

Tenant information kit

General



SECTION 1 – ORGANISATION INFORMATION

Roseberry Queensland (RQ) is a community based organisation providing a range of services for over 30 years to homeless disadvantaged young people and families, in the Gladstone and Rockhampton areas. RQ receives ongoing funding from both State and Commonwealth Governments and support from within the community from local government, industry, businesses and the general community.

RQ operates under an ethos of self-empowerment for clients and provides support and encouragement for clients to take responsibility for their own decision making. RQ offers a number of programs from crisis accommodation, to assistance with long term housing options, Social Housing, Transition to Independent Living program, family support and counselling services, and Branchout – offering alternative learning, as well as Headspace and Parents NEXT program.

The RQ Vision is a “Strong Vibrant Compassionate Community” and through our mission statement, strengthening families supporting and providing pathways for young people and providing homes. Our core values are professionalism, self-determination, community connection, people centeredness and flexibility.

RQ currently employs over 40 skilled and suitably qualified staff in Gladstone and Rockhampton, to manage and facilitate the diverse range of services available to our target group. The organisation is governed by a supportive Board, made up of members from the local community, who delegate responsibility for the day to day operations of the organisation to the General Manager.

1. Roseberry Qld Vision

A strong, vibrant, compassionate community

1.2 Mission

- Strengthening families
- Supportive pathways for young people
- Providing homes

1.2 RQ Values

The core values of RQ are:

- Professionalism
- Self Determination
- Community Connection
- People Centred
- Flexibility

1.3 Housing Options and Eligibility

RQ provides a range of housing options for eligible people in the Gladstone / Rockhampton areas. Eligibility criteria will vary for each type of accommodation provided and may be based on the requirements of the government department providing the funding. The Housing Officer can provide you with more information regarding other housing options and the associated eligibility requirements if interested or needed.

The relevant State and/or Federal Government agency/ies fund RQ accommodation. The accommodation is provided to people who meet the relevant State and/or Federal Government agency/ies common eligibility criteria as follows:

- Be an Australian citizen or have been granted certain residency status
- Be a resident of Queensland
- Do not own or partly own property (there are some exceptions so remember to discuss your circumstances with the Department of Housing)
- Liquid assets must be within the current limit for household size
- Have an independent income which is earned in Queensland
- Have a gross weekly household income less than current limit for household size.

1.4 Contact / Office Hours

The Housing Officer can be contacted by phone on **4972 0047** or **by appointment** at the RQ office – 21 Dawson Road, Gladstone.

Office hours are:

Monday – Friday 9:00am to 3:00pm

If the Housing Team is unavailable please leave a message on the answering machine or with another staff member and the Housing team will return your call at the earliest convenience. If you are ringing regarding an emergency repair please refer to the relevant section in this Information Kit and your Tenancy Agreement for detailed instructions on what to do.



SECTION 2 – LEGISLATION AND RQ POLICIES

2.1 Legislation

RQ is committed to ensuring that all legislative requirements are met and the organisation operates and deals with all matters in a legal and ethical manner.

RQ accommodation is covered by a range of legislation and legislative requirements including:

- **Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008** – administers the relationship between tenants and lessor's
- **Housing Act 2003** – provides a system for the delivery of housing and housing related services by the Qld State Government and funded organisations in Queensland, and

allows for the regulation of organisations that are funded to provide housing or housing related services

- **One Social Housing System** – is about common eligibility criteria for public and community housing, one application form and process for applicants, streamlined allocation process to match applicants to vacant properties and the provision of social housing assistance for those with the greatest need/s. Tenancies are reviewed at regular intervals to ensure those with the greatest need are provided housing for as long as it is needed.

2.2 RQ Policies

As a tenant of a RQ, you are not only covered by legislation, RQ has also developed and documented a range of policies and procedures that assist in the managing your tenancy and the organisation as a whole. If you require or desire access to these policies please contact RQ Housing Staff and they will provide the required information to you.

