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38,000 Victorians waiting for a home; more in urgent need



Victoria's social housing waiting list has hit nearly 38,000 applications, with the peak body for homelessness warning that the homelessness crisis will continue to grow while social housing stock dwindles at record lows.

Analysis of the Victorian Housing Register by the Council to Homeless (CHP) reveals that the waiting list grew by nearly 2,000 applications in the nine months to June 2018, bringing the total to 37,996 applicants. The number of *people* waiting for a home is at least double that figure, as many applicants have children and partners.

Worryingly, CHP's analysis shows urgent priority applications have jumped by 10 per cent since the December quarter. Priority applicants include those in extreme and urgent need, such as rough sleepers and women and children escaping family violence. Of the nearly 38,000 applications on the waiting list, 18,943 are categorised as an urgent priority.

CHP says the increase reflects both the declining number of affordable private rentals in Victoria, and a more visible and streamlined process for applying for social housing through the new Housing Register.

Table: Number of Victorians on the Social housing waiting list (NB. Figures represent number of applications)

	Dec '17	Mar '18	June '18	% change over nine months
Priority applications (e.g. rough sleepers, families in emergency accommodation etc.)	17,194	17,846	18,943	10%
<i>TOTAL applications</i>	<i>36,013</i>	<i>36,742</i>	<i>37,996</i>	<i>6%</i>

"The numbers on the wait list reveal that there are thousands of children, the elderly and women fleeing violence who are languishing in temporary accommodation, rooming houses, and on couches because we simply don't have enough social housing," said Jenny Smith, CEO, Council to Homeless Persons.

"While the current Victorian Government has started reinvesting in new social housing, these demand figures indicate the pace of investment needs to be increased.

“Every Victorian deserves a stable, affordable home so they can raise a family, stay in school, keep a job and achieve their potential,” she said.

With Homelessness Week (6-12 August), and a state election looming, CHP says solving the housing and homelessness crisis should be a priority for all political parties.

“Today’s homelessness crisis is the result of years of neglect and under-investment in social housing, and it’s going to take years of sustained investment to reverse the situation,” said Ms Smith.

During Homelessness Week people are encouraged to call on political leaders to take action as part of the [Everybody’s Home](#) campaign, among other things calls for 500,000 social and affordable homes nationally.

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