

1. Purpose

The purpose of this internal guideline is to support decision makers to review eligibility for rent allowance, reimbursements and advances.

2. Scope

Housing Specialists are responsible for maintaining their knowledge of Defence Policy and DHA Processes to ensure they can make accurate determinations on ADF member entitlements. This guideline provides additional context helping decision makers to determine an ADF member's eligibility to receive rent allowance, reimbursements and advances.

3. Definitions

For the purposes of this guideline and any related policy documents, the following definitions apply:

Break Lease Reimbursement	This reimbursement is for other administrative costs associated to breaking a lease for Service Reasons.
Client management (CLM)	Client Management System where ADF member and tenancy information is stored.
Directorate of Relocations and Housing (DRH)	A Defence Delegate with responsibilities under Defence housing policy.
Group rank entitlement (GRE)	Group Rank Entitlement which determines the eligibility of housing and allowances.
Housing Specialist (HS)	Housing Specialist in a Customer Service Centre.
Initial rent receipt (IRR)	A receipt showing a ADF member has commenced paying rent.
Leadership team	Collectively the Managing Director and their direct reports.
Live-in accommodation (LIA)	Defence live-in accommodation.
Accompanied resident family (ARF)	ADF member who has recognised family who live with them. They may also have non-resident family (NRF) and/or recognised other persons (ROP).
Unaccompanied resident family (URF)	ADF member who has recognised family who live in a family benefit location. They may also have non-resident family (NRF) and/or recognised other persons (ROP).
Member (MBR)	ADF member who has no resident family.

Break Lease Reimbursement	This reimbursement is for other administrative costs associated to breaking a lease for Service Reasons.
	They may also have non-resident family (NRF) and/or recognised other persons (ROP).
Non-GRS	A term used to identify those ADF members who are not in the Australian Defence Force (ADF). They may or may not have a housing entitlement.
Pay and Conditions Manual (PACMAN)	ADF Pay and conditions manual which authorises pay and conditions of service for all ADF members.
Resident child carer	A person who is living with the ADF member's family for the purpose of providing childcare for the ADF member's children and is not intended by the member to become recognised family.
Rent allowance (RA)	An allowance paid by Defence to an ADF member to subsidise the cost of renting a property on the private market.
Rent prior to occupancy (RPO)	This is a reimbursement for rent paid prior to moving into a property on a date that is after the lease start date.
Rent after occupancy (RAO)	ADF members may have a legal obligation to continue paying rent after vacating the rental residence due to Service reasons.
Responsible officer	The person responsible for the management of a particular policy, specifically, the content. These responsibilities include but are not limited to development, review, amendment and consultation.
Self-contained flat	Accommodation such as a flat has all its own facilities, including kitchen, bathroom, and lavatory and usually having its own entrance.
Service residence (SR)	A property managed by DHA for occupancy by ADF members and their families.
Tenancy adjustment (TADJ)	A Workflow B2B issue that indicates a change related to the details of a tenancy.
With effect date (WEF)	The date a change comes into effect.

4. Internal guideline statement

4.1 Guideline detail

Rent allowance helps ADF members and NZ/UK foreign exchange officers (FEOs) with the costs of renting in the private housing market.

This section provides guidance to support decision-making and processing for rent allowance:

Applying for rent allowance

The following is provided to assist with understanding the RA application process:

An ADF member must apply for RA via their member dashboard in Online Services.

The application consists of two parts:

1. **Eligibility** - this section collects the basic information required to determine eligibility to receive RA.
2. **Application** - collects all information pertaining to the RA property and an ADF member's personal circumstances.

Once an online RA application is submitted, a non-RSA case is created in CLM.

ARF RA - Early eligibility for rent allowance trial

If a member is accepted as part of the Early Eligibility for Rent Allowance trial, they are approved for ARF RA on posting to the new housing benefit. The locations approved to be part of the trial are outlined below. A member does not need to reject available Sr's in the housing benefit location.

Eligibility to the trial is based on the following:

- The request must be in writing
- The full AFR is received with the housing required date
- The members housing benefit location must be in one of the following locations:
 - Canberra
 - Glenbrook
 - Liverpool
 - Sydney
 - Canungra (Gold Coast)
 - Ipswich
 - Townsville
 - Hobart
 - Perth
- There is availability in the trial (the cap for the members location has not been reached).

For information on the approval process refer to WI_Accompanied Resident Family (ARF) RA Approval Escalation Process.

ARF RA eviction when member has unaccompanied resident family (URF) in a family benefit location

Scenario

ADF member has the following occur outside of their control:

1. They have unaccompanied resident family and/or recognised other persons (URF) housed in a family housing benefit location and
2. The member's unaccompanied resident family and/or recognised other persons are evicted from their ARF tenancy (could be SR, RBCH or RA)
3. The ARF tenancy was in an extended housing benefit location (at the time the member resided with them)

Action

DRH have advised the member is eligible for the higher rent ceiling of the location to support the family remaining in their location.

Example:

- Member was ARF posted to Richmond.
- Member and family were living in RA in Sydney location but were receiving Richmond rent ceiling
- Member then posted to Canberra as URF and resident family and/or recognised other persons remain in their RA property.
- Member's resident family and/or recognised other persons are evicted from their ARF RA property.
- Member is eligible for Sydney rent ceiling to facilitate family remaining in Sydney location.

Note: at the time of this scenario Richmond had a lower rent ceiling than Sydney.

'Under section 7.1.6 housing assistance may be given to a member who needs suitable accommodation and does not have a suitable own home in their housing benefit location. Housing benefit location is defined in **section 1.3.10**, In relation to URF, this would be the family benefit location, which describes the location where housing benefits are provided to a member's unaccompanied resident family.

