



## ***Statement regarding the Covid-19 NSW Rental Hardship Fund***

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May 28, 2020

***Over 2 million people in NSW call their rental property home.***

The Covid19 pandemic has brought into sharp relief how critical it is to have a secure home.

It has shown us the precariousness of many people's employment and financial situations

Shelter NSW was delighted to see the NSW Parliament recently pass an amendment to create a last-resort, Rental Hardship Fund to assist tenants and landlords affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. The amendment passed through the NSW Legislative Chamber on 12 May, 2020.

**We at Shelter NSW are now very disappointed and concerned to learn that the NSW Government has not commenced implementation of the hardship fund. Worse still, we understand the NSW Government is likely not going to proceed at all.**

**This is a backward step for the people of NSW – landlords and tenants alike.**

Under the scheme, a tenant must demonstrate that they have suffered a loss of income of 25% or more; that they have less than \$5000 in savings; and that they are paying more than 30% of the income in rent to the landlord. The landlord must also reduce the tenant's rent, with a maximum amount of 'top-up' payments of \$2500 available per tenancy.

Shelter NSW understands that like many tenants, many landlords are themselves suffering from financial stress. Good landlords need more help to support their tenants.

Shelter NSW believes the fund design is sound, it is: modest, temporary, targeted and similar to those already in operation in other states.

**Shelter NSW calls on the NSW Government to respect the 'will of the Parliament' and urgently implement the Rental Hardship Fund.**

Shelter NSW

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### More about Shelter NSW

Shelter NSW has been operating since 1975 as the state's peak housing policy and advocacy body. Our vision is "A secure home for all". We pursue our vision through critical engagement with policy and practice and thought leadership. We provide systemic advocacy and advice on policy and legislation for the whole NSW housing system to resolve housing inequality and we seek to ensure that the voices of housing consumers are included in our policy responses and review.

Our approach involves engaging, collaborating and connecting with Government, the private and not-for-profit sectors, stakeholders and consumers. Our research centres on the causes of inequity and injustice in the housing system and we advocate solutions that aim to make the housing system work towards delivering a fairer housing system for all.