

Rent Choice Youth

If you are a young person aged 16-24, are homeless or at risk of homelessness, you may be eligible to receive a Rent Choice Youth Subsidy from the Department of Family and Community Services' (FACS).

What is Rent Choice Youth?

Rent Choice Youth helps young people to take out a lease in the private rental market and to achieve stability and independence over time.

FACS pays some of your rent to make it more affordable and to help you sustain a tenancy.

Local support providers work with you to achieve your goals for work, education and financial independence.

Where is Rent Choice Youth available?

Rent Choice Youth is currently available in the Hunter, Tamworth, Orange, Bathurst, Penrith/Blue Mountains, Gosford/Wyong, Wagga, Queanbeyan and Lismore areas.

Who is eligible?

You are eligible if you are:

- Aged 16 to 24 years (i.e. have not reached your twenty-fifth birthday at the time of approval for the program)
- Homeless or at risk of being homeless
- Assessed as eligible for Social Housing
- An Australian Citizen or hold permanent residency in Australia
- Capable of maintaining a tenancy (with the required support)
- Able to demonstrate that you have the capacity and are willing to engage in education, training or employment during the period of the subsidy
- Able to demonstrate that you are willing to engage with your support provider

What kind of support will I receive?

On top of a rental subsidy, a local support agency will help you with a support plan to find accommodation, access educational and employment opportunities and to sustain your private rental tenancy for up to three years. You may already be linked with a support agency, or FACS will help link you to one.

How long does Rent Choice Youth last for?

How long you continue to receive assistance for depends on your need and any changes in circumstances. You may receive the subsidy for a maximum period of 3 years. FACS carries out reviews with you every 3 months to discuss your progress and support plan.

How much subsidy will I receive?

The rental subsidy that you will receive depends on your income. You pay 25% of your income and 100% of Centrelink Rent Assistance (CRA) towards rent. FACS pays the rest of the weekly rent directly to the landlord or real estate agent.

How do I receive Rent Assistance?

Once you have signed a lease for a property, you can take this to Centrelink and apply for Rent Assistance. This is an extra amount from Centrelink that helps pay your weekly rent. You can ask FACS or your support provider for more information about this.

How will I know if a property is affordable?

You can only be approved for a private rental property where the rent is considered affordable and within your financial means. For a property to be affordable, the weekly rent cannot be over 50% of your income on top of CRA.

What happens if I get a job?

Getting a job is an important goal and is one of the main aims of Rent Choice Youth. Your income can increase and you can still continue to receive the subsidy. A full time wage may pay more than the program allows, and if this happens the subsidy will only stop after review and a further period of time has occurred.

What other help can I receive?

You can also receive other FACS private rental assistance. This includes:

- Rentstart Bond Loan
- Advanced Rent
- Tenancy Facilitation
- Tenancy Guarantee
- Private Rental Brokerage Service

You may also be able to receive help with costs to set up your home, or to pay for education, training or work related needs while receiving Rent Choice Youth.

How do I find out more?

If you live in one of the areas listed above contact your local FACS Housing office and say that you would like to apply for a Rent Choice Youth Subsidy.