1.3.13 Location of residence - defines the area around a particular property.

ARF 2 vs ARF 3 bedroom rent ceiling

2brm v 3brm rent ceiling during tenancy:

- IAW 7.8.9.4 "The member may choose in writing to have a two-bedroom rent ceiling apply to them. If they do this, they cannot apply for an increased rent ceiling."
- Policy does not indicate a timeframe for when a member can request the 2-bedroom ceiling, only that it must be in writing. The member can claim this retrospectively regardless of the timeframe.

ARF RA recall

The WI_Rent Allowance Recall to Service Residence provides the process for determining the eligibility of a Defence member who is relocating from Rent Allowance (RA) to a Service residence (SR). It also outlines the entitlements for a Commonwealth-funded removal.

Housing Specialists are the delegate responsible for determining if a member is eligible for a Commonwealth funded relocation.

ARF members in a current RA tenancy are able to view available SR's via Online Services.

All ARF members in RA will have visibility of available SR's during their entire RA tenancy. The member will also receive an automated email 16 and 12 weeks prior to their

lease end date to remind them of this functionality in Online Services. See WI_Rent Allowance Recall to Service Residence for additional information.

For further information refer to WI_Rent Allowance Recall to Service Residence.

The lease end email is fully automated. Ensure the lease end date is updated in Tenancy Details if a member advises of a new date (member contacts the CSC, RA Review, etc.)

OLS system rules for viewing available SR's

- Available SR's only show for ARF members currently occupied in RA.
- SR's that are 'available to occupy' and are within the ADF members GRE, are visible to the member.
- The GRE is based on the members current rank (as displayed at the top of CLM).
- Bedroom entitlement is based on the current member resident family and/or recognised other persons.
- Members will not have visibility if they have an active RSA or Non-RSA case or if they have HomeFind access.
- Viewing access is suspended for the peak posting period from 1st October to 28/29th February each year.

SRs that will be visible

- SRs in the location that matches the base for the current ARF RA tenancy (not the members current base – this allows the families of URF members to view SR's in their location).
- Ready date of the SR does not fall between 1st October and 28/29th February each year (peak posting period).
- The ready date of the SR is in the past or is within the next 4/5 weeks of the date the member is viewing.
 - Example: If the member is viewing Online Services on 01 May, they will see SR's with a ready date that are prior to 01 May and SR's with a ready date up to and including 4 June.

Removal benefits

The ADF member will have a removal benefit if:

- The end date of a fixed term lease is in the past (check of current lease status is required).
- The end date of a fixed term lease is within the next 12 weeks.
- The member is on a periodic lease (month-to-month or similar).
- The member received a Lease End email recently.
- The Defence cap on relocations has not been met.

After the member selects an SR, please refer to the WI_Arranging Occupation process to arrange the notification of the removal eligibility to Toll Transitions.

Reimbursement of break lease costs including rent after occupation (RAO)

If the member is eligible for a removal benefit, they are also eligible for the reimbursement of break lease costs. Refer to the reimbursements tab on this page.

Occupancy Date Rules

When the member reserves a SR they are required to enter the vacate date of their ARF RA and advise an occupation date as per below:

- Ready date is in the past – occupation date must be within the next 2 weeks of the date of reservation.
- Ready date is in the future – occupation date must be within 2 weeks after the ready date.

Reservations should be actioned quickly to give Toll Transitions time to arrange the removal and provide a confirmed uplift date to the member who in turn can advise their landlord.

No SR's are visible in Online Services

Outside of the peak posting period, when SR's become available, they appear in Online Services. Members can request in OLS for them to be notified when properties are available.

Note - other families may also be receiving the same notification and viewing the same properties.

Request to view SR's outside of a members rank group

Members can request to view properties outside of their rank group. and may receive a removal benefit. Please refer to the WI_HomeFind Management process for further information.

Member is living in an adjacent posting locality

The member will only see SRs in their current housing benefit location.

Example: A member is posted to Amberley but has their RA extended into the Enoggera location. The member will view SR's provisioned for Amberley.

ARF RA - Sharing with non-recognised family or persons

The following guidance is to assist with processing ARF RA requests to share with non-recognised family or persons:

The non-recognised family or person is included as an occupant on the lease:	DRH have confirmed that DHA is to establish the fortnightly rent that is applicable to the ARF member and their resident family and/or recognised other persons. Calculation: Lease rent /less non-recognised family or person's contribution = rent for the purpose of calculating RA.
The non-recognised family or person is not included as an occupant on the lease:	This is a subletting scenario: • ○ Calculation: Rent – (contribution + the fortnightly rate of sub-lease rent) ○ Refer to PACMAN 7.8.23
If the ADF member does not hold a formal lease with the owner of the property and provides an Owner Member Statement with the sharing occupants listed.	The OMS is a lease, and the sharing occupants is included as an occupant on the lease.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- A member's adult child ceases to be resident family when they turn 21. A member can apply to their Commanding Officer (CO) to have an adult child aged 21yrs-25yrs recognised as a recognised other person for housing purposes (bedroom allocations). If approved the member should provide the CO approval to DHA. In this scenario the adult child would not be considered non-recognised family or person. PACMAN - 1.3.37 Recognised other person.

Boarding

Members who are in boarding accommodation have their rent allowance calculated differently from the standard rent allowance calculation outlined in PACMAN. There are 3 different boarding scenarios defined in PACMAN.

