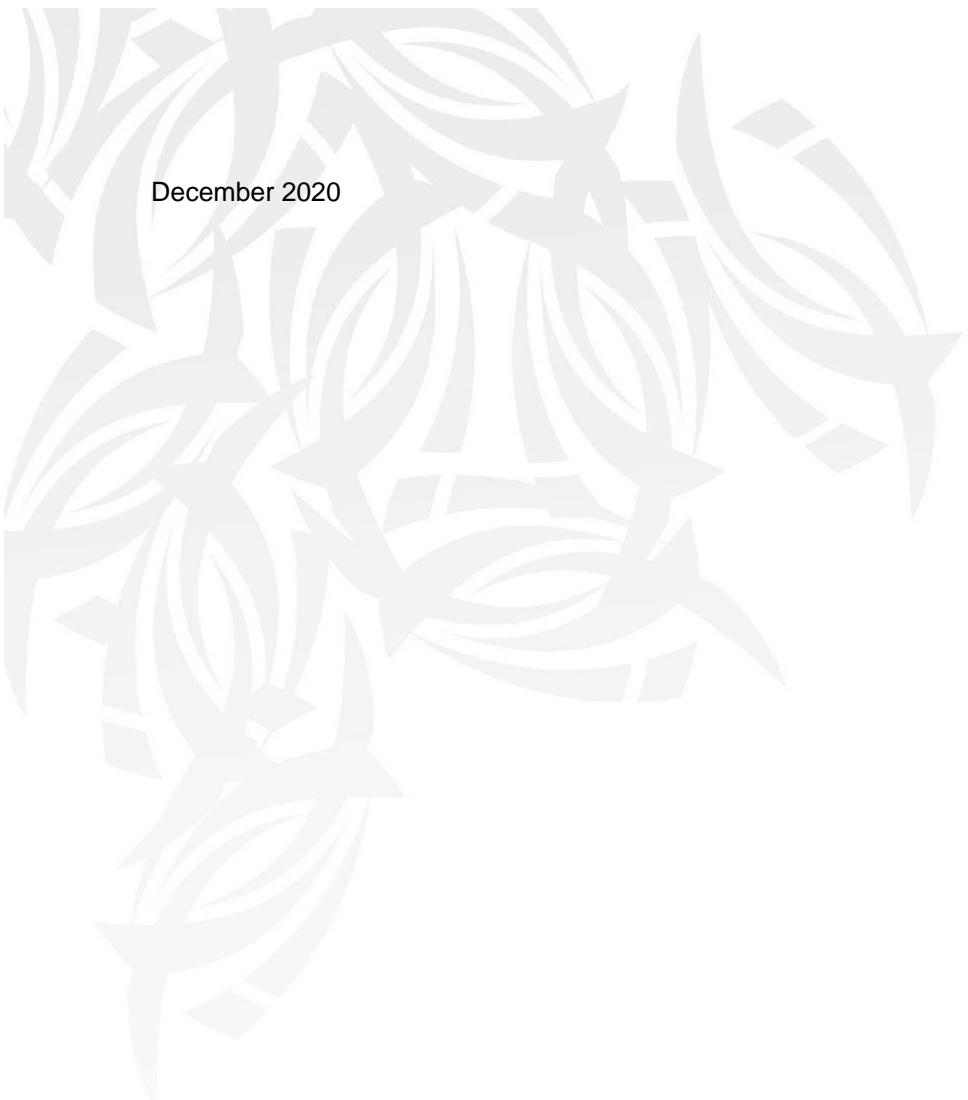




HOUSING CARE SERVICE

INFORMATION FOR SENIORS WISHING TO APPLY FOR HOUSING



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INTRODUCTION

This kit is for Senior Citizens' who maybe eligible, and who are thinking about renting a unit from the Invercargill City Council. It tells them what the Council can offer and gives information about eligibility, waiting lists, rents and making applications.

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to ask.

ENQUIRIES

The Housing Care Administration/Support Officer is situated at the:

Invercargill City Council
101 Esk Street
INVERCARGILL 9840

The telephone number for enquiries is (03) 211 1777.

AM I ELIGIBLE?

- You must be a New Zealand Citizen or be permitted to reside in New Zealand permanently.
- You will be asked to provide Residency or Citizenship papers, if you were born overseas.
- Furthermore, **the Invercargill City Council must be satisfied that you will be a good tenant and able to live co-operatively with others on the site.**

Because resources are limited, the housing must be targeted to those who most need it. On approval, applicants are placed according to their circumstances, into the Primary or Secondary priority group. The higher your priority, the more likely you are to be housed sooner.

ASSETS AND INCOME

Your assets and income will affect the priority your application receives and the level of rent you will pay. There is a primary and secondary asset limit. The limits are set by the Council and are adjusted from time to time.