However, if you have difficulty in reading or understanding this information please do not hesitate to contact the Housing Team to further discuss your rights and obligations as a tenant of the organisation.

2.3 Tenancy Agreement (lease) and Special Terms and Conditions

The Roseberry Qld Tenancy Agreement consists of: The standard Residential Tenancies Authority Tenancy Agreement RTA (Form 18a).

Additional conditions unique to Roseberry Qld housing or specific to a particular tenancy will be attached. It is a condition of tenancy that the tenant observes these conditions.

These conditions can include but are not limited to:

- Rent charges according to the Community Housing Rent Policy
- Roseberry Qld Policies and Procedures relevant to the tenancy.
- Body Corporate rules where these apply
- The Tenancy Conditions as outlined in the RTA Tenancy Agreement Form 18a
- Ongoing eligibility requirements.

At the commencement of the tenancy, the Housing Officer will provide the tenant with a copy of the RTA agreement and any attachments and ensure that they are fully aware of their rights and responsibilities as tenants in Roseberry Qld housing. It is a condition of tenancy that the tenant observes these conditions.

Keep your tenancy agreement and all associated documentation relating to your tenancy in one place so it can be easily accessed if needed!



SECTION 3 – RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 As a RQ tenant you have the following **RIGHTS**:

- To safe and secure housing within the limitations of funding requirements and program guidelines

- RQ compliance to Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008 at all times
- To confidentiality and privacy of yourself and your personal information
- To appeal Roseberry Qld decisions
- To use an advocate if required
- To access your own information held at Roseberry Qld office as per RQ policies
- To be treated with respect and dignity at all times
- To refuse assistance
- To participate in the management of your accommodation
- To access effective conflict procedures and grievance and appeal mechanisms both internal and external to the organisation
- To be provided fair, equitable and non-discriminatory treatment at all times
- To be consulted on any changes to your tenancy or its management
- To be provided information in an understandable form.

3.2 As a RQ tenant you have the following RESPONSIBILITIES AND OBLIGATIONS:

- To observe the conditions of the Tenancy Agreement and any special terms and conditions
- To inform the Housing Officer/s of any significant changes that may affect the conditions of the tenancy including:
 - **Any changes to assessable income of the household**
 - **Any modifications required to the property**
 - **Any additional people wanting to live at the property**
- To maintain the property in good repair and report repairs as identified
- To maintain lawns and gardens
- Remove and responsibly dispose of all unwanted rubbish.
- Keep ceilings, walls, floors, fixtures and fittings clean.
- To pay rent and service fees on time
- To respect the privacy and 'quiet enjoyment' rights of neighbours and other tenants
- To obey the law including:
 - **no** illegal drugs or substances
 - **no** illegal weapons or other similar items on the premises
 - **no** loud partying
 - **no** smoking in internal public areas of the property, including common rooms and laundries.

And remember – you are responsible for your guest's behaviour – so if they do the wrong thing it may be YOU that deals with the consequences!

3.3 Changing Needs of Tenants

RQ will work with you within the limits of the available housing portfolio to respond to your changing needs.

If you experience a relationship breakdown or domestic violence that impacts upon your tenancy arrangements, RQ will work with you in a sensitive, timely and confidential manner to look at options available to you.

The high level of need for affordable housing in the community means that there is limited turn over of housing stock and no guarantee that RQ will be able to provide alternative accommodation immediately. If you want more information on how RQ deals with the changing needs of tenants please refer to the attached RQ 1.2 Tenancy Conditions Policy and Procedures, or speak directly with the Housing Officer.



SECTION 4 – RENT

4.1 Rent setting

RQ must follow the guidelines of the relevant State and/or Federal Government agency /ies and implement the Community Housing Rent Policy. Rent charges are according to the Community Housing Rent Policy based on 25% (plus a 3% levy for replacement of furniture if the property is furnished), of household income and reviewed once a year. Tenants must supply proof of income for all eligible household members.