- Commercial boarding** - A member is housed in commercial boarding if the property has multiple rooms being rented out for residential purposes on a commercial basis. These establishments usually have shared living spaces and facilities.
- Boarding in a private home with the homeowner** - The member is boarding in a private home with 1 other person.
- Boarding with the homeowner and other occupants** - The member is boarding in a private home with multiple other occupants.

Rent for boarding is defined as the member's portion only and does not need to be divided by the number of occupants as in sharing scenarios.

The rent ceiling and contributions are aligned to sharing.

Base to RA location matrix

The following is provided to assist with identifying bases within RA locations:

The RA location can include several bases, see below matrix to confirm.

Region/HMC	Base(s)	RA location
Adelaide	RAAF Base Edinburgh Woodside Barracks Hampstead Barracks Keswick Barracks Osborne Warradale Barracks	Adelaide
	Woomera	Remote
	Port Wakefield Port Augusta Port Lincoln	Remote
Brisbane	Enoggera Barracks Victoria Barracks Bulimba Barracks St Lucia	Brisbane
	Caboolture	Remote

Region/HMC	Base(s)	RA location
	Greenbank Barracks Rockhampton	Remote
Canberra	ADFA Brindabella Park Bungendore Campbell Park Canberra CBD RMC - Duntroon Fairbairn HMAS Harman Russell Offices Weston Creek	Canberra/Queanbeyan
Hunter Valley	Adamstown Army Barracks Williamtown RAAF	Newcastle
	Singleton	Singleton
	Tamworth	Remote
	Armidale	Remote
	Junction Hill	Remote
	Lismore	Remote
	Coffs Harbour Evans Head/Junction Hill/Wollongbar Port Macquarie	Remote
Ipswich	RAAF Base Amberley	Ipswich
	Swartz Barracks Oakey Borneo Barracks Cabarlah	Toowoomba
	Kokoda Barracks Canungra DRF Coolangatta Robina Southport	Gold Coast
Melbourne	HMAS Cerberus	Frankston / Mornington
	Puckapunyal Bridges Barracks Tobruk Barracks Hopkins Barracks	Seymour
	Ballarat	Remote

Region/HMC	Base(s)	RA location
	Bendigo	RA - ceiling to be set as per PACMAN 7.8.11 no rent ceiling set for location, raise MENQ for HS to review ceiling
	Defence Plaza Melbourne DEFPZAMLB Broadmeadows Dandenong Hawthorn Maribyrnong Oakleigh RAAF Williams Ringwood Simpson Barracks Victoria Barracks Williamstown - 1 CDO Sunshine Victoria 79 Duke Street Sunshine	Melbourne
	RAAF East Sale	Sale
	Hobart Anglesea Barracks (TAS) Derwent Bks (Tas)	Hobart
	Launceston (TAS)	Remote
	Devonport (TAS)	Remote
	Queenscliff (Swan Island)/ Leopold/ Ocean Grove/ Point Lonsdale	Remote
Townsville	HMAS Cairns Cairns - 51st Battalion Tully - 51st Battalion Weipa - 51st Battalion Thursday Island - 51st Battalion	Cairns Tully/ Mission Beach/Thursday Island - Remote
	Lavarack Barracks Ross Island Barracks Townsville RAAF Base	Townsville
Darwin	Robertson Barracks Larrakeyah Barracks Fleet Base North RAAF Base Darwin	Darwin
	Tindal	Katherine
	Alice Springs	Alice Springs
Nowra	HMAS Albatross	Nowra

Region/HMC	Base(s)	RA location
	HMAS Creswell	
	Wollongong Hydro Office	Wollongong/ Tarawanna / Woonona
Perth	Irwin Barracks Karrakatta Barracks Campbell Barracks (Swanbourne) Redcliffe Guilford Hazelmere	Perth
	RAAF Base Pearce	Perth
	HMAS Stirling, Rockingham	Remote
	Henderson Leeuwin Barracks	Leeuwin Barracks RA / Henderson RA - Remote
	Karratha	Remote
	Newman	Remote
	Tom Price	Remote
	Exmouth	Exmouth
	Geraldton	Remote
	Broome	Remote
Wagga Wagga	Kapooka Army Base RAAF Base Wagga	Wagga Wagga
Wodonga	Bonegilla East Bandiana Gaza Ridge Barracks North Bandiana South Bandiana Latchford Barracks, Bonegilla Wadsworth Barracks, East Bandiana	Albury/Wodonga
Sydney (East)	HMAS Kuttabul Garden Island Fleet Base East HMAS Penguin HMAS Waterhen HMAS Watson Victoria Barracks Randwick Barracks Kensington (UNSWR)	Sydney

Region/HMC	Base(s)	RA location
	Lancer Barracks - Parramatta Timor Barracks - Dundas Banksmeadow Depot Dee Why Pymble Rhodes Defence Plaza Sydney	
Sydney (West)	RAAF Glenbrook Orchard Hills Defence Establishment	Glenbrook
	Holsworthy Barracks Steele Barracks Moorebank	Liverpool
	RAAF Richmond Bathurst & Orange Blacktown	Bathurst & Orange - Remote

Caravans or boats or similar

Member's eligibility for RA if they occupy a mobile dwelling:

The purpose of rent allowance is to assist ADF members to occupy a 'suitable' home in the private rental sector.

Consistent with the definition of a 'suitable' home as it is applied to a SR and an ADF members own home, the term home is taken to be a permanent dwelling such as a house, apartment or unit.

For the purposes of assessing eligibility to housing assistance, the term suitable home does not apply to a mobile dwelling such as a caravan, motorhome or yacht.

Accordingly, an ADF member would not be eligible to receive rent allowance if they occupied a mobile dwelling such as caravan.

