuse

Looking for: Self-awareness
 Respect
 Values

- How do you care for others who have experienced grief, trauma or stress?
Cover whether these existing caring techniques are appropriate with young people in a lead tenant home and explore alternative techniques. Also cover vicarious traumatisation.
- How do you deal with stresses in your life?
Cover the impact of stress, sources of support, how stress is diffused, how stress in others can impact.
- What do you think should be some lead tenant house rules to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all residents?
Cover appropriateness of rules, boundaries in the lead tenant home, role of lead tenant in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all residents.
- How do you feel about living with young people from Aboriginal or culturally and linguistically diverse communities? What do you think you may need to know about their cultures?
Cover values and attitudes to diversity. Ask also about religious diversity, sexual diversity, young people with drug and alcohol or mental health issues.
- Provide case example of a lead tenant house where there is subtle emotional abuse and intimidation occurring by one resident towards the lead tenant and another resident. Ask:
 - How would you describe the behaviour of the resident?
 - What strategies would you use to resolve the issues?Cover types of abuse, impacts of abuse and challenges in taking action, sources of support.

Competency 2: Personal readiness and capacity to become a lead tenant

Looking for: Judgement and decision-making
 Self-confidence and resilience
 Motivational fit
 Patience and openness

- What is your motivation to become a lead tenant?
Cover reasons for wanting take on the role, linkages with applicant's own history.

- Can you identify relevant experiences in your own life history which have motivated you to apply for the role?
Cover resilience, emotional impact of own life history, ability to deal with stress.
- What do you believe are your relationship skills and challenges? How do these manifest in the quality of your relationships with significant others?
Cover positive and negative relationships and how these impact on relationships with others, particularly young people.
- How would you respond if a decision is made that you don't agree with?
Cover decision-making processes, roles and responsibilities.

Competency 3: Good understanding or willingness to learn about adolescent development and trauma

Looking for: Specific knowledge
 Understanding and empathy
 Problem-solving

- What is your understanding of how childhood trauma can affect young people?
Cover willingness to learn about adolescent development and trauma.
- Can you reflect on your own adolescence and how that may influence you in the role of a lead tenant?
Cover self-awareness, potential for projection of own issues/experiences, adolescent development.
- Can you identify why the lead tenant role may be challenging?
Cover the presenting issues and behaviour of young people in out-of-home care, how these issues can be responded to, willingness to change anything in current practices in order to live with young people.
- If you were struggling with a young person's behaviour or very concerned about them, what would you do?
Cover impact of trauma on young people, sources of support, boundaries of lead tenant role, safety practices.
- How would you respond to a young person who wants you to keep an important issue a secret?
Cover privacy and confidentiality limitations, information sharing, duty of care, safety of young people, personal experiences and beliefs, potential outcomes of decision, sources of support.

Competency 4: Promote the positive development and independent living skills of young people in lead tenant accommodation

Looking for: Initiative and learning
 Organisational skills
 Flexibility and creativity
 Engagement and motivational skills

- What sort of environment do you think stimulates the development of independent living skills?
Cover role of lead tenant, managing frustrations, types of independent living skills, health and hygiene practices.

- How could you demonstrate and communicate life skills to encourage their development in young people?
Cover role-modelling, communication with young people, communication skills, household routines.
- What could be some effective strategies to manage challenging behaviour by a young person?
Cover personal responses that may impact on a young person's behaviour, sources of support, adolescent development.
- Provide case example of a lead tenant house where the young people have just moved in and have few independent living skills. Ask:
 - How would you approach your role in guiding the development of independent living skills for the young people?
 - What skills and qualities do you bring to supporting young people in their development? How would you use these skills and qualities in the role as lead tenant?
 Cover adolescent development, planning for leaving care, engagement and motivational skills, working with adolescents.

