

# Vacancy Management Procedure

## Commitment

Illohra is committed to ensuring vacancy management is efficient and effective. We believe that good vacancy management is important for all stakeholders. A household that is well matched is generally content and stable, which benefits residents, Illohra Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) and the Supported Independent Living (SIL) provider.

## Scope

This procedure is to ensure vacancy management in Illohra SDA:

- complies with legislation, policy and related requirements
- is equitable, consistent and transparent
- maximises choice and control
- engages with residents, their representatives and the SIL provider
- considers household compatibility, resident safety and sustainable living arrangements
- occurs within funding timeframes.

Illohra developed customised SDA. When SDA is purpose built for a person it is exempt from vacancy management requirements with the exception of eligibility, screening and collaboration.

Illohra acknowledges participants and SIL providers are also stakeholders in the vacancy management process. Communication channels and clear roles will be outlined in writing, and may be specific in response to individual requirements. The participant and collaboration agreements will provide specific detail to support this policy and resident choice.

A vacancy is not considered filled from the service agreement or residential statement commencement date. Under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) rules, Illohra is provided SDA funding for 90 days to fill a vacancy for a dwelling that is enrolled to house four or five people, and 60 days SDA funding to fill a vacancy for a dwelling enrolled for two or three people. There is no funded time to fill a vacancy in a dwelling enrolled for one person. This procedure is designed to fit within the funding timelines whenever possible.

## What is vacancy management?

Vacancy management covers:

- identifying a vacancy in SDA
- advertising the vacancy
- showing the home to people who are interested and eligible
- taking and shortlisting applications
- selecting the most appropriate person to fill the vacancy
- offering the vacancy
- notifying successful/unsuccessful applicants
- informing stakeholders and NDIA
- transition a new person moving into the house.

## Procedure

### Agreements

Illowra develops customised SDA in partnership with participants and their families, starting from the planning stage. This means that a group of people may have come together to design and develop an SDA dwelling they have equity in, with people who they want to live with, supported by an investor agreement. Many of the vacancies could be filled at the planning stage.

Vacancy management will have a common approach, in line with compliance requirements, but some detail may differ. This is because:

- Choice and control means different things to different people
- New houses are different to established households
- There may be NDIS and State requirements.

Participant agreements will specify how residents would like to be involved in vacancy management in their home. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Who has the resident chosen as their SIL\*?
- Do they want a review period for the SIL provider, so if they change their mind, or if the household changes, they have choice and control to change the SIL?
- Do they want everyone to agree to the same SIL, or will they agree to accommodate multiple SIL providers?
- Do they want to be consulted directly on vacancy management or do they want to be represented by family or the SIL?
- Do they want to meet applicants prior to offer?

(In Victoria currently DHHS requires the SIL manage vacancies, as the registered Disability Provider. Illowra will work with participants and/or their families to establish SDA, and Vacancy Management will be agreed with the SIL in the collaboration agreement.)

Illowra will develop collaboration agreements with SIL providers based on legislative requirements and participant choice. Each SDA-SIL collaboration agreement will be designed to meet compliance requirements, establish an effective working relationship and result in positive outcomes for participants in line with service agreements. For vacancy management this includes, but is not limited to:

- support for participant involvement
- the SIL provider's role in vacancy management
- requirements for open house.

To ensure choice and control is embedded in the process, specific details relating to vacancy management from each household's service agreements and collaboration agreement/s will be entered into the Illowra information system by the organisation's signatory or their delegate within five business days. If these details change, they will be updated by Illowra signatory or their delegate within five business days.

### Identifying a vacancy in SDA

There may be a vacancy may if a:

- new dwelling is enrolled with the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA)
- resident chooses to move out

- notice to vacate has been issued
- resident passes away.

Under the Terms of Business for Registered Providers, Illowra is required to notify the NDIA within five business days if:

- the participant gives notice to vacate
- a notice to vacate has been issued
- there is an impending vacancy for any other reason.

In Victoria, under the Disability Act, the SIL provider is required to notify the Secretary within 24 hours of a vacancy.

There are different ways of identifying a vacancy, depending on the property and reason for vacancy:

- In new SDA developments, vacancies will be identified by Illowra.
- In existing SDA, there will be clauses in participant agreements outlining who residents notify and when if they are planning to leave a property.
- Collaboration agreements with the SIL will be based on participant agreements. The SIL may be required to notify of the vacancy as the resident’s representative, or if a resident passes away. They will also be required to confirm general details regarding the vacancy with Illowra.

In some circumstances, a vacancy may be advertised prior to a resident exiting. In this case, advertising cannot start until the resident, SDA and SIL providers have agreed to an exit date. This is to prevent unintended pressures on the resident to exit earlier than the agreed date.

The following table outlines vacancy notification requirements.