Deployments

Global Pay (GP) manage contribution changes for ADF members who are deployed.

Non-GRS UK and NZ members are entitled to the same contribution adjustments to their rent allowance as per ADF members.

Deployment - Return from deployment, resident family and/or recognised other persons choose to remain in family benefit location

The following information is to assist decision making when reviewing a member's eligibility for RA after returning from deployment if their resident family and/or recognised other persons choose to remain in a family benefit location.

RA scenario: Partner was relocated to a family benefit location for family support due to deployment and has occupied an RA tenancy. The ADF member has returned to Australia from deployment and has occupied LIA in their service location on 21/05/2025. They have

advised DHA on 21/05/2025 that they have both decided the partner will remain in the family benefit location rather than join them back in the service location.

Outcome: RA eligibility ends on day the ADF member returns to Australia, however it is reasonable to allow the continuation of allowance until the ADF member returns to their service location, and the family have notified DHA of the intent to remain in the family benefit location. RA would cease effective 21/05/2025 in line with the DHA notification.

Reference: PACMAN 7.8.6.5

Food Allowance

- MBR submariners and URF members are eligible for food allowance from the occupation date.
- MBR Submariners - DHA are not notified if members are submariners. Upon receipt of the ADF member's RA, Global Pay (GP) will identify these members and automatically apply Food Allowance.
- URF members - DHA sends a pay transaction to commence the ADF members RA. If the member is categorised as URF in DHA systems, a Food Allowance flag on the pay transaction notifies global pay to apply food allowance.
- The rates applicable to Food Allowance are determined by Defence and are reviewed annually.
- An ADF member who is in receipt of food allowance can request at any time during their tenancy to have this ceased. DHA do not complete mid-tenancy changes to Food Allowance. Direct the member to Defence Service Centre on 1800DEFENCE (1800 333 362), as PAC will be able to assist them.
- DHA manage the cease/commence of food allowance due to a categorisation change during tenancy.

Reference: PACMAN 7.9.10

Food Allowance Rates

Furniture Rental

A member categorised as MBR/URF can apply for furniture rental during the initial RA application or at any point during the tenancy. Furniture rental must only be for items as listed in **PACMAN 7.8.25 Furniture rental**.

MBR/URF occupying JA_Appointed, Tied and Assigned Residences can also apply for furniture rental. Refer to WI_Providing Housing Solutions for more information.

MBR/URF with a fortnightly rent less than the rent ceiling, can use the difference to rent furniture items.

URF Specific - the purpose of the URF housing solution is to establish a home for the ADF member while they are away from the family. It is not provided to allow for a second home to be set-up for the family and this should be considered when reviewing requests for additional items.

Furniture rental calculation example

The following considerations apply to furniture rental:

- Rent Try Buy contracts can be approved, however a written acknowledgement that they will not purchase the goods at the end of term is required.
- Rent to Buy contracts that have a higher monthly/fortnightly rate for a fixed period, and at the end of the term the ADF member keeps the furniture are not acceptable.

This type of contract would directly assist the member to purchase furniture, which should not be funded by Commonwealth.

- Approval for items not on the list provided in PACMAN can be given by DHA if the member's request is reasonable.
- The Furniture Rental Additional Items email template is required when an ADF member has either:
 - Sent an email to request the approval i.e. ask if the items they have are claimable or
 - Called the CSC to enquire which items are claimable or not.

If an ADF member is seeking items not listed DHA are to manage this process and the approval of reasonable requests.

For a MBR, approval must not be given for the excluded items listed in **PACMAN 7.8.25 Furniture rental**.

EXCEPTIONS: DRH has indicated that Entertainment Units/TV Stands and Desk Chair (if desk is hired) can be approved. DHA require an online enquiry from the ADF member as these items are outside the listed items.

If a request for additional items is received it needs to be assigned to a Customer Service Centre **Complex Task Consultant**, including the following information:

- Current RA details
- Rent ceiling: \$
- Contribution: \$
- Rent: \$
- Total RA per fortnight: \$
- Maximum furniture rental entitlement: \$
- Current list of items are:
 - 1 x item
 - 1 x item
 - 1 x item
- Furniture rental amount per fortnight: \$
- Total RA per fortnight: \$
- Member has requested approval for the following reasons (below):
The Complex Consultant must record the outcome of the request and the reason for the decision as an interaction in CLM against the ADF member.

Examples:

A member has requested approval for a tallboy to be included as part of their rented furniture package with the following reasoning: The apartment rented does not have any built-in drawers in the bedroom to store clothing items. The inclusion of a tallboy is a basic requirement for clothes storage.	As the member has declared there are no built-in drawers in the bedroom for his clothing items the request is reasonable and can be approved.
A member has requested approval for a BBQ as they prefer to cook outside in warmer weather and have one at their URF home.	URF members can request certain items that are referenced in the excluded items list in PACMAN 7.8.25 , if they confirm they own similar items used in their URF home.

	A BBQ is not included in this list and as there are other cooking options for the member within their residence this request would not be deemed reasonable.
Member requesting additional beds or fold away beds.	Sleeping provisions are only provided for the member and do not include arrangements for family visits. This request is not deemed reasonable.

Garaging

PACMAN 7.1.14 defines garaging as being a part of the rent. Garaging can be applied for either as part of the initial rent allowance application or during the tenancy.

Any separate charge for garaging **must** be included as part of the terms of a lease.

The "garage" can be located away from the RA premises and can be owned by a different landlord. It is important to review the lease terms to determine if the charge can be included as part of the RA application.