Currently, the primary asset limits are \$23,000 for a single applicant and \$26,500 for a couple. The secondary asset limit is \$50,000 for all applicants.

Assets include investments (including Bonus Bonds), money in trusts, savings, real estate and any items of significant value. However, they do not include furniture and personal effects or usually your car.

If you personally own or have a financial interest in any houses, flats or cribs, you would be required to declare it to Council and expected proceeds of any sale being included in the assessment of your priority on the waiting list.

Depending on the value of your financial interest in any property, you would be required to sell the property prior to the commencement of any tenancy with Council.

You should not divest yourself of assets in order to increase your priority. If you do, your application will be assessed as if you retained the assets, and you may find that you are allocated a lower priority. Furthermore, you will no longer have the asset to call on should you need to find alternative accommodation or pay market rent.

The following income limits and asset limits are baseline criteria across the priority groups for eligibility:

	Single Person	Couple
Income Limit	GRI plus 30%	GRI plus 30%
Primary Asset Limit	\$23,000	\$26,500
Secondary Asset Limit	\$50,000	\$50,000

(GRI is equivalent to current gross NZ Superannuation rate)

THE WAITING LIST

If your application is successful, your name will be placed on our waiting list. **Unfortunately, it is impossible to say how long you will have to wait before we can offer you a suitable flat.** Your application will be prioritised according to the following guidelines:

CRITERIA

Primary Eligibility

In order to be given this priority the applicant must:

- Be 60 years or more; and
- Have an on going housing need and be on a permanent benefit and /or have special needs/health issues and their income is within the income limit;
- Their assets are within the primary asset limit of \$23,000 or secondary asset limit of \$50,000 (which doesn't include furniture and personal effects or usually a car).
- May be at risk in their current accommodation.

Secondary Eligibility

In order to be given this priority the applicant must:

- Be 55 years or more;
- Have an on going housing need and be on a permanent benefit and /or have special needs/health issues and their income is within the income limit;
- Their assets are within the primary asset limit of \$23,000 or secondary asset limit of \$50,000 (which doesn't include furniture and personal effects or usually a car).

These applications will be considered for eligibility depending on individual circumstances.

All of the above applications will be subject to additional assessment relating to compatibility with existing Housing Care residents/neighbours in terms of safety, privacy and suitability of the accommodation offered by the Housing Care Service.

NOTE ON PRIORITY

Where possible those applicants who have been on the waiting list the longest will be allocated a flat first. The only exception is:

URGENT NEED

Where an applicant has an urgent housing need or is at risk in their current housing, Council's Housing Staff will treat the application with urgency and give preference where the applicant is willing to accept accommodation in any flat.

ALLOCATION OF UNITS

When a unit is vacated it will be offered to the next applicant on the list for whom it would be suitable. **The applicant usually has two days to decide whether to accept.** However, an extension may be given in certain circumstances.

If you refuse a unit, you do not drop to the bottom of the waiting list. However, please tell us why the unit is unsuitable so that we can make a more suitable choice the next time.

The Council is reluctant to allow shifts between units unless this will significantly improve the well-being of the tenant applying for the shift. You should therefore consider carefully before accepting a unit.

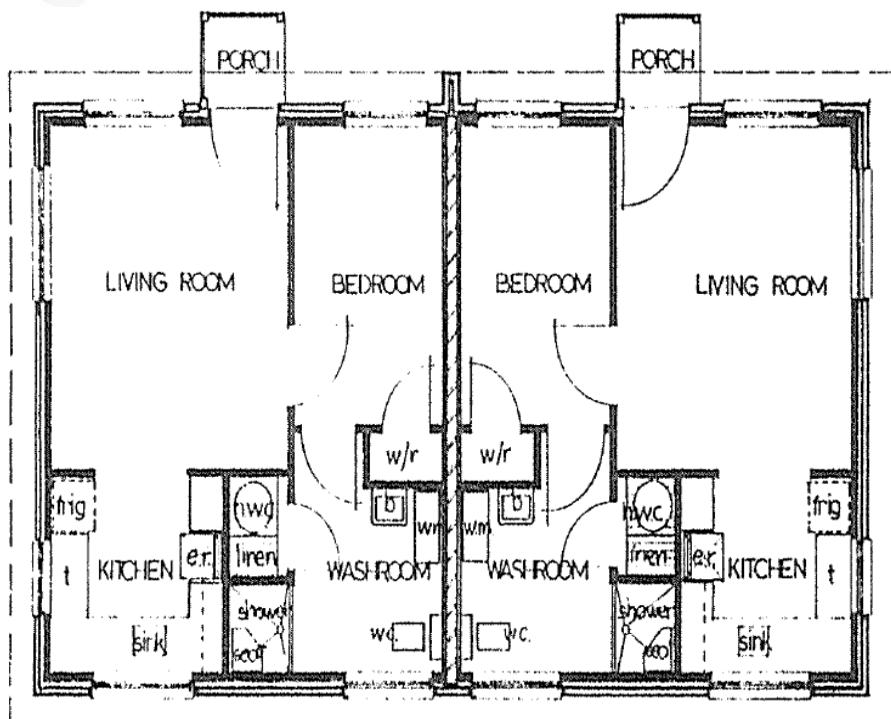
PRESENT INVERCARGILL CITY COUNCIL HOUSING STOCK