The Housing Officer can explain to you and provide you information on how your rent is calculated. RQ uses an electronic rent calculation tool to calculate the rent based on your assessable income. Please refer to the attached Tenant Information Sheet from the relevant State and/or Federal Government agency/ies for a full explanation of the how your rent is calculated.

4.2 Bonds

RQ charges all tenants a bond equal to four weeks rent. The bond is to be paid when you make your first rent payment. You may also make an application to the relevant State and/or Federal Government agency/ies for a Bond Loan.

The Housing Officer will keep records of all bond transactions and comply with all relevant legislation in lodging payments.

When and if you vacate your unit and the rent is fully paid to date and there are no costs to be claimed for repairs, replacement or cleaning, RQ will ensure the Bond Refund form is completed, signed and provided to you as soon practicable for you to seek your refund. If there are any outstanding costs due to rent arrears, damage or cleaning requirements, the amount will be deducted from the amount recorded on the Bond form.

If you want to dispute this amount you contact the **RTA** on **1300 366 311** for further information.

4.3 Options of Rent Payment

RQ does not accept cash payments for rent. The easiest method of paying rent (if you are receiving a benefit from Centrelink) is to use the Centrepay system. Centrepay debits the rent from your benefit every fortnight and credits RQ.

If you are not receiving a Centrelink benefit, the Housing Officer will be able to provide you with other options of rent payment, for example direct deposit from your bank into the RQ rent account.

4.4 Rent Account

You can request a copy of your rent account at any time. The Housing Officer will then provide you a rent ledger with up to date copy detailing how much rent you have paid and where you are paid up to.

In case of rent arrears or a dispute over rent payment, the Housing Officer will always provide you with an up to date rent account when any correspondence or notices are issued.

4.5 What to do if you can't pay the rent...

It is really important that if you are experiencing financial problems, and you cannot pay the rent, that you talk to the Housing Officer as soon as possible. The Housing Officer will discuss options available to you and if necessary and only with your consent, refer you to other agencies that may be able to assist you further.

RQ will make agreements with you to repay outstanding rent arrears however the onus is on you to discuss any concerns with the Housing Officer and to make the repayments as agreed.

4.6 What to do if your household income increases...

If your household income increases you must contact the Housing Officer and advise them of the increase immediately. You will then be asked to provide proof of income and the Housing Officer will recalculate your rent based on the new income.

If your **rent increases** RQ provides **two (2) months' notice**, in writing of the rent increase.

4.7 What to do if your household income decreases...

If your household income decreases you should contact the Housing Officer and advise them immediately of such decrease. You will then be asked to provide proof of income and the Housing Officer will recalculate your rent based on the new income.

If your **rent decreases** RQ will advise you, in writing that your rent will be **reduced immediately**.

4.8 Rent Reviews

RQ conducts rent reviews every twelve (12) months. You will be sent a form to complete and asked to provide proof of income. This information is to check that the rent amount is correctly calculated and to ensure that households are paying the required rent as per the Community Housing Rent Policy.

You will be informed of any subsequent rent decreases or rent increases and how the amounts were calculated once the Housing Officer has completed the rent review. Time frames for increase or decrease in rent is as per the above mentioned 4.6 and 4.7.



SECTION 5 – PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

5.1 Privacy and Confidentiality

RQ is committed to protecting the personal information of all tenants and clients of the organisation. This means that:

- Only relevant information regarding your housing application and tenancy will be maintained on your file
- Your information is maintained in secure filing cabinet, or electronically in a secure location
- Your information will not be disclosed to anyone without your permission being sought first
- You can access your own information (as per the Protection of Personal Information Statement).

5.2 Protection of Personal Information Statement

The Protection of Personal Information Statement attached provides more detailed information about your personal information will be maintained.

RQ has developed the attached “Protection of Personal Information Statement” to provide to all tenants and clients of the organisation to explain how the organisation will ensure that any personal information collected by its staff in the course of their duties will be maintained safely, privately and confidentially.



SECTION 6 – COMPLAINTS, APPEALS AND COMMENDATIONS

RQ encourages you to make a complaint, appeal a decision, or make suggestions for improvement, as the organisation believes that receiving feedback, negative or positive, is an opportunity to improve our practice and the quality of our services.