The maximum number of garages a member may rent is up to their rental ceiling. The categorisation of a member has no impact.

A storage locker, that is included in the lease for the rental accommodation can be reimbursed, as it is considered a charge for the home. (even if it is an optional addition). **Note:** a storage unit that is not part of the rented accommodation is not reimbursable, as it is not considered a charge for the home.

Refer to IG_0009 Documentation for Housing Entitlements Internal Guideline for documentation requirements to support garaging.

LIA to RA

Member moving from LIA to RA:

ADF member in transit, temporary LIA or on a bulk/course booking	- No requirement to notify LIA team - Continue to assess Occupancy date in line with the WI_RA Application Received and > 8. Approve and Process RA Application (Data Entry).
Member in permanent LIA	The CSC are not required to action any cease PAY transactions. Cease transactions are not created until the ADF member and/or on base service provider complete the check-out process. A LIA vacancy provides notification to the CSC and on base service providers only. Failure to check out of an LIA booking when there is an expected vacate date will trigger the 'Failure to check out' processes and will be managed by the CSC and on base service provider. The status of the LIA vacate will determine the action required.

For instructions on how to manage LIA vacates when an ADF member is moving to RA refer to WI_Providing Housing Solutions > Business Process Step 1 > 'Member planning to move from LIA'.

Managed RA (MRA) - why the member does not pay a water contribution

Water contributions:

Managed RA is rarely used but is intended to assist ADF members that are posted to remote locations where other housing types are difficult to secure.

In these areas members who have no resident family (MBR) are occupied into available service residences under Managed RA.

The conditions under which ADF members are housed in DHA managed properties under the categorisation MBR in SR pay element are not noted in PACMAN.

For a member who has no resident family (MBR) in a SR, the contribution rates including water contribution payable exceeds what a member who has no resident family (MBR) would pay if in LIA or RA.

PPEC have confirmed that an ADF member in managed RA pays their normal RA contribution (no additional water payment).

• RB1 MBR Not Sharing in Appointed RB2 • SR will pay \$560.38 + \$20.20 water (Annex 7.A Part 3, Column 3, Item 4) This contribution is determined based on the Amenity group or Rent Band of the SR.	Pay transaction: • Pay Element SR RENT, • SR Classification (SRC) – RB2, • Marital Status: • MWOD MBR. • 2BR Amenity: Y
• RB1 MBR Not Sharing in Appointed RB2 SR will pay \$560.38 in Managed RA • will only pay \$456.78 (Annex 7.D Part 2) determined by their rank group	Pay transaction • Pay Element MWOD in SR, • Marital Status: MWOD, • Share Type: 1.

Member with accompanied resident family (ARF) RA approvals

For guidance on ARF RA requests refer to the WI_ARF RA Approval Escalation Process and the IG_0006 Accompanied Resident Family (ARF) Rent Allowance (RA) Approval.

MBR/URF - Sharing with persons under 18 years of age

MBR/URF requests to share with persons under 18 years of age:

A person is not considered to be a sharing occupant for the purposes of calculating MBR/URF RA if the occupant is under 18 years old, or if the person was occupying the property prior to turning 18 **and** any of the below apply:

- They are not a lessee of the property.
- The lease has not ended since the person turned 18 (i.e., the tenancy has ended).
- The member has not had a posting move under 6.5.26 or 6.5.27 since the person turned 18yo.

Applying this policy to an existing tenancy

This policy change is WEF 05/08/2021.

The effective date of this change is the date that the member notifies DHA that a sharing occupant is under 18 years of age and meets the above criteria.

Exception: If a MBR/URF is deployed/seagoing/field the WEF date can be backdated to the day the person started living in the home (not prior to 05/08/2021) if the member notifies DHA within 30 days of returning to normal duties.

Note: This does not apply to ARF members.

Out of Cycle (Off Cycle) payment requests

If an ADF member requests any payments outside the normal pay period due to hardship or other extenuating circumstances, they need to follow the Defence Off Cycle Payment Request process. The delegate for these requests is the member's Unit CO, and requests are considered on a case-by-case basis.

DHA are not able to arrange or approve off cycle payments.

Operation Resolute

Rent Allowance eligibility for members on SERVOP C and on temporary duty for Ops Resolute

- OPS Resolute is considered a Peacetime operation and does not fall under the definition of deployment. Members who are away from their parent unit on temporary duty (not posted) are required to continue making contributions to their accommodation.
- While a member is on temporary duty, they remain eligible for accommodation in their housing benefit location.
- If a member leaves their housing benefit location to perform temporary duty at another location, they continue to be eligible for housing assistance in their housing benefit location.
- Members may be approved for an extended housing benefit location; however, they must meet the criteria of PACMAN 1.3.11.b which states: *'The CDF is satisfied that the member's attendance at their primary service location will not be adversely affected any additional travelling time to their primary service location as a consequence of extending the member's housing benefit location'*. As a guide, if an extension is approved for greater than 100kms, it should be referred to a Housing Specialist so that they can engage with DRH before processing any housing entitlements.
- The OC/CO of Transit Security Element (TSE) would be considered the member's direct chain of command while they are undertaking Ops Resolute.
- Members may supply documentation that references a 'mounting unit'. Defence have provided the following explanation of a 'mounting unit':
'A mounting unit is responsible for providing people for TSE, who are required to source members for the rotation. A posted location however, is the location where members physical attend regular parades. For example, with TSE 108, the Mounting Unit is 13 BDE (Perth), which encompasses a lot of TSE members posted to Karrakatta/Irwin Barracks. However, 13 Bde also sourced members from external BDEs, resulting in other members being posted to locations such as Enoggera and Canberra.'
- The members housing benefit location is where their primary service location is based, unless the service location has been extended (IAW 1.3.11). If this is unclear,

DHA should contact the point of contact for TSE to clarify. The PoC will typically be referenced in minutes/documents provided by the member to show that they are on Ops Resolute.