Competency 5: Ability to work as part of a team

Looking for: Accountability

 Communication skills

 Team work

 Responsibility

- Where have you been part of a team? What did you bring to the team and what did you find hard? What would other team members say about you?
Cover team work skills, capacity to reflect on personal contribution to team, understanding of role in a team.
- Can you describe an example of conflict within a team in which you were a member? What did you do about the conflict?
Cover conflict resolution strategies, team work skills, supports that were sought.
- Provide case example of a lead tenant house meeting where there is disagreement and issues to be resolved. Ask:
 - What do you think are the issues that need to be resolved?
 - What strategies would you use to resolve the conflict?
 Cover appropriateness of conflict resolution strategies, sources of support, boundaries of lead tenant role.

Appendix 3: Example lead tenant assessment report template

This template is an example of a lead tenant assessment report that CSOs may use or modify as part of lead tenant selection and approval processes.

Details of lead tenant applicant

Name: _____ Previous names: _____
DOB: _____
Address: _____
Phone: (home) _____ (mobile) _____

Mandatory checks (placed in applicant's file)

Police check Date: _____
Working with Children Check Date: _____
Medical assessment Date: _____
Referee check Date: _____
2nd referee check Date: _____
3rd referee check Date: _____

Issues arising from checks: _____

Assessment summary

Assessment undertaken by: _____

Position of assessor: _____

Date (or period) of assessment: _____

Recommendation: Applicant is competent to perform role - **Appoint**
 Applicant is not yet competent to perform role - **Do not appoint**

Rationale for recommendation (including action plan to address areas of concern leading to becoming competent if applicable): _____

Recommendations for further training: _____

Signatures

Assessor: _____ Date: _____
Program Manager: _____ Date: _____

Detailed evidence of competencies

Evidence of competency 1: Ensure a safe environment that is free from abuse

Evidence of competency 2: Personal readiness and capacity to become a lead tenant

Evidence of competency 3: Good understanding or willingness to learn about adolescent development and trauma

Evidence of competency 4: Promote the positive development and independent living skills of young people in lead tenant accommodation

Evidence of competency 5: Ability to work as part of a team.

Appendix 4: Example CSO agreement with a lead tenant

The purpose of the agreement with a lead tenant is to specify and obtain acceptance of the expectations of the role. The agreement should be included as part a range of information provided to the lead tenant about the program.

1. Roles

Lead tenant responsibilities are to:

- Be a positive role model to young people living in the house, demonstrating appropriate independent living skills, engagement in education/training/employment, recreation, self-care, communication and behaviour.
- Respect the rights of all young people regardless of ethnicity, gender or religious persuasion and not verbally, physically or emotionally abuse anyone.
- Assist and encourage young people to develop household routines and manage their day-to-day needs.
- Regularly liaise with the key worker about issues affecting the residents or household.
- Be in the house for periods agreed with the agency which meets the needs of the young people who reside in the house.
- Contact the on-call worker in the case of emergency or if the household members are at risk to themselves or others.
- Act in the best interests of the young people at all times.
- Maintain confidentiality in relation to young people at all times.
- Ensure the policies and procedures of the agency are adhered to at all times.
- Negotiate any requested overnight stays of guests or relatives in advance with the agency.
- Not allow the premises to be used for any illegal purpose or bring drugs/weapons onto the premises.
- Not enter into any arrangements with the young people for personal advantage or gain.
- Not engage in sexual activity with any resident.
- Agree to leave the house if asked in the event of a quality of care investigation.

Agency responsibilities are to:

- Provide guidance and support to the lead tenant.
- Provide support services and case management for the young people living in the house.
- Liaise with the lead tenant about the progress and wellbeing of young people in the house.
- Lead regular house meetings with the lead tenant and young people.
- Provide 24-hour crisis support to the lead tenant.

- Negotiate time off for the lead tenant.
- Report any quality of care concerns to the Department of Human Services and participate in any subsequent investigation processes.

2. Home and environment

Lead tenant responsibilities are to:

- Participate in house meetings, meals and activities with the young people.
- Undertake basic housekeeping duties to ensure a good standard is maintained in the house.
- Report any safety or house maintenance issues to the key worker in a timely manner and ensure someone is present at the house while any work is carried out.
- Check that the kitchen is clean and food is appropriately and hygienically stored.
- Ensure hazardous and dangerous materials are safely stored.
- Not smoke or consume alcohol or drugs in the home.
- Not keep any pets at the home unless agreed with the agency.