DESCRIPTION OF HOUSING

The Invercargill City Council currently has 215 housing units. Of these 164 units (76%) are one bedroom units. There is one, two bedroom 'special needs' unit and 50 studio units (bedsit).

Number of Bedrooms	Number of Units
0 Bedrooms/Studio Units	50
1 Bedroom	164
Special Needs Units	1
Total	215

Examples of 1 bedroom units.



LOCATION OF UNITS

The Council units are located as follows:

Number of Units	Complex Name	Address
10	Willow Park	64 Adamson Crescent
14	Clarendon Court	60 Stirrat Street
7	Kelly Court	210 Crinan Street
7	Niven Place	102 Earn Street
40	Elston Lea Village	50 Murphy Street
7	Strathpine	246 Ettrick Street
16	Nevill Place	26 Selwyn Street
8	Aurora Place	15 – 29 Janet Street
12	Cairnsmore	160 Leet Street
6	Thorndale	3 Lithgow Street
8	Laurel Court	2 Maltby Street
4	Miller Street Flats	Miller Street
22	Otarewa Village	90 Conon Street
6	Powell Court	295 Pomona Street
8	Aiden Place	132 Princes Street
10	Korimako Court	12 Waverley Street
8	Pateke Place	429 Yarrow Street
4	Jim Brass Place	154 Elles Road
5	Anzac Court	9 Tone Street, Bluff
6	Kinross Flats	30 Henderson Street, Bluff
6	Stirling Flats	25 Gregory Street, Bluff
1	Special Needs Unit	50 Murphy Street

AMENITIES

HEATING

All units have electric heating, convection heaters, wall heaters or under-floor heating.

LAUNDRY FACILITIES

All units are supplied with automatic washing machines. Tenants can use their own automatic washing machines if they wish to, in units which have the appropriate tap fixtures.

COOKING FACILITIES

All units have electric ranges or rangettes.

REFRIGERATORS, CURTAINS AND DRAPES

Tenants supply their own refrigerators, curtains and drapes. Curtain rails are in units and remain the property of the Council.

PARKING

All the Housing Care complexes have limited off-street parking for one vehicle per unit.

Car parks are not allocated to particular units or to particular tenants. Car parking is primarily for tenant use. Visitors to tenants may not park within the complex for extended periods of time. Service agencies providing personal care or home help to tenants, Council staff and contractors on Council business, are permitted to use the car parking provided for tenants.



Three of the units at Jim Brass Place have carports.

SPECIAL NEEDS

Units can sometimes have minor alterations done to meet individual needs. However, if an alteration is required on the recommendation of a community occupational therapist and is considered by them to be essential, then it may be funded by a grant from the Health Funding Authority at no cost to the tenant.

A common alteration is to fit handrails at entries and in bathrooms.

LAWNS, SHRUBS AND HEDGES

Council undertakes all lawn mowing on a regular basis at all complexes. Shrubs and hedges and larger garden plots are maintained by Council contractors.

GARDENS

Residents are encouraged to be responsible for the small garden beds and borders immediately adjacent to their unit.

RUBBISH

A number of wheelie bins are supplied at each complex for household rubbish and recycling. The wheelie bins are not allocated individually but are for the use of all residents. Generally, wheelie bins are shared – one wheelie bin between two neighbouring tenants with sufficient recycle bins to meet the needs of the complex.



Garden rubbish can be disposed of in the composting bins provided on complexes.

Residents may, if they wish, arrange for their own bin and rubbish pickup.

RENTALS AND TENANCY

TENANCY AGREEMENT

When you start your tenancy, you must sign a tenancy agreement. A sample of this agreement is included at the back of this document.

Please note that:

1. Only the person or people named in the agreement may permanently live in the unit.
2. **Dogs are not allowed.**
3. You may keep a cat, bird or fish. Only one cat may be kept. It must be spayed or neutered.
4. Tenants must show a sense of community responsibility and respect each other's privacy.



RENT

Rent is paid fortnightly, in advance. You will be asked to pay rent up to the next billing cycle when you begin your tenancy, and then (by automatic payment) every fortnight from that time.

Rents are set by Council during the Annual Plan and Long Term Plan process and current rental amounts can be found under the Housing applications area on icc.govt.nz.