Member commences SERVOP C. Their housing benefit location is Simpson Barracks. They are maintaining a private rental within 30kms of Simpson Barracks. They leave the rental property to undertake temporary duty in Darwin (Ops Resolute).	They are eligible for housing assistance in the Housing Benefit Location and can claim Rent Allowance.
Member commences SERVOP C. Their housing benefit location is Brisbane. They are maintaining a private rental in Sydney. They leave the rental property to undertake temporary duty in Darwin (Ops Resolute). Their OC/CO extends their housing benefit location to Sydney.	There is no entitlement to rent allowance in Sydney – as this is not an extended HBL and does not meet the criterion outlined in PACMAN 1.3.11.b.

Overseas Posting - member returning

ADF member returning from an Overseas Posting

Members posting overseas will not have an RSA case.

1. Contact the Toll International Team to confirm the delivery date of the members furniture and effects.
2. Ensure all other dates take this delivery date into consideration - for example, occupation date, PAC commence dates.
3. Refer to IG_0009 Documentation for Housing Entitlements Internal Guideline for documentation requirements and Contacting External & Internal Third Parties for the contact points.

Overseas Posting - members leaving

ADF member proceeding on an Overseas Posting

Members posting overseas will not have an RSA case. Contact the Toll Transitions International Team to confirm the vacate date of the member's furniture and effects.

Refer to IG_0009 Documentation for Housing Entitlements Internal Guideline for documentation requirements and Contacting External & Internal Third Parties for the contact points.

Property Rent - What charges are eligible to be included as part of RA calculation?

PACMAN 7.1.14 defines rent as the following:

A charge for a rented home for which rent allowance is payable. It includes both these charges if they apply.

1. A charge for a garage at the home.
2. A charge for rental of furniture or household appliances for the home.

If an ADF member provides a lease that confirms the rent for the property includes other services outside of the charges referenced above, the member is required to provide an itemised list of the costs included in the rent amount.

The amount of property rent applied to the tenancy will be the rent only portion and any garaging that may be applied.

Charges that are not eligible to be included in RA calculations include but are not limited to:

- Cleaning
- Pool maintenance
- Yard maintenance
- Utilities - power, water, sewage etc
- Internet/Phone

Rent Allowance - rent definition and rent allowance formula

PACMAN 7.8.19 defines rent allowance as:

1. In this section, **rent** means the lower of the following amounts.
 - a. The fortnightly rent paid by the member for a property.
 - b. The approved rent ceiling for the property.
1. The rate of rent allowance is worked out using this formula.

rent allowance = rent - A

Where:

A is the member's contribution set out in Division 3.

Rent allowance - location

The 'RA location' is a data entry point when processing the RA via the WI_RA Application Received process.

It is defined as the applicable rates based on the location of housing in association with the member's housing benefit location.

See:IG_0067 Housing Benefit Location Information.

Each RA location has specific 'Rent Ceilings' determined by Defence that apply to the calculation of the RA.

If an RA location doesn't exist this is considered a 'Remote location' and will require a Rent Ceiling to be determined - refer to the WI_Providing Housing Solutions Rent Ceiling Process for the process and details in remote location no rates set link below for delegate considerations.

Refer also to the Base to RA location Matrix below and the JA_RA Ceiling and Contribution Rates job aid for amounts.

RA Review Specific Guidance

Any call relating to the RA Review or during the RA Review period requires a check of the status of the RA Review:

Who gets reviewed?

Applying for RA in the same location after ceased for Nil Response

Member is away at time of the review

Responds following the cessation of their allowance, to request it be reinstated

Rent Allowance and rank change

7.8.27 Member promoted	
7.8.28 Member reduced in rank	
Member changes rank during an RA tenancy	Member promoted - If a member is promoted to a higher rank group during a tenancy, they can elect to retain the contribution and ceiling for the lower rank group for the duration of the tenancy. When the member moves from the current tenancy the new rank applies to their next housing solution. If the member wants the rank change applied to their RA tenancy, they must apply in writing to DHA to have their benefit reviewed by the delegate (Complex Task Consultant or Team Leader). This may occur retrospectively, resulting in their housing eligibility being reassessed at the new rank upon vacation of the tenancy. Member reduced in rank - if a member is reduced in rank their rental ceiling does not reduce to a lower rank group in their current tenancy. If the member moves to another home, the RA contribution and ceiling is based on their current GRE as PACMAN 7.8.28.
ARF member changes categorisation to member who has no resident family MBR during the tenancy.	The rent ceiling and contribution for their current rank is to apply.

For additional information on rank change processing, see IG_0034 Housing & Vacancy Guidelines.

Rent ceiling calculations

The following is provided to assist with understanding how rent ceilings are calculated:

When RA location is OTHER:

CLM draws the existing rent ceiling in tenancy details, unless the TADJ is changing this rent ceiling, in which case it will use the new rent ceiling input by the HS/CC Consultant in the tenancy adjustment.

When RA location is NOT OTHER:

In all cases where an ADF member may be eligible to retain a higher rent ceiling, the system will search for the highest rent ceiling between the effective date of the TADJ and the latest of the following dates:

- date of last TADJ changing categorisation to member (no resident family) (MBR), or
- changing RA location, or
- occupation.

The system will compare this highest rent ceiling with the rent ceiling calculated for the effective date of the adjustment (known as recalculated rent ceiling).

