



**blackcommunity**  
HOUSING SERVICE (QLD.) LTD.

## Fact sheet 12) Under occupancy

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*Black Community Housing Service (QLD) Ltd. (BCHS) is committed to providing accessible and sustainable tenancy management and assistance services. We strive to provide access to affordable housing that will enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to position themselves to transition over time into long-term and mainstream housing markets. Providing support and assistance to clients in understanding and meeting their tenancy obligations is a subsequent priority, to support current and future housing, social and economic aspirations for Indigenous individuals and families.*

### What is under occupancy?

Under occupancy basically occurs when a dwelling is under utilised. This means that there are bedrooms and/or parts of the house going unused as the dwelling has more room than what the occupant(s) require. For example, a couple may be renting a four bedroom house and not have use for two of the bedrooms.

### Why do I need to know about under occupancy?

Depending on the nature of your tenancy agreement and who it is with, there may be different rules that apply.

If you live in a property owned by BCHS, another housing program, or the Department of Public Works, under occupancy may be an issue that arises. This is because some housing programs only have a limited supply of properties available, and extremely high demands for housing from a diverse range of people and families who are applying or on waiting lists.

This means it is very important to try and match people/families with a property that appropriately meets their occupancy needs (i.e. the bedroom number is well matched to the occupant(s) needs). If properties are being under occupied, it means other occupants/families may miss out on finding a property that meets their needs.

It is important to consider when you are first applying or looking for a rental property what your occupancy needs are. This will help you and BCHS or your other lessor/agent find you the most appropriate property from the start.

## What are the rules on under occupancy if I have a tenancy agreement with the State?

If you have a State tenancy agreement, there are some set rules about under occupancy.

The Department works to an Under Occupancy policy, aimed at improving the utilization and availability of public housing properties. Under this policy, the Department will identify and review households that are under-occupying the property by two or more bedrooms to determine if the household has a continued need for the larger property.

It is noteworthy that tenants who are assessed as no longer needing the larger property and additional bedrooms will be asked to move into another social housing property, which is better matched to their housing needs and room entitlements. The tenant may also be given an option to pay a higher rent to remain in the under occupied property that they are currently living in.

When reviewing a household's ongoing need for a larger property, the Department will typically consider the following in making a decision:

- Household need for additional bedrooms;
- Household ongoing housing and support needs; and
- Potential impact of a transfer on the household's health and wellbeing.

Households that are required to transfer to another property will be assisted with reasonable relocation costs, including: removal costs; reconnection of existing utilities; and transport costs on moving day.

If you have your occupancy is reviewed and it is deemed that you continue to require the larger property, you will continue as per normal with your tenancy agreement.

## I have some further questions relating to under occupancy

If you have further questions relating to under occupancy – as either a BCHS or State tenant – you can contact Coulson's Real Estate for some further advice.

Email) [Kerry@coulsonrealestate.com.au](mailto:Kerry@coulsonrealestate.com.au)  
Phone) 07 3372 9666

*Note: Other tenancy factsheets are available via the BCHS website ([www.blackcommunityhousing.org](http://www.blackcommunityhousing.org))*