6.1 What is a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of concern, dissatisfaction or frustration with:

- the quality or delivery of service
- a policy or procedure
- the conduct of a staff member

6.2 What is an appeal?

An appeal is a formal request to have a decision already made, reviewed. For example you may want to appeal a rent increase if you think the calculation was incorrect or unfair.

6.3 What is a commendation?

A commendation is a documented form of positive feedback about an aspect of the organisation or staff member that you have appreciated.

6.4 How to make a complaint / appeal?

RQ has a formal process to deal with any received complaints, appeals and / or suggestions for improvement and a complete copy of the organisational policy and procedures is available, upon request from the Housing Officer. The basic process is as follows:

- Step 1: Speak directly to the person you have an issue with and try and resolve in an informal manner.
- Step 2: If you are still not satisfied with the outcome, request a meeting with the housing manager or General Manager of RQ. You are more than welcome to bring a friend or advocate with you to this meeting. Hopefully the issue will be resolved at this point however if you remain dissatisfied the formal complaint / appeals process is to be instigated, as follows.
- Step 3: Complete a formal complaint / appeals form and provide to the Board of Directors of Roseberry Qld
- Step 4: If still not happy with the outcome there is a number of external agencies that may be able to assist you further depending on the nature of the complaint / appeal including:
- **Residential Tenancies Authority – 1300 366 311**
 - **Tenant Advice and Advocacy Services (Qld) – 49237433**
 - **DHPW: Local – 4938 4089/ 1800 266 807**
Brisbane – 1300 557 245

At all steps of the process you will be kept informed and provided information about the progress of the complaint / appeal.

At no time will you be penalised for making a complaint or lodging an appeal – this is an opportunity for RQ to improve its services!

6.5 Feedback and Surveys

As a RQ tenant the organisation will periodically seek from you feedback regarding the services we provide you. Sometimes this will be a formal process meaning that RQ will provide you with a written survey and request that you complete and return to the office by a certain date or it will be informal, meaning for example, that your opinions may be sought through casual discussion at the tenants meeting.

Your feedback will be sought in the following ways:

- Annual Survey
- Exit Interview with Housing Officer when you leave the accommodation
- Tenant' s meetings – held at the Gladstone Williams Street complex
- Complaints, commendations and appeals lodged with RQ

The information we get back from the above listed mechanisms will be used to ensure that the organisation is providing quality services and to identify any areas that may need improvement.



SECTION 7 – REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

7.1 How to make a request for a repair or maintenance work?

- Ring the Housing Officer on 4972 0047
- Complete the attached Repairs and Maintenance Request Form and drop into the office at 21 Dawson Road St, Gladstone
- Make the request at the tenant’s meeting.

7.2 Timeframes

RQ will endeavour to respond to the repairs and maintenance requests in a prompt and timely manner, and in line with the RTA requirements.

7.3 Tenant responsibilities

You are responsible for the following repairs and maintenance matters:

- Replacement of all light bulbs and fluorescent tubes
- Pest control outside of the annual pest control service provided by RQ
- All accidental and wilful damage caused to your property
- The cleaning of the property and the upkeep of any outdoor area supplied for your use
- The maintenance of the your property’s garden & lawn

7.4 Emergency Repairs

The Residential Tenancies Act 1994 states emergency repairs are:

- A burst water service
- A blocked or broken lavatory system or fittings
- A serious roof leak
- A gas leak
- Dangerous electrical fault
- Flooding or serious flood damage
- Serious storm, fire or impact damage
- A serious fault in any staircase, lift or other common area that inhibits or unduly inconveniences residents in gaining access to or using the premises.

Main Office	4972 0047
EMERGENCY Maintenance Mobile	0409 587 439

RQ will organise the emergency repairs if you are able to contact staff.

If a staff member of RQ does not return your phone call, **within an hour** of a message being left on the answering service, you can get a suitably qualified person to carry out emergency repairs to a maximum value of two weeks’ rent.