Agency responsibilities are to:

- Provide good quality and secure residential premises.
- Arrange repairs and maintenance of the house.
- Undertake checks of the home environment to ensure the safety and wellbeing of residents.

3. Finances

Lead tenant responsibilities are to:

- Insure their personal property against theft or damage.
- Contribute to food and household expenses as specified by the agency.
- Oversee a small budget for household and minor maintenance items.

Agency responsibilities are to:

- Provide accommodation and utilities (excluding phone calls and internet connection).

4. Support, learning and training

Lead tenant responsibilities are to:

- Participate in fortnightly supervision with the key worker.
- Attend learning or training opportunities as agreed with the agency.

Agency responsibilities are to:

- Provide fortnightly supervision for the lead tenant.
- Provide ongoing support and training for the lead tenant

5. Ceasing lead tenant role

Lead tenant responsibilities are to:

- Provide at least one month's notice prior to leaving the lead tenant position.

Agency responsibilities are to:

- Raise any issues of concern and provide opportunity for resolution (as appropriate). If the issues are unable to be resolved within a reasonable period of time, the CSO will provide a letter advising the agreement has come to an end and provide up to four weeks notice to the lead tenant to vacate the lead tenant home.
- Where there are serious breaches of agreements and guidelines, or risk to other tenants, the tenancy may be terminated immediately without the usual period of notice.

6. Signatures

Lead tenant

I accept the position of voluntary lead tenant based on the above expectations which I have read and fully understood. I understand that failure to adhere to the agreement may result in me being asked to leave the lead tenant house.

Lead tenant name:

Signature:

Date:

Agency

I have read through and explained the above expectations with the proposed lead tenant to ensure they have understood the agreement.

Agency representative name:

Signature:

Date:

Appendix 5: Lead tenant placement and environment check⁵²

This assessment tool is an example of a placement and environment check that can assist a CSO to make an assessment about the safety and environment of a lead tenant home. The tool can be used or modified for use in an initial assessment, for a change of placement address/location or an annual review of the home environment.

Factors	Requirements	Issues to consider (not exhaustive)
General home environment	<p>The lead tenant home and property must be safe, hygienic and appropriately furnished in line with community standards and expectations.</p> <p>Specific requirements are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Areas where people may possibly trip over, for example, steps, loose cables or cords, torn or uneven carpet or floor surfaces are made safe <input type="checkbox"/> Glass doors have safety glass or marking stickers <input type="checkbox"/> Food is appropriately and hygienically stored <input type="checkbox"/> Kitchen is clean <input type="checkbox"/> Living areas bedrooms are clean and free from rubbish 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall cleanliness • Appropriate property maintenance (without the need for 'Urgent repairs' – see Glossary) • Security of the home • Living environment including outdoor areas are appropriate for the age and needs of the young people
Smoke- and alcohol-free environment	<p>CSOs will ensure all young people in lead tenant placements reside in a smoke- and alcohol-free environment.</p> <p>Specific requirements are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> No smoking in the home <input type="checkbox"/> No smoking in the car if lead tenant is transporting a young person <input type="checkbox"/> No alcohol is consumed in the home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the lead tenant and young people clear about the expectation that the home is smoke- and alcohol-free?

⁵² The Lead tenant placement and environment check has been developed using the Step By Step Victoria resource as an initial source. Information about Step By Step Victoria is available at <<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-service-providers/children,-youth-and-families/child-and-youth-placement-and-support/step-by-step-user-login-only>>

