

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Maintenance reform

July 2024

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### About Homes NSW

Homes NSW, a division within the Department of Communities and Justice, leads work to deliver more social and affordable housing in NSW, end the cycle of homelessness and deliver quality public housing to our 262,000 tenants.

As one organisation that puts people at the heart of housing and homelessness solutions in NSW, Homes NSW will streamline and improve housing outcomes for people in need. Our priority is to maintain a public housing portfolio of 95,000 properties in a way that ensures safety, belonging and privacy for the people who call them home.

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### Why are we making changes?

When Homes NSW formed in February 2024, we had an opportunity to change how public housing maintenance is managed and delivered. It gave us a chance to place our tenants at the heart of changes that will improve their everyday comfort, safety and standard of living.

Through the changes, we will:

- ensure better service and support for our tenants
- streamline and improve housing outcomes for people in need
- ensure safety, belonging and privacy for the people who call our properties home
- create a maintenance system our tenants can rely on
- bring greater control of services and customer support back to government
- allow contractors to focus on quality and timely delivery of works
- use the voices of lived experience to inform our approach
- strive for excellence in service delivery.

We have 262,000 people who rely on us for home maintenance and repair. We need to make sure they feel respected, valued and supported in every interaction with us.

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### Do the changes apply to CHP-managed properties?

No, the changes only apply to public housing properties managed by Homes NSW.

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## What do tenants need to do?

Tenants can continue to call 1800 422 322 or use eRepair to lodge their maintenance requests.

This phone number will connect you with our new in-house customer service centre known as the Maintenance Hub. When you call the Maintenance Hub, you will speak to a Homes NSW staff member who will help with all aspects of your maintenance request.

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## How is the Maintenance Hub different from the previous call centre?

The Maintenance Hub is an in-house customer response centre. The phone number is the same, but the people answering the phones and managing your requests are Homes NSW staff members.

Our staff will work closely with you to understand and oversee your maintenance needs from start to finish. They'll carefully assess and prioritise your requests, making sure the right contractor is sent out to fix the issue within a suitable timeframe.

If we can't identify the exact issue of concern over the phone, we'll visit your home to assess the problem in person before sending out a contractor.

This is different from the previous call centre, which used external contractors to answer calls and manage requests.

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## Will maintenance work still be delivered by external contractors?

Yes, tenants should expect that maintenance works and repairs will still be delivered by external contractors. These contractors may be different from those who've provided services in the past.

We'll be responsible for your maintenance requests and how they're handled, but we must rely on tradespeople and skilled contractors to deliver the work.

When you call the Maintenance Hub to make a request, we'll let you know which contractor has been allocated to work at your home. They'll contact you to arrange an appointment.

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## How will you ensure contractors provide better service?

Through a competitive tender process, we've selected six experienced partners to deliver maintenance works and repairs under a new contract from 1 July 2024.

We'll work closely with our partners to ensure contractors deliver quality works in good time. With a renewed focus on the customer experience, you and your home will be treated with care and respect.

Contractors will be more accountable for their work. Extensive training will ensure they are prepared to deliver services to the high standards expected of them. Once their work is completed, it may be inspected by Homes NSW maintenance staff for quality and compliance.

Contractors may take photos of the maintenance issues they work on. These photos will only be used by Homes NSW to ensure quality of service.

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## Will there be any improvement to planned maintenance services?

Yes. The new maintenance system is based on our staff managing maintenance requests from start to finish. This will give us greater oversight of maintenance needs across all our properties, which will help us to improve our long-term plan for maintaining homes.

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## Will the Maintenance App replace the phone line?

No. You can still request maintenance over the phone, by using eRepair or by speaking to a staff member at your local office.

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## Have tenants been involved in the maintenance reform?

Yes, we've used years of tenant feedback to shape our new approach.

We've engaged with tenants, advocates and peak bodies to discuss what we've changed and what more we can do to meet the diverse needs of all our residents.

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## Who can I contact for maintenance support?

The Maintenance Hub is your one-stop response centre for maintenance support.

Through the Maintenance Hub, you can:

- Lodge a maintenance request
- Request a home modification
- Ask a question about maintenance/repair at your home
- Find out how long it will take for your maintenance issue to be fixed
- Check on the progress of your request
- Submit feedback about your experience
- Submit a compliment or complaint

This service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

To contact the Maintenance Hub, call **1800 422 322**.