

PFWA Position Paper - Government Housing

Preamble

The Principals Federation of Western Australia (PFWA) is committed to the Department of Education providing suitable housing to staff in rural and remote areas. School staff should expect suitable, well maintained housing in their work location. The PFWA notes that housing is a key issue in being able to attract good staff to country positions. The current Department of Education and Department of Communities practice provides a situation where there needs to be an improvement of accountability in the standard of accommodation as well as the delivery of timely maintenance across the sector.

PFWA Position

- That a GROH house be provided to regional based school Ed Act staff **at no cost**
- That the Department of Education have a minimum level of suitable housing in each location to enable the changeover of staff annually
- That housing be checked before a tenant occupies the accommodation of no longer than 2 weeks to make sure everything is working and cleaned for occupation. This includes air-conditioning/heating, lights, plumbing, fire alarms, oven, reticulation systems, door handles and locks, electrical appliances if it is part of the furniture allotted to the accommodation
- If suitable accommodation is not available in a location then Department of Education liaises with the Department of Communities to liaise with shire offices and/or real estate agents to organise a lease of a suitable property for a suitable time period, (usually a year as a minimum)
- That the Department of Education liaise with the Department of Communities to investigate suitable flexible housing options to enable housing to be moved to different locations if required
- That a review be undertaken to the subsidies for heating and cooling costs linked to location in light of the changes in climate conditions
- That tenants of government housing pay 50% of water costs to encourage tenants to look after gardens and lawn areas
- That a property be inspected within 2 weeks by the Department of Communities of a tenant vacating a property, any charges for repairs or cleaning to be itemised with photographic evidence
- Maintenance repair timelines to be reviewed and a schedule of rent reduction for maintenance not performed in that time period
- Department of Communities adopt more flexible arrangements in regional locations with signing paperwork and collection of keys for housing
- Directors of Education or their delegate to oversee issues with housing in their regions through network principals
- A review of processes in relation to inspections timelines, regular maintenance required: gutter cleaning, painting, air-conditioned servicing, and communication sequence for all leased properties.