You must make all reasonable effort to contact RQ before you organise a contractor to conduct emergency repairs yourself. You must give a copy of the invoice and/or receipt to RQ, who will reimburse you, or pay the invoice within seven days.

If a contractor has attended to an emergency repair call out and it is not an emergency repair you will be notified and the costs may be passed onto you. It is advisable that you ensure that the emergency repair is actually an emergency. Unnecessary emergency call outs are costly, time consuming and disrupting to all involved.

7.5 Routine Inspections

The RQ Housing Officer will conduct three (3) monthly, six (6) monthly and twelve (12) monthly routine inspections (your lease will reflect frequency) of your accommodation. This is to check out the upkeep of the premises, to identify any items for replacement and to monitor the overall asset management of the organisation's properties.

You will be notified and provided the legal notification of the date and time of the inspection. This is a good time to notify the Housing Officer of any maintenance work or discuss any property modifications that may be required.

7.6 Modifications to your home

What is a home modification?

A home modification assists a person to live safely and independently within their home. If you have a specific need due to a serious medical condition, disability, or because of age, the relevant State and/or Federal Government agency/ ies may be able to help you.

What types of help are available?

There are several types of help available such as:

- modifications to the bathroom, toilet or kitchen, etc;
- installation of fixed aids such as grab rails and hand rails;
- installation of ramps for access to buildings; or
- advice from an occupational therapist on suitable modifications to meet your needs.

If you require specific alterations or modifications to your home, please contact us for the appropriate forms and steps to be completed. You will need to supply medical documentation. An occupational therapist will visit you in your home to assess your needs. They will recommend any necessary modifications that will improve your living conditions, health, safety or independence.

7.7 Home improvements

You need to make your request in writing to Roseberry Queensland who will submit it to the relevant State and/or Federal Government agency/ ies). You need to provide all details about what improvements you intend to make, to ensure the proposal is fully understood

What improvements can I make to my home?

You can apply for approval for any of the following:

- storage sheds;
- garages and carports (except in multi-unit complexes);

- pergolas and shade houses;
- aerials;
- security systems;
- building alterations and modifications;

You are responsible for ensuring compliance with local council rules, for example, when erecting storage sheds, pergolas or carports. You will need to supply Roseberry Qld with copies of the council approved plans (if applicable) and all council approvals for each stage of the work you do.



SECTION 8 – ENDING TENANCIES

8.1 Voluntarily leaving the accommodation

If you want to move out of your accommodation you should discuss this with the Housing Officer. The Housing Officer can:

- Clarify the tenancy ending date and advice of what notification is required, usually two weeks written notice.
- Meet with you for the final inspection of the property and to complete the Exit Condition Report
- Prepare the Bond Refund paperwork for negotiation over any damages and your signatures
- Provide you with a reference (where relevant)

8.2 Cleaning expectations

When you move out please make sure you leave the premises in a clean and tidy condition. The following list provides guidance on RQ expectations:

- Remove all dirty marks from the walls
- Clean the shower cubicle, vanity, basin, mirror and any shelves
- Clean kitchen cupboards & drawers inside and out
- Clean kitchen bench tops
- Clean stove top, oven & griller
- Clean all windows and sills
- Clean all ceiling fans
- Wash / mop all floors
- Remove dirty marks from all doors
- Clean refrigerator & microwave
- Clean, sweep and tidy all court yards & balconies

8.3 Forced eviction

Eviction is the last step in the RQ tenant dispute procedure. Evictions will be carried out in accordance with the Residential Tenancies Act. The following circumstances may lead to eviction:

- Step 1: A RTA **Notice to Remedy Breach (Form 11)** will be issued to you detailing the nature of the breach what you have to do to remedy the breach and the time frame required, for example pay rent arrears or discuss options and make an agreement with the Housing Officer by a certain date.
- Step 2: If you do not remedy the breach or contact the Housing Officer to discuss your options you may be issued a **RTA Notice to Leave (Form 12)**. This form will notify you of when you must vacate the premises.
- Step 3: If you do not vacate the premises on the required date RQ will lodge an application with the Small Claims Tribunal for a Warrant for Possession of the property.

