

Queensland statement of priorities

1. For the NHIF CT what are the Priority Investment Areas for your jurisdiction?

The Queensland Government supports capital investment targeting the priority cohorts for NHIF CT:

- Women and children experiencing family violence
- Young people aged 16-25 who are experiencing, or at particular risk of, homelessness

- First Nations peoples in Queensland experience disproportionately higher rates of homelessness, housing stress, and lower rates of homeownership compared to other Queenslanders. The current unprecedented housing pressures across the state have a particularly severe impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities.
- Our vision is that *Every First Nations person in Queensland has a safe and secure place to call home that meets personal, location and cultural needs*. This home provides the foundations to thrive.
- In April 2024, the Queensland Government launched the *Our Place: A First Nations Housing and Homelessness Roadmap to 2031 and Action Plan 2024-27*. The Our Place Roadmap is an eight-year, strategic framework to accelerate and close the housing gap for First Nations peoples. It sets out how we can work collectively together over the next eight years, guided by the lived experience of First Nations peoples and organisations across Queensland to deliver solutions that reflect community's concerns, values, needs and aspirations.
- The Our Place Action Plan is backed by a \$61.3 million investment and commits to 27 actions to deliver whole-of-sector responses across the housing and homelessness systems. The Our Place Action Plan will accelerate First Nations housing outcomes over the next four years to shape a fairer and more inclusive housing system.
- The Our Place Action Plan identifies five outcome areas:
 - **Partnerships and shared responsibility:** drive whole-of-system responsibility and accountability for First Nations housing outcomes, guided by First Nations leadership and shared decision making.
 - **Strong sector:** grow the size, viability and sustainability of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sector to deliver housing and homelessness outcomes.
 - **Private market pathways:** increase access for First Nations peoples living in Queensland to private market rental and home ownership opportunities.
 - **A reliable and culturally safe service and support system:** shape fairer and more reliable, accessible, integrated and culturally safe housing and homelessness supports and services.
 - **Culturally responsive supply solutions:** deliver more culturally responsive affordable supply solutions that meet the needs of First Nations peoples living in Queensland and their wellbeing needs and life circumstances.
- A key priority within the Our Place Action Plan is addressing the needs of young people at risk of homelessness. **Action 3.1** commits to delivering a housing program over four years to support First Nations families and individuals at risk of homelessness or experiencing chronic

homelessness in regional locations. This initiative focuses on early intervention and support to prevent displacement from family homes.

- Delivery of crisis and transitional accommodation responses for First Nations women or children who are experiencing or at risk of domestic and family violence, and young people who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness, is delivered as part of the broader domestic and family violence and homelessness responses in Queensland.
- Noting the NHIF-CT priority on responses for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the over representation of First Nations people in the homelessness system, there is opportunity to consider prioritisations of responses including:
 - all domestic and family violence women's shelters, youth foyers and temporary supported accommodation for young people are designed and delivered considering the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including ensuring culturally safe design and service delivery.
 - ensuring that First Nations people and organisations are engaged in co-design of housing and homelessness services, supporting partnership and shared decision making.
 - purpose built and culturally safe domestic and family violence shelters in all 21 Discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities are also identified as priority
 - identifying future opportunities for dedicated First Nations youth foyers or temporary supported accommodation services for young people
 - enhancing opportunities to engage the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sector to deliver housing and homelessness outcomes.

Domestic and family violence (DFV) shelters

- DFV shelters in Queensland provide accommodation for women and children experiencing domestic and family violence to ensure immediate safety and protection
- A DFV shelter typically includes:
 - 4-11 fully self-contained dwellings
 - a mix of 1, 2 and 3-bed dwellings, with consideration for 1 x 4-bed dwelling to address specific needs of large families
 - sufficient office/program space, storage and utility space
 - indoor communal space that provides areas for women and children in need of support and privacy, and sufficient recreation space for residents
 - outdoor communal and play space, linked to the indoor communal space
 - secure gates, fencing and screens at boundaries, entry points, and to all windows and doors on ground level
 - video entry and the provision of electronic security system including CCTV capacity and electronic door and gate entries
 - 1-1 parking for number of dwellings plus sufficient staff and visitor spaces
 - visually screened from key external viewpoints.
- Ideally, shelters also have pet-friendly additions, including ground floor dwellings to have enclosed and fenced yards and upper floor dwellings to have access to a pet exercise yard if possible

- Mix of accessible dwellings including Platinum and Gold Level, with other fittings such as hearing-impaired smoke alarms, to ensure that women and children with mobility issues and other disability can be appropriately accommodated
- Close proximity to public transport, schools, childcare, health services and essential shops
- Operated by an organisation experienced in the delivery of support services for women and children with a sustainable source of funding to ensure continuity of service for the useable life of the asset
- The typical length of stay is up to 3 months with a small number of households requiring up to 12-months