<b>Task</b>	<b>Responsible party</b>	<b>Timeframe (business day)</b>	<b>Required systems, tools and templates</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notify Illowra of planned/ unplanned vacancy</li> <li>• Notify Illowra of unplanned vacancy or confirm planned vacancy</li> <li>• Notify the NDIA/Department of vacancy</li> </ul>	Resident/their representative  SIL  SIL	XX days in line with participant agreement  Next business day  Next 5 business days	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update Illowra’s information system with service end dates where an exit has occurred</li> <li>• Check the household vacancy management requirements in participant/ collaboration agreements</li> </ul>	Vacancy manager	Within 1 business day of notification	Illowra’s information system
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete a vacancy profile</li> </ul>	Vacancy manager if new  SIL and/or residents if existing	Within 2 business days of notification	Vacancy profile

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notify the National Disability Agency (NDIA) of the vacancy</li> </ul>	Vacancy manager	Within 5 business days of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a vacancy becoming available or</li> <li>an exit date is confirmed</li> </ol>	NDIA contact details
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agree an exit date</li> </ul>	Vacancy manager, SIL and resident	Before advertising	

## Advertising the vacancy

The vacancy manager, in consultation with stakeholders and in line with agreements, should ensure participants have sufficient information to determine whether to apply. This includes:

- the SDA type (design category and building type)
- features of the house
- the general location of the SDA including proximity to amenities such as public transport
- basic and de-identified information about any existing residents, such as gender and age mix
- a description of the application process such as key dates, open inspection times and application process
- specialist support features.

All vacancies must be advertised for at least ten business days through the NDIS register, websites and local networks. This allows time for eligible participants to find out about the property, visit if they choose, and apply for the vacancy.

The following table outlines vacancy advertising requirements.

Task	Responsible party	Timeframe (business day)	Required systems, tools and templates
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confirm suitable open house times with housing officer (new SDA) or residents and SIL (established SDA)</li> <li>Complete a marketing flyer template including inspection time(s)</li> <li>Seek further information from in consultation with residents and/or their representatives and/or SIL if required</li> </ul>	Vacancy manager	Within 2 business days of finalised vacancy profile	Marketing flyer template
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advertise the marketing vacancy through local networks, on housing hub or equivalent and NDIS register</li> </ul>	Vacancy manager	Within 2 business days of developing flyer	Mailing lists <a href="http://www.thehousinghub.org.au">www.thehousinghub.org.au</a>

## Open inspections

Open inspections offer a valuable opportunity for potential residents to view the residence and find out more about the vacancy. They require coordination with stakeholders. For vacant SDA this will be with the property manager. For established SDA the vacancy manager will consult with the SIL and/or residents to ensure the advertised dates provide reasonable notice and minimise disruptions to all stakeholders.

When responding to expressions of interest in an open house, the vacancy manager will collect the person's details, including age, NDIS participant number and plan/funding status, and notes who will be attending the inspection.

If applicants are not eligible for the vacancy they will be referred on. If NDIS participants do not have SDA as a provisional item in their approved plan, the vacancy manager will inform them (or support coordinators/Local Area Coordinators - LAC) about the need to arrange a plan review. People aged 65 years will be referred to *My Aged care*.

Names will be provided to the housing officer (new SDA) or SIL and/or residents (established SDA). Illowra will facilitate open inspections for new vacant dwellings, ensuring site security and visitor safety are maintained.

The SIL will oversee coordinate open inspections for occupied dwellings, unless otherwise negotiated in the collaboration agreement. Residents will be involved in open inspections in line with their preferences documented in the service agreement. The SIL will ensure only shared areas and the vacant room are accessed. They will maintain the privacy of all residents. If the resident has not vacated, they will agree an approach for showing the room. The SIL will also ensure the inspection does not cause any security or safety problems.

The following table outlines open inspection requirements.

Task	Responsible party	Timeframe (business day)	Required systems, tools and templates
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Answer any queries with regard to the advertised vacancy</li> <li>• Collect details and develop an attendee list for open inspection/s</li> <li>• Follow up where plans do not have a provisional SDA line item</li> <li>• Provide referral information where person is not eligible</li> <li>• For new dwellings provide the attendee list to the housing officer, and for established dwellings provide the list to the SIL and/or residents prior to the scheduled open inspection date/s</li> </ul>	Vacancy manager	Inspection to occur during the advertising period (10 business days)	Attendee list
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate/host open inspection (s) using the open for inspection tip sheet</li> <li>• Use attendee list to manage open inspection</li> <li>• Answer any vacancy and support queries at the time of inspection</li> </ul>	Vacancy manager/ housing officer (new SDA) SIL and/or residents (established SDA)		Open for inspection tip sheet
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in open inspections in line with choices documented in the service agreement</li> </ul>	Residents and/ or their representatives		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider the advertisement</li> <li>• Confirm attendance prior to attending open inspection</li> <li>• Attend open inspections (optional)</li> <li>• Meet with residents (if required)</li> </ul>	Participants looking for SDA		Application form

### Applications

The NDIA is responsible for assessing SDA eligibility. The vacancy manager will check that applicants are approved for SDA, the vacancy's SDA type (design category and building

type) and location. They will collate the information for comparison and selection. In the event of no applications wider advertising would need to commence as soon as possible.

The following table outlines application requirements.