The rules to determine if the ADF member is eligible to keep a higher rent ceiling depends on the type of change to the ADF member's circumstances.

The following expanders contain tables outlining the calculation the system will perform, how it completes the comparison and how it applies these values.

Definitions of terminology used in the tables:

Recalculated rent ceiling	Rent ceiling that is calculated using new values effective the date of the TADJ
Highest rent ceiling	Highest rent ceiling that is calculated using new values found in the range of dates below and the effective date of TADJ: • The most recent categorisation changes where new categorisation = MBR, or • The most recent change to RA location, or • The occupation date.
Override rent ceiling	The total value of rent Ceiling + ceiling increase fields currently applied to a tenancy.

Change to member who has no resident family (MBR) or change to RA location

Share change (increase occupants), change to URF or selecting ARF 2 bedroom rent ceiling:

Rent ceiling increase

Reduction in rank or decrease in resident family or recognised other persons

All other tenancy adjustments that require a calculation:

Rent Free Periods

Member has a "rent free period" at the commence of their rental agreement.	The member is not paid rent allowance for the 'rent free' period. Create a TADJ for the rental change to \$0.00 WEF the start date of the rent-free period, then create a second TADJ for the rental amount WEF the date the member is to recommence paying rent. This should be supported by an appropriate email or letter from the agent. PAC has confirmed that \$0.00 can be accepted. For additional information refer to WI_RA Application Received, 9. Additional steps or corrections after main data entry, Step 6: Rent Free Period.
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Remote Locality_no rates set

Defined on the IG_0067 Location Information a delegate decision is required to determine the rent ceiling:

The lowest the rent ceiling in a remote location can equal is the applicable member contribution i.e. for member who has accompanied resident family (ARF) this is no less than the 3 bedroom contribution.

The member will usually require a higher rent ceiling to be determined, as property rent will usually be greater than the applicable Member Contribution.

The member must complete the rent ceiling Increase form to request a rent ceiling above their contribution.

If this occurs during the WI_Case Creation and Closing or WI_Providing Housing Solutions processes, the delegate should consider the following:

- Available properties to the member (some remote locations will have a limited resource).
- Their bedroom entitlement (member who has accompanied resident family (ARF)) i.e. number, age and gender of resident family and/or recognised other persons.
- A pet is not resident family and/or recognised other persons and should not form the basis of decision making.
- Considerations relevant to rent ceiling increase policy may also relevant i.e. special needs.

If a rental property has been provided by the member - is the property rent amount within the above considerations?

If Yes: Setting the rent ceiling as the property rent amount is recommended.

Policy does not allow an ADF member to elect a 2 bedroom rent ceiling in a region that has no rent ceilings set. The minimum member contribution applies for a member who has accompanied resident family (ARF), the 3 bedroom rate.

Resident Child Carer

An ADF member may have a resident child carer living with the family. Definition: A person who is non recognised family and who is living with the member's family for the purpose of providing childcare for the member's children.	1. The member must inform their unit administrator in writing when either of the following occurs. a. A resident child carer moves into their rented home. The member is to provide a date when the arrangement is expected to end, if known. b. A resident child carer moves out of their home. 2. The member's unit administrator must forward the information provided by the member to Defence Housing Australia. The resident child carer will not affect the amount of the member's rent allowance.
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Self-contained flats

The definition of a self-contained flat is a flat that has all its own facilities, including kitchen, bathroom, and lavatory and usually has its own entrance.

Request the ADF member to provide a description of the rooms in the flat. If they meet the above, it would be reasonable to determine this as a separate unit/flat/apartment and can be treated in the same way as any other unit in a multi-unit complex.

If the description does not meet the above, it is reasonable to determine that the member is sharing with the other occupants of the same building.

Serviced Apartments (AirBNB, Holiday Units)

The rate for a serviced apartment may include the cost of the electricity and WiFi.	Rent allowance can only be applied to the rent component of the rate charged. The ADF member must provide an itemised listing of the charges (rent, electricity, cleaning fees, internet, etc) so the actual cost of rent can be determined. This document is used as a lease and the rent allowance is processed on the actual rent cost.
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- This applies to accommodation similar to a Self-Contained flat (see description in the above link). For AirBNB, check with the member if it is a room in a house (treat as sharing with others/owner). If the property is exclusive to the occupier, process as per any other RA property.
- Normal RA rules apply as to which fees must be excluded, and which can be included.

Sharing with 4 or more occupants

MBR with no recognised family shares a rent allowance property where there are 4 or more occupants.	PACMAN 7.8.10 states to calculate the ceiling for members (MBRs) who are sharing with four or more people based on the ceiling in Annex 7.E Part 1 – plus 10% for every extra room. Note: Annex 7.E Part 1 is the 3-bedroom ceiling for ARF members. Example: The calculation is processed by using the applicable ARF 3-bedroom ceiling and adding 10% for each additional bedroom after the third bedroom, then dividing that by the number of occupants to determine the ceiling.
ARF member who is eligible for a 4 or 5-bedroom ceiling due to number of accompanied resident family.	The rent allowance ceiling is calculated using Annex 7.E Part 1 – plus 10% for every extra room. Example: The calculation is processed by using the applicable ARF 3-bedroom ceiling and adding 10% for each additional bedroom. ARF members eligible for the 5-bedroom rent ceiling have the 3-bedroom ceiling plus 20% applied.

Standard RA Applications

Standard RA applications are non-RSA MBR/URF RA applications that are based on the members online services RA declaration and auto processed. The pay transaction is auto generated and reviewed by an approver as per WI_Customer Service Centre Approvals Process & Best Practice.

