

NORTHERN TERRITORY STATEMENT OF PRIORITIES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this nation.

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands and waters and pay our respects to ancestors and Elders, past, present, and emerging.

The Department of Children and Families is committed to honouring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas and their rich contribution to society.

Throughout this document, we will use the term 'Aboriginal' to refer to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and First Nations peoples and communities of the Northern Territory.

We recognise the diversity and complexity of these communities.

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

Accommodation and housing should be developed using a flexible, place-based approach that allows for assets to be adapted to different uses as needs change. For example, a short-term housing asset that could be adapted to long-term housing. Flexible place-based approaches include investing in placemaking through developments with mixed tenure and onsite amenities, services and community spaces, and using modular housing to quickly and efficiently adapt assets to address a changing need.

Group specific accommodation and housing

Group-specific accommodation and housing tailored solutions that cater to the unique needs of different groups of the NT population who are experiencing homelessness, specifically:

- Youth transitional accommodation facility model targeted to 16–24-year-olds.
- Core and cluster crisis or transitional accommodation/housing models with self-contained accommodation and wrap around services for women and families who have experienced violence.

Target location, typology, and scale

- Youth supported transitional accommodation facility model targeted to 16–24-year-olds, experiencing or at risk of homelessness.
 - Alice Springs or Greater Darwin Region
 - 12 - 30 beds with flexible configuration
- Domestic Family Sexual Violence (DHSV) supported crisis accommodation for impacted women and families, experiencing or at risk of homelessness.
 - Big Rivers, Barkly, or Greater Darwin Region
 - 12 - 30 beds with flexible configuration

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Culturally appropriate

- Accommodation model should support place-based and better coordinated culturally safe approaches to addressing homelessness –to drive the innovation necessary to deliver real change in a location, or for specific groups, that is appropriate and effective. Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) have a particularly important role to play in this context.
- Support programs should be culturally appropriate and tailored to Aboriginal tenants' unique needs by engaging with the community and involving Aboriginal communities in decision-making processes.
- Design and layout should consider individual and family needs and be able to cater for the unique requirements of different communities and family groups.

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

NT has a higher proportion of people experiencing homelessness than elsewhere

Based on 2021 census figures, the ABS estimated that 5.6 per cent of the NT population (more than 13,000 people) experienced homelessness in 2021. This was almost 12 times the national estimate, of 0.48 per cent of the total population.



The complex drivers of homelessness can impact a number of groups in different and significant ways, they include people who are sleeping rough, young people, and people who are experiencing Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence

Homelessness and young people

In urban areas, mobility, couch surfing, staying with friends, and overcrowding contribute to 'hidden homelessness,' a complex and often overlooked form of housing insecurity. This can often affect young people or Aboriginal people visiting urban centres, who lack stable accommodation and move between temporary shelters like friends' homes or other overcrowded living spaces. Homelessness among young people may also occur because of violence and / or abuse in their family home and many young people experiencing homelessness have frequently been through state / territory child protection systems before becoming homeless.

The harm and trauma young people experience after losing their homes has a lifelong impact.

Housing transience can disrupt education, employment opportunities, access to essential services and consistent social connections. For those who are older or have existing health

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issues, it can cause their health to deteriorate further. While less visible than rough sleeping, these experiences represent significant housing vulnerability challenges such as financial hardship and limited affordable housing options.

In general, young people experience homelessness in the NT at almost 12 times the national average, and at higher rates than the general population.

Homelessness and Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence

In the NT, rates of both domestic violence and homelessness are higher than anywhere else in Australia. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare data shows that in the NT, 56 per cent of clients are presenting to an SHS service due to DFSV – compared to 36 per cent nationally. Violence in a home creates an unsafe and unstable environment. Victims of DFSV are often forced to choose between staying in or returning to this environment or entering homelessness due to a lack of available and affordable housing or services. DFSV also significantly impacts women who are rough sleeping. Women who are rough sleeping are more vulnerable and have poorer health outcomes and are at greater risk of violence and exploitation, further demonstrating the complex intersectionality between homelessness and DFSV.

Victim survivors of DFSV require specialist supports and services that are tailored to their specific needs, with coordination between the homelessness system and DFSV specific services being particularly important to ensure all their needs are met.

3. Proposed Jurisdictional Support

The Northern Territory is unable to commit any specific support to prospective projects which may be submitted in this funding round, as supports would be project dependent and subject to future Budget processes. However, we undertake to explore what options may be possible with prospective applicants.