Task	Responsible party	Timeframe (business day)	Required systems, tools and templates
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Receive and acknowledge applications</li> </ul>	Vacancy manager	Within 1 business day (from close of applications)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review all applications</li> <li>Confirm SDA and SIL are in the participant's plan</li> <li>Contact participants, support coordinators or LACs if additional information or clarification is required</li> <li>Add summarised information to the applicant profile form</li> <li>Securely send the applicant profiles to stakeholders in line with service and collaboration agreements.</li> </ul>	Vacancy manager	Within 3 business days (from close of applications)	Applicant profile
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review applicant information</li> </ul>	Vacancy manager (and residents, their representatives and/or SIL when applicable)	Within 2 business days (of receipt of applicant profiles)	Applicant profile

### Selecting the most appropriate person to fill the vacancy

Stakeholders are required to work together to identify a preferred participant to offer SDA, as outlined in the service and collaboration agreement. This may include communicating with each other and sharing information about the existing residents and the services. They will fully co-operate to meet the needs of the residents of the household, and balancing the needs of existing and new residents.

The selection process to determine the best fit for the household will vary depending on the vacancy:

- The vacancy manager will review all initial applications for new vacant SDA, as there may be no other stakeholders.
- Where participants and/or their families are SDA investors, the new SDA development is partially allocated, and a SIL has not been confirmed, the vacancy manager will work with founding stakeholders as outlined in the investor and service agreements.
- For established SDA, the vacancy manager will work with residents, their representatives and/or the SIL provider as outlined in the participant and collaborative agreements.

Apart from the first instance, a meeting will be held at an agreed suitable time and follow a clear and consistent agenda. (In the first case of a vacant SDA with no stakeholders, the vacancy manager would follow a clear and documented selection process.) The vacancy manager will be briefed vacancy meeting attendees on confidentiality and due process. The vacancy manager will chair the meeting and document outcomes. Depending on resident choice as noted in the service agreement, and the collaboration agreement(s):

- If residents or their representative choose to contribute to the selection process verbally or writing, individually or collectively, this input will be brought to the vacancy meeting.
- If they wish to participate in the vacancy meeting, or have a representative participate, this will be facilitated.
- If there is one or more SIL providers involved they will automatically be involved as a stakeholder. If residents have agreed the SIL as their representative in the participant agreement, this will be accommodated in the process as would the process for the SIL seeking resident views (eg through a house meeting).

The vacancy manager (new SDA), or all stakeholders (established SDA) will work through the applications systemically and fairly, must consider individual factors that may influence the likelihood of a sustainable and long term tenancy. Consideration will be given to household compatibility, resident safety and sustainable living arrangements, to determine the most suitable person.

All parties are required to collaborate with each other at the meeting and agree on the preference and ranking. Ideally everyone will be in consensus. If there are any complexities while identifying a suitable participant, the stakeholders may give this further consideration outside of the meeting. This is to be completed within two days for the top three ranked applicants, to avoid further delays. If there is agreement no one applicant is suitable then wider advertising would need commence as soon as possible. If consensus is unable to be reached after further consideration and discussion the SDA may make a final decision on ranking of vacancies to be offered to participants. Difference of opinion will be considered; if necessary a majority decision may be made.

Meeting minutes will include the decisions making process and a clear rationale for the vacancy to be offered to a particular applicant. Decision making documents must be retained on file in the Illowra document management system. Documentation will be available to demonstrate due care, skill and diligence when offering a participant SDA.

The following table outlines selection requirements.

<b>Task</b>	<b>Responsible party</b>	<b>Timeframe (business day)</b>	<b>Required systems, tools and templates</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrange a vacancy coordination meeting date and time with stakeholders</li> </ul>	Vacancy manager	Within 2 business days of notification	





<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare and send an offer letter and response to offer of residency form to the appropriate person (participant, nominated person, support coordinator or LAC)</li> </ul>			Offer letter template Response to offer of residency template
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arrange a SDA visit or meeting with residents for the preferred applicant prior to acceptance if required</li> </ul>	Vacancy manager in communication with residents and/or SIL	Within 5 business days (from the offer)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visit the SDA and meet with residents and/or SIL if required</li> <li>Consider the offer</li> <li>Indicate his/her decision and sign the letter and forward it to the appropriate contact</li> </ul>	Participant and /or representative/s		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inform residents and/or SIL of the applicant's decision</li> <li>File the letter and document</li> <li>If the applicant accepts the offer, advise the local NDIA</li> <li>If the applicant declines, document and continue offering to other suitable applicants (or their representative) following the procedure</li> </ul>	Vacancy manager	1 day from receipt of the response from applicant	Signed response to offer of residency template Signed agreement Illowra information system
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure the applicant has signed agreements in place with Illowra Projects and the SIL (which will include how the person prefers to participate in future vacancy management)</li> </ul>	Vacancy manager	Within 5 business days (from receipt of the acceptance)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor commencement of transition process</li> </ul>	Vacancy manager	Over the agreed transition period	

### Informing stakeholders and NDIA

The vacancy manager will keep residents, or their representatives, and/or the SIL provider, informed of the outcomes. They will advise NDIA when an offer has been accepted and filled. A participant is considered to be residing in the dwelling from the commencement date of the service agreement.

