

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Singles bearing brunt of housing crisis need solutions**

Victoria's peak body for community housing said raising JobSeeker will help reverse the worsening rental crisis for single people, as fresh analysis highlights the unmet and growing demand for affordable homes among the cohort.

Community Housing Industry Association Victoria's (CHIA Vic) *Housing Challenges for Single Person Households* paper reveals:

- More than 47,600 single-person households are on Victoria's social housing waitlist, representing the majority (85%) of all new applications
- For every single person housed, Victoria's social housing waitlist received 1.8 new applications from singles. For non-single households this ratio is 1.5.
- Two in five single applicants for social housing (40%) receive lower forms of income support payments such as JobSeeker, compared with less than one in five (19%) families and couples
- Less than 30 per cent of public housing in Victoria is one-bedroom
- Single applicants are generally in higher need, making up nine in ten (89%) of new applications on the Priority Access List, compared with one in ten (11%) being families and couples.

CHIA Vic chief executive Sarah Toohey said demand for social housing among single people will continue to rise as income support fails to keep pace with the cost of living.

"The housing crisis is burdening a broad spectrum of Victorians but single people are disproportionately coping it," Ms Toohey said.

"Rising rents and cost-of-living pressures are driving more and more single people to seek social housing. For every single person that gets housed, we're seeing almost two more people added to the waiting list.

"This year, the federal government is developing a National Housing and Homelessness Plan, and promising cost-of-living relief. There is no greater preventative against homelessness than alleviating poverty, and no one is having a harder time in the cost-of-living crisis than those trying to survive on JobSeeker payments. Raising JobSeeker must be top of the list when it comes to cost-of-living relief.

"Social housing is a lifeline for singles - it delivers affordable rent, at no more than 30 per cent of income. However, because JobSeeker is so low, 30 per cent of a single person's income makes it challenging to cover the cost of building and maintaining homes for singles

at the required scale, and that's holding back the community housing sector from delivering more homes to those who most desperately need them.

“Raising the JobSeeker rate to \$78 per day is critical to helping recipients cover their rents, and assisting our sector to build more social housing for single people.”

To view CHIA Vic's Housing Singles policy paper, [click here](#)

To view the full project, [click here](#)

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