

ATTN: LISA Inc.

The new board and lodging fee is a simpler way of charging residents for rent and housekeeping expenses and gives residents greater certainty in relation to their disposable income. The fee will be individually calculated for each resident and take into account what they are currently contributing towards rent and items such as food and utilities.

The fee will also be proportional to cost of living increases in the Disability Support Pension (DSP) and the Commonwealth Rent Assistance. This means that residents will be protected if some items, such as the cost of utilities, increase at a higher rate than the cost of living increases to the DSP.

The purpose of the Disability Amendment Bill 2013 is to amend the Disability Act 2006 in relation to the review by VCAT of a decision of a disability service provider to issue a notice of a proposed increase in a residential charge.

Residents or their administrators will retain their right to apply for a review of fee charges at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT). However, VCAT must dismiss an application for review where the residential charge increase is in line with cost of living increases to the Disability Support Pension or to Commonwealth Rent Assistance and is within the amount prescribed in the Disability Regulations 2007.

The Bill contains three proposed formulas to reflect the three different methods of setting a residential charge listed as follows:

Proposed 72A 2 (a) - if the previous charge was a charge based on DSP only and the proposed charge is a charge based on CRA and DSP

Proposed 72A 2 (b) - if the previous charge was a charge based on CRA and DSP and the proposed charge is a charge based on CRA and DSP

Regards,
Service Outcomes Service Development and Design Branch, DHS

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We do not accept the advantages suggested, above, override the, (a) potential to, over time, increase the cost (the bundle) towards the regulated 75% of the DSP, being the Minister's agenda and that of the NDIS, as shown in August, to get residents of group homes to contribute towards their support service costs and, (b) the loss of residents' "Choice & Control" when there is no clearly defined rent component with which to define the residents' entitlement to real residential tenancy rights (see attached article), thus making the home a hostel - like aged-care.

Where the "bundle" (like the aged-care bundle) is not defined by actual costs, it becomes easy to increase, above cost of living, over time. The present separate components (Rent & Housekeeping) cannot be other than what they actually cost.

Regards,
LISA Inc