On confirmation of moving in the vacancy manager will notify any unsuccessful participants and their supports, of the outcome of their application and document accordingly.

### Moving in

The future resident will sign a service agreement with Illowra and the SIL provider of their choice (new SDA), or the household's SIL provider (established SDA unless they accommodate multiple SIL providers). The vacancy manager will check the person's preferences for involvement in future vacancy management and related representation, and ensure this is included in the agreement.

The service commencement date must be clearly specified in the agreement. It should be within 60-90 days of vacancy period, so providers will not carry an unfunded vacancy period and be financially disadvantaged.

Illowra will ensure the access requirements of future resident is managed, eg keys/codes. The SIL provider will work with the future resident, and/or their representative, to ensure their transition support requirements are met.

The following table outlines offering the requirements that enable the new resident to move in.

<b>Task</b>	<b>Responsible party</b>	<b>Timeframe (business day)</b>	<b>Required systems, tools and templates</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and agree to agreements with the future resident and / or their representatives</li> <li>Illowra agreement to include resident's preferences for participation in vacancy management</li> <li>Transition requirements to be identified and recorded in service agreement or related document</li> </ul>	Vacancy manager and SIL	Within 10 business days after acceptance and prior to commencement of service delivery	Participant agreements (Residential Statement)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advise unsuccessful applicants of the outcome</li> </ul>	Vacancy manager	Within 5 business days of notification of agreement being signed	Outcome message
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Documented transition to commence</li> <li>Transition outcomes documented</li> </ul>	SIL/ Vacancy manager	Immediately after the service agreement is signed	Illowra information system
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor the transition timelines</li> </ul>	Vacancy manager		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advise vacancy manager once transition is concluded</li> <li>Document transition outcome</li> </ul>	SIL Vacancy manager	Immediately after the notification	

**Illowra Projects and staff are responsible for:**

- developing agreements with participants that meet the requirements of this procedure and address individual preferences
- developing collaboration agreements with SIL providers in line with this procedure and service agreements

- working with participants, their representatives and their SIL provider to manage vacancies in line with this procedure
- ensuring the access requirements of future residents are met
- maintaining registration and meeting dwelling compliance requirements.

**The vacancy manager is responsible for:**

- coordinating vacancy management in all Illowra SDA in line with this procedure
- maintaining information on properties (eg type of house and contents, current residents, SIL support, service/collaboration agreement details on vacancy management)
- advertising vacancies and responding to queries
- maintaining communication with stakeholders
- arranging open house times
- collating and shortlisting applications
- chairing and documenting vacancy meetings
- ensuring the most suitable applicant is selected in line with service/collaboration agreements
- communicating and confirming offers
- ensuring the SIL and NDIA are notified
- notifying unsuccessful applicants.

**NDIS participants are responsible for:**

- looking for a home in consultation with their informal supports and/or support coordinator (if funded and allocated)
- considering advertised SDA vacancies
- applying for suitable vacancies in line with the advertised procedure
- considering, accepting, negotiating or declining any offers
- on accepting the vacancy, meeting the requirements of vacancy management as outlined in the service agreement.

**SIL providers and staff are responsible for:**

- meeting the requirements of vacancy management as outlined in this procedure and the collaboration agreement
- maintaining registration under the Disability Act (Victoria only)
- providing Illowra relevant vacancy information, such as the current level of support, day-to-day operations of the household and preferences of current residents
- supporting applicants to visit the property and/or meet current residents, managing privacy, safety and security
- participating in the selection process as outlined in the collaboration agreement
- developing a service agreement for SIL with the new resident.

**NDIS funded support coordinators (where funded and allocated in a participant's plan) are responsible for:**

- supporting participants to choose which SDA dwellings to apply for
- supporting participants to provide accurate and current information about their support needs and preferences in their application
- supporting participants to accept, negotiate or decline any SDA offers.

**Informal supports (e.g. families and carers) are responsible for:**

- using their detailed knowledge and understanding of a participant's support needs, preferences and aspirations to support them in choosing which SDA dwellings to apply for
- supporting participants to provide accurate and current information about their support needs and preferences in their application
- supporting participants to accept, negotiate or decline any SDA offers
- acting as the participant's representative in other vacancy management if negotiated in the service agreement.

## **Legislation and Standards**

The following legislation applies to this policy and supporting documentation:

[Disability Act 2006](#) (Victoria)

[Health Records Act 2001](#) (Vic)

[Offering residency in Specialist Disability Accommodation Policy and Standards May 2017](#)  
(Vic)

*The Vacancy Coordination Practice Guide for Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA)*  
September 2017 (Vic)

[Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014](#) (Vic)

[SDA Rules](#) available from <https://www.ndis.gov.au/specialist-disability-accommodation>

## Related Illowra documents

Feedback Policy

Marketing Flyer

Offer of Residency Letter

Open Inspection Attendee List

Open Inspection Tip Sheet

Outcome Letter

Privacy Policy

Response to Offer of Residency

Screening Tips

Vacancy and Applicant Profile form

Vacancy Notification form

Collaboration agreements

Investor agreements

Service agreements

<b>Policy Matrix: Engagement</b>	
<b>Version</b>	<b>Details</b>
Version 1	28 October 2018
Endorsed	28 October 2018
Changes	