If it would be difficult for you to meet these rent payments, the following avenues of assistance are available and may be able to help you.

ACCOMMODATION SUPPLEMENT

The accommodation supplement is paid to eligible people by Work and Income. It is income and asset tested. Enquiries should be made to Work and Income, you will find the local offices listed in the blue pages at the front of your phone book.

BUDGET ADVICE

A number of organisations have people who are experienced in helping people to plan a budget for a very limited income. The Citizen's Advice Bureau, telephone 218 6648, have information about such services:

Jubilee Budget Advisory Service

74 Don Street

Invercargill

Phone: 214 0942

HOW TO APPLY FOR A UNIT

COMPLETE THE APPLICATION FORM

An application form is included with this Information Booklet. If you need assistance in completing it, the Housing Care Administration Support Officer at Council will be happy to help. The Housing Care Administration Support Officer will be able to witness your Statutory Declaration at your interview, so don't fill in this part of the application unless you are unable to attend the interview.

OBTAIN TWO CHARACTER REFERENCES

The referees must:

- Have known you for at least 12 months; and
- Be unrelated to you.

The letters of reference must be:

- Accompanied by the referees' names, addresses and contact telephone numbers; and
- Not more than 12 months old.
- Alternatively references can be contacted for a verbal reference.

A personal credit reference is available on line from Veda Advantage, www.mycreditfile.co.nz, which members of the public can access.

A letter from a recent previous landlord, detailing length of tenancy, condition of property at close of tenancy and regularity of rental payments, could be helpful to support your application.

If you will have difficulty providing such references, please advise the Housing Officer.

FUTURE SUPPORT FOR APPLICATIONS

The Housing Care Service reserves the right to request any applicant to support their application with written reports from personal health or social services professionals. These requests are limited to those occasions where staff have concerns about a prospective tenant's ability to live successfully in the unique environment of Council flats.

MAKE AN APPOINTMENT

When you have completed the application form and have the necessary references, make an appointment for an interview with a Housing Care Officer. Please do not call in on the off-chance, because there may not be a Housing Care Officer available to see you. Much of their work is done away from the office. Call the Housing number on 211 1777.



INTERVIEW

The interview is very informal but gives both you and the Housing Care Administration Support Officer a chance to obtain any additional information or documentation and explain anything that is not clear. You can also tell us of any special needs you may have. If, because of illness or disability, you are unable to call at the office, please tell us so that alternative arrangements can be made for a Housing Care Administration Support Officer to visit you.

If you live outside the Southland area, you should post your application so that your name can be placed on the waiting list promptly. You may wish to consider giving the name, address and telephone number of a relative or friend who could take a preliminary look at any flat allocated to you. This may save you travelling to look at flats that are clearly not suitable. However, we do not expect you to make a final decision before seeing the flat yourself.

If you are visiting Invercargill later on, it would still be useful to meet us and discuss your application then.

OUTCOME

We will advise you whether your application has been approved and, if it has been approved, what priority it will receive.

OTHER HOUSING OPTIONS

If you find that the type of Council Housing discussed so far does not suit your needs, you may wish to consider:

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The Ministry of Social Development has houses and flats for rental.

The Ministry of Social Development website is www.housing.msd.govt.nz.

OR call Work and Income on 0800 559 009,

OR Senior Services on 0800 552 002,

OR visit 33 Gala Street, Invercargill.

OTHER

There are many private landlords. Some suggestions for seeking accommodation are:

(a) ***Newspapers***

Check the "To Let" columns in the Southland Times and Community newspapers. The best days are usually Wednesday and Saturday.

Alternatively, place an ad yourself. Briefly describe the type of place you want to rent and give a contact telephone number.

(b) ***Community Noticeboards***

Check for advertisements in shop windows or at clubs you attend, or put up your own.

(c) ***Real Estate Agents***

Many are also letting agencies. They usually charge a fee equal to a week's rent for signing you up for a tenancy.

SAMPLE TENANCY AGREEMENT

Council uses the current Tenancy Agreement as set under the Residential Tenancies Act. Please go to <https://www.tenancy.govt.nz/forms-and-resources/> for a copy of a Residential tenancy agreement.

Checklist

Before making an appointment with the Housing Officer to discuss your application, please ensure:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
1. You have completed the Application for Housing Form	
2. You have two character references	
3. You have accurately recorded your assets and earnings. This includes any investments and interest earned from investments.	
4. If you have health or disability issues you wish to have taken into account, do you have a support letter from a Health Professional or Social Services Professional?	
5. If you have all of the above, you are now ready to phone 03 2111777 and make an appointment to see the Housing Officer.	
Enter appointment details below:	
Date:	
Day:	
Time:	
With:	

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Please note: The Housing Application is a Statutory Declaration and it is illegal to omit, or provide false, information.



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