The tenant can appeal to the RQ General Manager at any time during the eviction procedure!

8.4 Reason for ending tenancies and timeframes

Reason for ending the tenancy	Timeframe
Unremedied rent arrears	At least seven days (after expiry of Notice to Remedy Breach for rent arrears)
Unremedied general breach (breaches of the Act apart from rent arrears) including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Failing to keep the premises clean;• Disruption to neighbours;• Damage to property;• Over-occupancy;• Modifying the property without permission;• Use of illegal drugs on the premises;• Failing to observe local council or body corporate by-laws or Failing to comply with any Roseberry Qld tenancy conditions.	At least 14 days (after expiry of Notice to Remedy Breach)
Non-compliance with a Tribunal order	At least seven days
Compulsory acquisition (the notice must be given within one month after compulsory acquisition)	At least two months
Premises sold	For periodic agreements only — at least four weeks upon signing of a sale contract

Non-liveability (the notice must be given within one month of the event causing the non-liveability)	The same day the notice is given
Abandonment	If the tenant does not respond to an Abandonment Termination Notice (Form 15) within seven days, tenant is taken to have abandoned the premises
Without grounds	For periodic agreements — at least two months' notice For fixed term agreements — cannot be ended without grounds unless all parties agree (see below)

8.4 Advocacy

All RQ tenants have the right to use an advocate. If you believe that you need further assistance when negotiating with the RQ staff you should seek the assistance of an advocate. They can be someone with specific expertise, for example the Tenant Advice and Advocacy Service (Qld) or a friend or relative. RQ encourages you to have the advocates present during discussions with RQ Housing Officer / staff.

8.5 Abandoned Goods

If you leave behind goods or personal documents at the end of a tenancy, the RTA 1994 requires RQ to deal with these goods or documents in a certain manner.

In general "Personal Documents", must be given to you or the Public Trustee within seven (7) days of the end of the tenancy, or within seven (7) days of finding the documents.

For goods other than personal documents, if the total market value of the goods is less than \$1000 they may be disposed of. If the total value of goods is \$1000 or more RQ may store the goods for one (1) month and then sell them. RQ may deduct the cost for the removal, storage and sale of the goods from the money raised through the sale. Any remaining money from the sale must be paid to the Public Trustee within ten (10) days.

RQ will not refuse you access to your goods and will not withhold the goods in lieu of payment of rent. However, RQ asks that you pay reasonable storage and removal costs before the goods are released.



SECTION 10 – TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Roseberry Queensland	
Main Office	4972 0047
Maintenance Mobile	0409 587 439
Tenant Advice and Advocacy Service (Gladstone)	07 4976 6360
Residential Tenancies Authority	1300 366 311
DHPW	13 QGOV/ 137468
Centrelink	1800 277 277
Ergon Energy	13 10 46
Emergency	
Emergency (Police, Fire, Ambulance)	000

SECTION 11 – ATTACHMENTS

- RTA General Tenancy Information Statement (17a)
- RTA General Tenancy Agreement (Form 18a)
- RTA Condition Report (Form 1)
- RTA Bond Lodgement Form
- Tenant Information Sheet, Rent Calculation
- Protection of Personal Information Statement
- Repairs / Maintenance Notification Form
- Emergency Procedures and Acknowledgement Form
- RQ Tenant Induction Acknowledgement Form

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

I, _____, being the
tenant of _____ hereby acknowledge
that I have read and understood the above described rights and responsibilities and
agree to the terms and conditions of my tenancy agreement with Roseberry Qld

Date: _____

Name of Tenant: _____

Signature of Tenant: _____

Name of Witness: _____

Signature of Witness: _____

Roseberry Qld
21 Dawson Road
Gladstone Q 4680

Ph: 07 4972 0047
Fax: 07 4972 0262