## Vacancy notification form

This form (or equivalent) is used to notify Illohra of a vacancy in specialist disability accommodation (SDA). Please email to [info@illohraprojects.com.au](mailto:info@illohraprojects.com.au)

### Information about the person completing this form

Date form completed	
Organisation	
Name	
Position	
Contact phone number	

### Vacancy details

Address of SDA	
Phone number of SDA	

### Details of person vacating

Name	
Person's date of birth	
Date of exit / planned exit	
NDIS participant number	
Reason for exit (eg death, aged care, notice to vacate, other)	
New address (if appropriate)	

### ILLOWRA INTERNAL OFFICE USE ONLY

Date received	
Person receiving form	
Update end date for SDA in information system	
NDIS property number	
SDA design and type	



## Suburb

Property blurb - Describe the property using simple and clear short sentences that are appropriate for participants and the target audience.

**Insert main property photo.**

Right click and select 'change picture' and choose 'from a file'.

Picture size:

H: 156 mm

W: 194 mm

If picture size is not exact, you can crop within MS Word to make fit; or for this front cover photo (only) you can move it around and resize without cropping due to the photo box being 'framed' behind white side panels and the top and bottom banners.

Property ID: 10000000





**Vacancy and applicant profile**

SIL provider	
Address of vacancy	

Details	Residents (SIL to complete)	APPLICANT 1 (Vacancy manager to complete)	APPLICANT 2	APPLICANT 3
Age	Resident 1: Resident 2: Resident 3: Resident 4: Resident 5:			
Interests	R1: R2: R3: R4: R5:			
Gender	R1: R2: R3: R4: R5:			
Cultural background and/or religion	R1: R2: R3: R4: R5:			
Disability or impairments	R1: R2: R3: R4: R5:			

Health Needs	R1: R2: R3: R4: R5:			
Support Requirements - Activities of Daily Living	R1: R2: R3: R4: R5:			
Behaviours of concern	R1: R2: R3: R4: R5:			
Night time supports - Sleep over or Active night	R1: R2: R3: R4: R5:			
Risk Assessment - <i>Has the person been subject to an assessment for fire risk behaviours or manual handling? Please provide details</i>	R1: R2: R3: R4: R5:			

Community activities	R1: R2: R3: R4: R5:			
Mobility	R1: R2: R3: R4: R5:			
Communication skills	R1: R2: R3: R4: R5:			
Strengths, interests and preferences for applicants	R1: R2: R3: R4: R5:			
Description of house - <i>physical structures, locks, kitchen, and mobility access</i>				
Fabric - <i>is there capacity to consider changes to the physical structure to take account of individual needs within current resources?</i>				

<p>Description of vacant room - <i>size, built-in robes, room for manoeuvring a wheelchair, existing furniture and equipment such as manual handling equipment, location in relation to exits and bathroom (residents' representative to complete)</i></p>				
<p>Current Roster <i>(SIL to complete)</i></p>				
<p>Staff profile <i>(SIL to complete)</i></p>				
<p>Any important resident dynamics that need to be considered <i>(residents, their representatives and SIL to contribute)</i></p>				
<p>Any other specific issues relating to the vacancy or house that need to be considered <i>(residents, their representatives and SIL to contribute)</i></p>				
<p>Funding and plan status</p>	N/A			
<p>Other information</p>				





## **Open Inspection**

### **Tip sheet**

This tip sheet has been developed to help host an open inspection. The tip sheet includes tasks to complete before and during the open inspection, and important information to provide to attendees and their supports. The following actions say 'staff', but residents may participate in sharing information or showing the house if they choose.

**Only people on the attendee list and their supports may enter the property for the open inspection. Attendees cannot enter the bedroom of a person who lives in the house without their permission. Attendees can only enter a bedroom where it is vacant (unless otherwise agreed for room that is yet to be vacated) and any common areas (both inside and out). Staff should minimise disruptions to existing residents where possible, for example scheduling the open inspection at a time established residents find suitable. This may be when they are home, out or engaged in other activities. Staff should also attend to the safety and security considerations of both the existing residents and attendees throughout the open inspection.**

#### **Before open inspection**

- Staff should read the marketing flyer and familiarise themselves with its content. Seek clarification if unsure about anything on the flyer
- Staff should have enough copies of the marketing flyer available to provide to attendees
- Staff should use the attendee list provided by the divisional vacancy manager to manage the open inspection
- Staff should ensure that all rooms of existing residents are closed for privacy unless otherwise agreed
- Staff should be mindful of identifying material displayed such as resident names on bedroom doors, photos, and resident information on display in the office and around the house

#### **During open inspection**

- Staff should document who attends and return to vacancy manager after the open house with any related feedback
- Staff should provide a copy of the marketing flyer to each attendee
- Staff should provide each attendee with a quick overview of the house including home technology, accessibility and proximity to local amenities
- Staff should monitor attendees to ensure privacy, safety and security

- Staff should answer any vacancy and support queries from attendees during the open inspection
- Staff are not to provide personal information about existing residents to attendees. If attendees ask any questions about current residents, staff should refer them to the advertisement flyer.
- If current residents are home and would like to meet attendees and introduce themselves, or participate in showing the house, staff should assist.