Standard RA applications are defined as not including the following:

- Furniture rental
- Garaging
- Locality assessment required
- Personal location
- CFTS
- Flexible Work
- Movement plan letter
- Discharging members
- Boarding and Sharing

Sub-letting

Subletting is defined as:

- The amount of income the member gets as rent for any part of the rental property that is sub-let.

Example: Money made by sub-letting a downstairs flat or a spare bedroom to a boarder.

Calculation for ARF RA where subletting is occurring:

- (Lesser of Fortnightly Rent or rent ceiling - Fortnightly Subletting Amount) - Contribution = RA Entitlement paid by Defence

Check the definition of sharing vs subletting (e.g. above section for ARF RA - Sharing with non-recognised family or persons)

How is this represented on the PAY transactions?:

- The Total Amount/Member Allowance Amount will reflect the lesser of Fortnightly rent ceiling or Rent minus the Fortnightly Subletting Amount.
 - **Example:** Rent \$700, rent ceiling \$850, Subletting Amount \$120. Member Allowance Amount will be \$700 - \$120 = \$580

The following guidance is provided for the decision maker determining if 'subletting' is occurring or not - giving consideration to the members normal living conditions:

Subletting is treated differently depending on the categorisation:

1. **ARF** sharing with non-recognised family or other persons, or
2. **MBR/URF** who is deployed for 6 months or more subletting their rental property i.e. subletting is a sharing occupant paying rent - this is not a house-sitter not paying rent. If this member normally shares (i.e. before departing on deployment) then remaining sharing occupants are not subletting - the normal share calculation remains in play.

All members must advise the rent contribution being paid - which is called: '*Subletting Income*'.

ARF:

- Non-recognised family or other person occupant may contribute or not.

- If the non-recognised family or other person is not contributing any rent, then the RA calculation is not affected.
- **Note:** If an ARF member is renting with a MBR or URF and indicates that a nil rent contribution applies then the MBR/URF will not receive subsidised housing support.

The CC TL decision maker should consider the following when a nil rent contribution is advised for subletting:

If the member who has accompanied resident family (ARF) is sharing with another member who is not recognised family or a recognised other person who remains in the property, then:

- Any RA for that member will need to be ceased - refer to WI_Arranging Vacation.
- If the rent contribution advice is lower than an equal share; any RA for that member will need to be adjusted accordingly, refer to WI_Change in Personal Circumstance Share Processing

If 'nil' is accepted the ARF RA calculation is not affected i.e. the non-recognised family member is a non-contributing person and is not considered in the calculation.

Sydney Recall List

Refer to JA_Recall List for Housing - Sydney for details.

Presence on a recall list does not automatically entitle an ADF member to a rent ceiling increase. The member must still conduct a reasonable search for a property within the prescribed rent ceiling before an increase may be approved - refer to the rent ceiling increase approval section on this guideline.

Recall lists are to be signed by the relevant 2-star officer and provided to DHA via DRH. If a member is seeking approval for recall consideration on bases not listed, they need to seek the 2-star approval through their unit.

Two (2) serving members - senior member discharges and junior member assumes eligibility for RA:

Scenario:

- Two serving ADF members are recognised ARF - ranked WO1 and SGT occupied 2018 in Darwin.
- WO1 is in receipt of ARF RA.
- 24/01/2019 determined rent ceiling for location decreases - WO1 retains 2018 rent ceiling.
- WO1 discharges 01/11/2019 and ARF RA is ceased.
- SGT commences receiving RA effective 02/11/2019.

Outcome:

- SGT receives RB1 2019 rent ceiling.

DRH have confirmed that on the commence of RA for the junior serving member, the RA is to be calculated as per the junior member's current circumstances. PACMAN 7.8.16.1 does not apply in this case as this is considered a new benefit for the junior member and is to be assessed as such.

URF extended housing benefit location to where family SR is located

The following is provided to assist with processing URF requests for an extended housing benefit location to where their family occupies a SR:

Scenario:

Member posted to Brisbane with family and occupies an SR. Member is then posted to Amberley. CO approves extending the housing benefit location into the Brisbane DHF.

- RAAF Amberley to URF RA: 49km / 50 mins.
- Distance between SR and URF RA property: 26km / 33 min.
- URF RA address falls within Brisbane housing benefit location/DHF.

Assessment:

This member is housed within policy.

- ARF SR tenancy - family have been in occupation since 2013 when member posted to Brisbane on RSA 83013. (Previous housing benefit location.)
URF RA tenancy - CO has extended the housing benefit location to East Brisbane.

When determining an RA benefit it is based on housing benefit location, not DHF (provisioning) location. This member's housing benefit location is extended to East Brisbane only.

URF member seeking RA for resident family and/or recognised other persons in accommodation provided by an institution

If resident family and/or recognised other persons live in accommodation provided by institutions such as private or public hospitals, nursing homes or mental health facilities, there is no eligibility for RA for that accommodation.

Vacation dates - end of eligibility

The vacate date determines the effective date on the cease pay transaction.

The end date for Rent Allowance eligibility for a member who has accompanied resident family and no unaccompanied family varies and is determined by PACMAN 7.8.30.

In some cases, the following points need to be considered to apply an alternative date outside the set timelines in PACMAN 7.8.30:

1. How much time is left in the member's posting to that location.
2. The cost of a removal to the new accommodation.
3. How long the member will need to move out of the rented home. This includes any notice period needed under their lease.
4. Whether the member has included a release section in the lease that allows them to end it with one month's notice.
5. Any other fact relevant to the member's accommodation.