Youth foyers

- Youth foyers provide housing with on-site support for vulnerable young people aged 16 to 25 who are struggling to find and sustain accommodation while they engage in education, training and/or employment
- In Queensland, a typical youth foyer is co-designed with Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS), Community Housing Providers and young people with lived experience of homelessness and includes:
 - 40, one-bedroom fully self-contained dwellings
 - program support and management space
 - communal kitchen and living/dining room, meeting spaces, training and IT rooms
 - indoor and outdoor communal, meeting and activity spaces
 - onsite parking for tenants and management
 - proximity to education and training institutions, employment opportunities, regular public transport and connection to local amenities and services
- Youth foyers require operational funding – for those funded by the Queensland Government, typically a Specialist Homelessness Service is procured to provide 24/7 on-site support and appoints a registered Community Housing Provider to deliver property and tenancy management
- Tenants pay rent, shop and cook for themselves and must be committed to engaging in education, training and or employment
- The typical length of stay is under two years.

Temporary supported accommodation for young people

- Temporary supported accommodation comprises of immediate and transitional supported accommodation where there is onsite support for young people aged between 16-25 years that are homeless or at risk of homelessness
- A contemporary model of temporary supported accommodation informed through consultation with the Queensland Youth Housing Coalition (QYHC), the youth Specialist Homelessness Services sector and the views of young people with lived experience of homelessness includes:
 - accommodation for up to 20 young people
 - up to ten studio units for immediate or emergency accommodation
 - up to 12, one-bedroom dwellings for transitional accommodation
 - office, program, indoor and outdoor communal space
 - proximity to regular public transport and connection to local amenities and services
- Operational funding is required, and in Queensland they are operated by a funded Specialist Homelessness Service
- Rent may be charged if the client has financial capability to pay
- The typical length of stay could be from one night to up to 13 weeks (three months)

Priority regions for DFV shelters:

- Cape York
- North & North-West Queensland
- Outback Queensland
- Central Queensland
- South-West Queensland
- South-East Queensland

Priority regions for youth foyers:

- Far North Queensland
- North Queensland
- Mackay-Whitsunday
- Outback
- Wide Bay Burnett
- Darling Downs
- South-East Queensland including Brisbane

Priority regions for temporary supported accommodation for young people:

- North Queensland
- Central Queensland
- Outback
- South-East Queensland including Brisbane

2. What is the rationale that supports the identification of the above priority investment areas?

Domestic and family violence (DFV) shelters

To find safety and rebuild their lives, women and children experiencing family violence often require immediate access to secure and affordable housing but currently face several challenges:

- **Immediate Availability:** Finding immediate temporary shelter for those leaving a violent situation can be difficult. Refuges and crisis accommodation can often be at capacity, particularly in remote or regional areas.
- **Affordability:** The high cost of housing in Queensland can make it challenging for women, especially those with children and single-income households, to afford appropriate accommodation. Complexity in legal systems or slow responses can impede the ability of victims to separate their housing and financial arrangements from the perpetrator.
- **Security:** Ongoing safety concerns can necessitate particular housing features or locations which may not be readily available, or which may incur additional costs.
- **Stigma and Discrimination:** Women may face discrimination when seeking housing due to stereotypes, stigma associated with family violence, or simply because they are single mothers.

Accommodation services that understand the psychological impact of family violence on women and children are essential in the healing process as it provides the understanding, safety, and empowerment that are crucial for recovery and rebuilding their lives. Whilst there are challenges associated with ongoing funding, the Fund presents an opportunity to expand the number of settings from which Trauma-Informed Support services can be delivered.

A range of data sets has been used to provide an evidence base when identifying Queensland's priority investment locations which include areas where there is currently no provision, areas where current provision is insufficient to meet demand and locations where the existing provision is beyond its useable lifespan.

An analysis of the number of places of funded accommodation against the resident population of each Local Government Area (LGA) has delivered a ratio of Population Per Funded Place for each LGA.

Whilst influenced by multiple factors, such as the size of the population in the location and the prevalence of DFV in the location, the number of clients seeking assistance from SHS is also influenced by the number of DFV shelters and the number of funded places of accommodation in a location. This SHS data has been utilised as part of the wider needs analysis in determining priorities.

Queensland Police Service (QPS) provide monthly data demonstrating the number of offences recorded for Breach of Domestic Violence Protection Order (DVPO) by LGA. QPS also provide monthly data demonstrating rates of offences per 100,000 of population for breaches of DVPO by LGA. Number of offences data highlight those communities that contain a high proportion of the total number of vulnerable people across Queensland, while rates of offences data highlight those communities where the highest proportion of the population is in need. Whilst these two different data sets have their limitations, for example, number of offences data cannot differentiate between those locations whose need is proportionally higher than other locations and rates of offences data can be subject to the effect of a low number of offences occurring in very small populations, they are useful in the context of other data sets when selecting priority areas

Data published by Queensland Courts related to courts proceedings related to DFV provides indicators of those locations where a significant proportion of the population in need of DFV specific support for reside.