**Information to provide to attendees and their supports during open inspection**

- The specific 'house rules' e.g. keeping pets, sharing resources and household items, having visitors over to the house, staying overnight or coming for meals, smoking etc
- Monthly rent or board and lodging information, including any additional contributions residents are required to make for expenses such as utilities or other services
- What residents are expected to supply themselves i.e. their own bedding, linen and bedroom furniture including mattresses and beds
- The agreement (and residential statement in Victoria) needs to be signed and they need to start paying rent as per SDA Rules
- Access to a vehicle, whether it is wheelchair accessible (does it have a hoist and anchor points)? Is the vehicle shared? Any other restrictions or considerations with use of the vehicle?



**Specialist Disability  
Accommodation  
Application Form**

Date of application: \_\_\_\_\_

SDA property ID: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Person requiring Specialist Disability Accommodation (<i>the applicant</i>)</b>			
First name		Surname	
Gender	Male Female Unspecified	Date of birth	
Primary disability		Other disability	
Interpreter required	Yes No	Preferred language	
Address/ Suburb/ Postcode			
Daytime phone		Mobile phone	
Email			
Additional information	Do you have a NDIS Plan? Yes (plan approval date:        ) (Participant No:                    ) No	SDA included in the plan? Yes (SDA type:                    ) No	

<b>Primary contact person (<i>if other than the applicant</i>)</b>	
First name	Surname
Relationship to person requiring support/ Organisation	
Address/Suburb/ Postcode	
Daytime phone	Mobile phone
Email	



<b>Person completing this form (if other than the applicant or the primary contact person)</b>	
First name	Surname
Relationship to person requiring support	
Organisation	
Daytime Phone	Mobile phone
Email	
<b>NDIA Support Co-ordinator</b>	
First name	Surname
Organisation	
Daytime phone	Mobile
Email	
<b>Is there a legal guardian?</b>	
<p>Yes    No</p> <p>If no, please proceed to next question box</p> <p>If yes, what type of decisions are they able to make?</p> <p>Accommodation    Health    All lifestyle decisions</p> <p>Please provide legal guardian's name, phone number and organisation (if relevant):</p>	
<b>Is there a legally appointed Financial Administrator?</b>	
Yes    No	
<b>How are other people assisting with support? Include help from family and friends and any other support services.</b>	
<b>Relationship of person or agency name</b>	<b>Type of support provided</b>
<b>Current accommodation arrangements</b>	



	No help	No help but aids used	Prompting	Some support	Full physical support
<b>Showering / bathing</b>					
Describe:					
<b>Grooming</b>					
Describe:					
<b>Dressing</b>					
Describe:					
<b>Toileting</b>					
Describe:					
<b>Eating</b>					
Describe:					
<b>Cooking</b>					
Describe:					
<b>Domestic tasks</b>					
Describe:					
<b>Using money</b>					
Describe:					
<b>Decision making</b>					
Describe:					
<b>Taking medication</b>					
Describe:					
<b>Mobility</b>					
Describe:					





When you are out in the community as part of a group, do you need one-to-one support to help you?

What transport do you use to travel to and from places?

Tick if you have the following:  
 Annual travel ticket  
 Concession card  
 Taxi card  
 Other (please describe):

Do you need help to use public transport, taxis and other transportation? If yes, please give details.

**Community activities and day supports**

What do you do during the daytime, Monday to Friday? If you attend a day service, workplace, education or training facility, please provide the names and addresses of the services you attend.

**Please complete the schedule below. Include time and places**

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<b>Time leave</b>					
<b>AM</b>					
<b>PM</b>					
<b>Time arrive home</b>					

How do you travel to and from your day supports? What support do you need to travel?

Are there activities you regularly do on Saturday and Sunday? If so, please provide details

**Section 9: Other information**

Is there any other information you would like to add?

**Consent & Declaration**

You or your authorised representative\* must provide consent for the SDA application and information provided in the application (and requested assessments and reports) to be used in the following ways:

- to create a file (electronic and/or paper)
- to be seen by external parties for a placement
- for statistical reporting

\* Your representative could be a primary carer, family member, advocate or an appointed guardian. A paid worker such as a case manager or support worker cannot be your representative.

Written consent

*I have been informed and consent to the use of information in the application for any Specialist Disability Accommodation dwelling vacancy that I am applying for. I understand that this information may be provided to external agencies for this purpose. I also understand that this consent allows for information in this application to be used for statistical reporting. I declare that the information given on this form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.*

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

If signed by a representative, please state your relationship to the applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Verbal consent – only to be used where it is not practicable to obtain written consent

*I have discussed the purpose and disclosure of this information with the applicant or their representative and I am satisfied that they understand how the information will be used, and that they have provided informed consent to the submission of this application for support.*

Verbal consent provided by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Person/representative's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Organisation (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_





## Screening tips

Screening, in vacancy management, is a way of looking at a person, their interests, abilities and support needs, and how this matches the vacancy. It is important to screen applicants in the selection process. Structured screening makes it easier to prioritise applicants, looking at who is the best match for the house and the household. (For new dwellings, applicants' support needs should be considered against the housing type, and if it is to be a shared dwelling, likely future residents.)