Factors	Requirements	Issues to consider (not exhaustive)
Sleeping arrangements and privacy	<p>Sleeping arrangements for a young person must be age appropriate and meet their individual needs.</p> <p>Specific requirements for a young person's bedroom are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Individual bedrooms for each person (unless lead tenants are partners) <input type="checkbox"/> Space for appropriate furniture and storage <input type="checkbox"/> Privacy and safety available for all residents <input type="checkbox"/> Space to lock or secure belongings <input type="checkbox"/> Heating and cooling is appropriate and in working order 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there enough bedrooms and beds? • Is the linen clean and appropriate to the climate?
Equipment and furniture	<p>All equipment and furniture used by a young person must be safe, stable and appropriate and must comply with Australian safety standards where they exist.</p> <p>Specific requirements are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Space and opportunity for social interaction indoors and outdoors <input type="checkbox"/> Small kitchen appliances including microwave ovens are well maintained and not hazardous <input type="checkbox"/> Large appliances including fridges, ovens, stoves, dishwashers, heaters, washing machines and dryers are maintained and serviced as required <input type="checkbox"/> 'Test and Tag' of appliances is completed on an annual basis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there any concerns about the kitchen or large appliances?

Factors	Requirements	Issues to consider (not exhaustive)
Hazardous and dangerous materials	<p>CSOs will ensure that hazardous or dangerous materials in the lead tenant home, including any materials that may be used as inhalants, will be securely stored.</p> <p>The following materials must be safely stored:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Dangerous materials, garden chemicals, cleaning fluids, medicines and alcohol <input type="checkbox"/> Machinery and other equipment <input type="checkbox"/> Aerosol and other potential inhalants <input type="checkbox"/> Young people have their own medication in their bedroom and ensure it cannot be accessed by others. (Depending upon individual circumstances, an arrangement may be in place where a lead tenant may provide a young person with enough medication for a specified period at a time) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the backyard, garages, sheds are secured? • Are electrical and gas appliances including heaters and barbecues safe? • Are all hazardous materials safely stored including medications?

Factors	Requirements	Issues to consider (not exhaustive)
<p>Fire safety</p>	<p>CSOs will comply with the most current departmental <i>Capital Development Guidelines Series 7 Fire Risk Management</i> to ensure young people are appropriately protected from the risk posed by fire. Refer to http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/fire-risk-management-policy,-procedures-and-guidelines. Guideline 7.10 is usually applicable to lead tenant placements, however, this must be confirmed by the CSO based on the client and lead tenant profile and program model (refer lead tenant program requirement 3.10.2).</p> <p>The lead tenant home must be fitted or provided with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Smoke detectors installed and working <input type="checkbox"/> Doors and windows can be easily opened in the event of fire <input type="checkbox"/> Fire blanket and fire extinguisher is fitted (as per CSO policy) <input type="checkbox"/> An appropriate fire evacuation plan is in place <input type="checkbox"/> There is safe storage of matches and lighters <input type="checkbox"/> Fire guards are to be fitted to open fire places and must not be used <input type="checkbox"/> A fire safety handbook (refer Capital Development Guideline 7.2) <input type="checkbox"/> No deadlocks on any of the doors or windows <input type="checkbox"/> Evacuation plans and diagrams must be developed and prominently displayed on the inside of the entry doors of each bedroom and in all common areas <input type="checkbox"/> An electrical safety check to be conducted (at least once every 5 years) by a licensed electrician <input type="checkbox"/> Maintenance contracts in place for all essential safety measures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to the agency's policy on fire risk management. • Is this a bushfire-prone area? Refer to www.cfa.vic.gov.au • Is the evacuation plan practiced and reviewed on a regular basis?

Factors	Requirements	Issues to consider (not exhaustive)
Fencing	<p>Perimeter fencing on a lead tenant property must be appropriately maintained and any swimming pools or spas fencing must meet Victorian legal requirements. Refer to http://www.buildingcommission.com.au/consumers/swimming-pool-and-spa-safety-barriers</p> <p>Specific requirements are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Perimeter fencing checked and maintained <input type="checkbox"/> Fencing for pools and spas complies with relevant legislation <input type="checkbox"/> Gates can be locked and secured 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is all fencing secure?
Pets or animals	<p>Pets or animals are not to be kept at the lead tenant home unless there is an agreement with the program Team Leader.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are any pets or animals present?
Firearms/Weapons	<p>Firearms or weapons are not to be kept at the lead tenant home under any circumstances.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are any firearms or weapons present?