This fund presents an opportunity to strategically direct investment into priority areas that currently have no services, insufficient services, or facilities that are outdated and no longer fit for purpose. In doing so, it ensures that women and children fleeing domestic and family violence can find safe, secure, and affordable housing underpinned by trauma informed support. This aligns with existing systems and current programs focused on meeting the significant needs of this vulnerable group.

Youth Foyers

Throughout Queensland a significant number of vulnerable young people aged 16 to 25 are struggling to find and sustain suitable accommodation and this is impacting their ability to engage in education, training and/or employment.

A comprehensive range of data including; state population, published by the Australian Statistician in September 2023, 2021 Census published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) Specialist Homelessness Service Collection (SHSC) combined with supporting information from the Foyer Foundation, Under One Roof Report has helped inform the rational for priority investment areas identified in this proposal.

Demand for services to address the increasingly complex circumstances of young people with housing needs continues to rise, with significant ongoing unmet demand across Queensland.

Evidence shows young people who experience unstable housing and homelessness are more likely to be disconnected from family and community, have a lifetime of housing instability and homelessness, and are more likely to require health services and be in contact with the justice system.

Access to supported, safe, secure and affordable housing is the first step towards ending homelessness, improving life outcomes and reducing costs. The proposed commitments will build on existing service responses for young people to provide more housing and support responses across the continuum from crisis accommodation through to social housing.

The priority areas identified benefit from strong local commitments to meeting the needs of vulnerable young people including examples of collaboration between funded Specialist Homelessness Services Providers, Community Housing Providers and other stakeholders. The addition of significant infrastructure including Youth Foyers will provide new and scaled-up pathways for young people that are not currently available. The Queensland Government has strong evidence of the positive impacts introducing new Youth Foyers into existing housing and homelessness service networks, including

boosting throughput at immediate and transitional supported accommodation and providing medium and long term outcomes for young people as they exit from services to long term sustainable housing. The addition of the Foyer model to a local housing service system also has the benefit of introducing new thinking about the ways we work with young people for example through the Advantage Thinking methodology.

Temporary Supported Accommodation for Young People

Access to safe and secure accommodation in times of crisis is critical for the personal safety and wellbeing of everyone but is particularly important for the development of young people.

A comprehensive range of data including state population, published by the Australian Statistician in September 2023, 2021 Census published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) Specialist Homelessness Service Collection (SHSC) combined with supporting information from the Queensland Youth Housing Coalition has informed the rationale for the priority investment areas identified in this proposal.

There is significant unmet need for temporary supported accommodation, including immediate and transitional options for young people experiencing or at risk of homelessness state wide resulting in a reduction in the ability of existing funded services to transition young people through to more appropriate housing and respond to the urgent needs of young people at crisis at the point of presentation. Delivering new and contemporary immediate and transitional supported housing aims to address several emerging challenges identified by peak and Specialist Homelessness Sector partners including accommodation that meets the needs of young people with multiple and/or complex needs and providing cultural safety for First Nations young people, and young people from diverse cultures, backgrounds, and/or from the LGBTIQ+ community. Providing new contemporary models of immediate and transitional supported accommodation also provides opportunities to incorporate good design to support the provision of 24/7 access to services that provide safe places for young people in crisis.

In the absence of available temporary supported accommodation to meet demand, young Queenslanders are continuing to live and sleep in public places or place themselves at risk, sofa-surfing to meet the immediate need for a place to stay.

The Queensland Government in consultation with Specialist Homelessness Service Providers and the Queensland Youth Housing Coalition identified several challenges including disengagement from education, training and employment, increased risk taking linked to negative health, mental health and criminal justice outcomes where the availability of crisis and transitional accommodation would provide young people with safe places and support to reduce risks and work towards positive outcomes.

A contemporary model including a combination of immediate (crisis) and transitional (medium-term) accommodation, supported by 24/7 on-site support services aims to provide the time and space for young people to work towards securing longer term housing pathways and other positive outcomes.

3. Proposed Jurisdictional Support

The Queensland Government is committed to optimising outcomes through value for money investment into capital and operational programs. A range of activities are underway, which can be enhanced through additional investment, with further information below. Any additional operational funding is subject to government budget processes.

Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) shelters

- The Queensland Government is committed to the delivery of new and replacement DFV shelters in locations across the state to provide immediate safety and protection for women and children.
- To achieve this ambition, the department of Housing and Public Works has convened co-design workshops to provide opportunities for DFV shelter staff and management committee members to:
 - establish a shared vision for the replacement DFV Shelters;
 - understand specific needs of the capital development, particularly the built solution that would facilitate the delivery of organisation's services and contribute to the delivery of positive outcomes for women and children from a range of backgrounds;
 - agree specific design elements for implementation in the design process; and
 - secure agreement for the developing project brief, including spatial requirements.

Youth Foyers and Temporary Supported Accommodation for Young People

- The Queensland Government is committed to increasing housing supply and options for vulnerable Queenslanders including young people by:
 - Engaging with the Specialist Homelessness and Community Housing Sectors to support the operations of these assets, in the priority areas identified across the state.