Screening looks at information about people that would otherwise be private or confidential. No one is allowed to talk about or share information about applicants to anyone other than the vacancy panel.

Some things to consider are outlined below. A match in one area does not guarantee compatibility. ie two people may be the same age or gender, but not get along. Good profiles assist in comparing applicants to find who will fit in well with current residents.

### Age and interests

People of the same age and stage in life are more likely to share similar interests. For some people, their age does not represent their ability. There may be two people with a common interest, and similar abilities, but of very different ages.

Age-related life changes occur for all people, including people with a disability. People of a similar age may be having similar life experiences.

Is the applicant a similar age to existing residents?

Are they interested in any of the same things as existing residents?

Do they like to share their interests?

Are they going through some of the same life experiences as existing residents?

### Gender and sexuality

People may prefer to live with others of the same gender, ie ladies may want to live with ladies and men with men. Sometimes a mixed household is a good balance.

People may also identify as a gender different to how they were born, with both genders or no gender. People may wish to change their gender. This can be called gender diversity. Some people accept this, others may not be as understanding. Screening should look at the best match, but should not discriminate on gender.

Some people are sexual and some people are not. Some people like people of the opposite sex, the same sex or both. Some people accept this, others may not be as understanding. Sexuality is private and people may not want to share this information. Screening should look at the best match, but should not discriminate on sexuality.

Do current residents want to live with a lady, man or is this not important to them?

Are there any cultural or safety reasons for choosing an applicant of one gender?

If a current resident or applicant is gender diverse, how will this be accepted?

If known, is there anything about the current residents' or applicants' sexuality that may affect how people would get along?

### **Cultural and religious background**

Where a person comes from, and what they believe, can affect how they like to live. This can be what they eat, their daily routines, their community, whether they can be with people of a different gender, and even the holidays they celebrate. For some people it is very important, and for others it is not. People may need support in line with their cultural or religious identity. People may not always share this information. Screening should look at the best match, but should not discriminate on culture or religion.

What are the cultural and religious similarities and differences?

Are these important to current residents or applicants?

Would staff be able to support everybody's cultural or religious needs?

### **Community**

How a person wants to participate in their community can affect the support they need.

How is the person engaged with local service providers and how does this fit in with others in the house?

Will staff be able to support everyone's community activities?

### **Support needs**

People with the same disability or similar support needs will not always get along. However, matching the person's support needs to the house type and support available is important.

Health needs should also be considered to make sure that staff, in consultation with specialists, can meet the needs of the applicants.

What are the similarities and differences with support needs? (eg personal support, self-management, activities of daily living, mobility etc.)

Would staff be able to support everybody's support needs?

Would there need to be any house modifications or equipment to meet the applicant's support needs?

If there are any safety concerns, could they be managed by staff in the home?

### **Communication skills**

Some people like to communicate and be around others; some people prefer a quieter life. Being able to communicate with other people in your home is important for independence and enjoyment.

Do people like being around other people or do they prefer their own company?

What are the similarities and differences in how people communicate?

Would staff be able to support everybody's support needs?

Would there need to be any house modifications or technology to meet the applicant's communication needs?

## **Behaviours of concern**

Behaviours of concern refers to any behaviour that causes harm to the person or another person. Screening should look at the best match, but should not discriminate on support needs such as behaviours of concern. Evidence suggests having people with a disability with behaviours of concern living together can overwhelm staff and affect the support they are able to provide.

If current residents or applicants have known behaviours of concern, would staff be able to manage the behaviours as well as everyone's support needs?

Will current management plans work in the house with the resident mix?

Can behaviours be managed safely?

What will be the risks and how can they be managed?

Are known triggers for the behaviour that may be managed better or not as well in the house with the resident mix?

Would there need to be any house modifications or equipment to meet the applicant's behaviour support needs?



## Offer of residency letter

**Note:** Copy and paste this text into an appropriate format

<Name>

<Address 1>

<Address 2>

<SUBURB STATE POSTCODE>

<DATE>

Dear <Person, representative>

I am pleased to offer you a place to live at <address>. This property is managed by Illowra, and staff support at this address is currently provided by <insert SIL provider name if already established>.

This offer is based on the information in your application form. This offer depends on the funding in your NDIS plan for Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) and Supported Independent Living (SIL). <insert if there are any other specific conditions which NDIS participant may need to agree to>

Your support coordinator, your representative or family member could help you to consider this offer. You may choose to visit the house, or meet with residents and staff. You have 5 business days from the date of this letter to choose whether or not to accept this offer. You may let us know what you choose, or communicate through your support coordinator, who will inform us of your choice.

You need to put your choice in writing. Please fill in the Response to Offer of Residency Letter attached and return it to <insert mailing address> by <insert date>. It is important you let us know if you have chosen to accept the offer or not. If we do not hear from you or your support coordinator within 5 business days from the date of this letter, we will assume you did not accept this offer.

If you accept this offer there needs to be formal agreements between you and Illowra Projects, and you and <the support provider/ your choice of support provider>. These agreements are so everyone can be sure of what support will be provided, the cost of services, and other information such as your preferences, conditions, and your rights and responsibilities. The service agreements must be signed within <insert appropriate days>.

If you accept this offer, a transition process for you to move to your new home will begin. You will be involved in developing the transition plan. Your plan may include visits or short stays at the new house to help you settle in. It will involve people who support you and the staff in the new setting to ensure your needs are well met.

To discuss this offer further, please contact me on <worker phone>.

Yours sincerely,

<Name>

Vacancy manager

Illowra



CC <insert name>

**Note:** Copy and paste this text into an appropriate format

**<Name of applicant>**  
**Response to offer of residency**  
**at <insert name and address of home>**  
**dated <insert date of letter of offer>**

I am responding to the offer of specialist disability accommodation (SDA) residency at the above address. The house is managed by Illohra, and staff support is < provided by insert SIL provider name/to be chosen by me>.

I understand this offer is based on the information in my application.

I understand that a transition plan will be developed to help with the upcoming move if I accept the offer.

<b>Response to offer (Put a X in the boxes matching your choice)</b>	<b>Check (X)</b>
I accept the offer of residency.	
In accepting the offer I consent to the collection, use and disclosure of personal and health information (as defined in the <i>Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014</i> and the <i>Health Records Act 2001</i> ) about me by Illohra Projects and other relevant agencies for transition and support.	
<i>OR</i>	
I do not accept the offer of residency.	
Reasons for not accepting the offer:	

<b>Name of applicant or representative or guardian*:</b>	
<b>Signature:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	

\*(Name of SDA applicant, their nominated representative or Guardian appointed under the *Guardianship and Administration Act 1986*)



## Outcome message

*(Note: Communication should be provided using a method that best suits the participant, support coordinator or LAC's needs and circumstances)*

Dear <Person, representative>

Thank you for your application to live at <insert property ID>, but unfortunately your application was not successful.

We reviewed all the applications. House representatives worked with us to find the best match for the vacancy. The procedure Ilowra Projects uses complies with National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) *(and Department of Health and Human Services - Victoria only)* requirements.

Thank you again for your application. Please consider other Ilowra vacancies in future that may be a better match. We wish you well in finding a home where you can be happy and well supported.

We have also attached our Feedback Policy to this letter.

Yours sincerely,

<Name>  
Vacancy manager  
Ilowra

# Glossary

The following terms are used in relation to this document:

Term	Definition
Collaboration Agreement	The agreement between SIL and SDA providers that meets the requirements of the Disability Act.
Department, department	The Department of Health and Human Services in Victoria
Disability Act	The Disability Act 2006 (Vic)
Dwelling	A property enrolled with the NDIA by a registered SDA provider.
Dwelling vacancy notification	A form completed by the SDA provider to declare a vacancy in SDA property.
Local Area Coordinators (LAC)	Local organisations working in partnership with the NDIA to help participants, their families and carers access the NDIS. LACs will help participants write and manage their plans and also connect participants to mainstream services and local and community-based supports.
National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA)	The NDIA is a Commonwealth statutory agency. The role of the NDIA is to implement the NDIS.
NDIS	The National Disability Insurance Scheme
Participant	A person with a disability that has met the access requirements to become a participant of the NDIS.
Registered Provider	A disability support provider that has met the NDIS requirements for qualifications, approvals, experience, capacity and quality standards to provide a product or service.
Vacancy coordination meeting	A meeting to determine who will be the best fit for the vacancy.
SDA dwelling vacancy profile and applicant profile	A tool to collect vacancy information and prospective tenants' information.
SDA marketing flyer	A flyer used to advertise a vacancy in SDA property for prospective tenants.
Participant Agreement	An agreement between the SDA provider and a participant that describes what supports will be delivered and how they will be delivered. The agreement also sets out each party's responsibilities and obligations and how to resolve any problems that may arise. In Victoria, the residential statement is issued by the SIL.
Support coordination	Funded support under the NDIS. Where support coordination is intended to assist a participant with SDA in their plan, support coordination would include assistance to locate, apply for, access, transition and maintain SDA arrangements including the development of written agreements when moving into a dwelling.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA)	<p>Housing provided by a NDIS registered provider to participants who require specialist housing solutions to assist with the delivery of their supports. SDA refers to the dwelling itself and not the support.</p> <p>Providers must be registered with the NDIS to provide SDA.</p>
Supported Independent Living (SIL)	<p>Support to participants provided in a shared living arrangement including assistance with or supervision of the tasks of daily life.</p>
Vacancy Coordination Team	<p>The department's team that oversees the coordination of the process to offer residency in all Victorian Government dwellings. The VCT may also coordinate this process for other dwellings, unless they elect to operate an independent process that satisfies the requirements.</p> <p>The VCT comprises a central coordinator (Central VC) and four divisional VCTs. The roles and responsibilities of both components of the VCT are described in this guide.</p>