



Aboriginal Housing NT (AHNT) Aboriginal Corporation

ICN: (9120)

Office of the Chief Executive
Level 1
6/41 Georgina Crescent
Yarrowonga, NT 0830
E CEO@ahnt.com.au
T 0488 273 013

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MEDIA RELEASE: Rent hikes in remote communities will put more pressure on Alice Springs

The Northern Territory (NT) Government's changes to rent in remote communities and town camps across the NT – which will see two thirds of tenants hit with a rent increase – could further exacerbate overcrowding in Alice Springs and increase the number of people in town without a safe place to sleep.

On 6 February 2023, the NT Government will abolish income-based rents for people living in the poorest areas of the NT and introduce a bedroom-based rent scheme.

The Remote Rent Framework (Framework) will see public housing tenants in remote communities and town camps, where incomes are some of the lowest in the country, become the only public housing tenants in Australia whose rent is not calculated based on income.

“Raising the rents of the most marginalised people in the Northern Territory will only put further pressure on families, especially around Central Australia,” Aboriginal Housing NT chief executive Skye Thompson said.

“This week, we’ve seen the [NT Police Commissioner Jamie Chalker tell RN that “functionally broken” services](#) in remote communities have been pushing people into Alice Springs since November,” Ms Thompson said. “We’re concerned that the Framework will compound these cost-of-living pressures, and could see even more people in remote communities move into towns like Alice Springs.”

“[We know that youth crime rates are linked to poverty and substance abuse](#), and while the announcements last week may reduce access to alcohol, the Framework will put more pressure on people who are already overwhelmingly living below the poverty line.”

Remote communities in the NT are already facing inflated prices for food, electricity and fuel. The [NT Council of Social Service's Cost of Living report](#), released in December 2022, shows that the price of fuel has almost doubled in the NT over the past five years, while the average cost of a healthy food basket in remote stores in Aboriginal communities has continued to rise and was 52% higher than in a town supermarket.

Aboriginal Housing NT, the peak body for Aboriginal community-controlled organisations which provide housing services, [has called](#) on the NT government to maintain income-based rent until a new model is designed in true partnership with stakeholders.

In September 2022, NT Government announced it would delay implementing the Framework for a second time, from September 2022 to 6 February 2022 to allow for further engagement with residents ahead of implementing the new model.

Since September, Aboriginal Housing NT has continued to raise the sector's concerns about the Framework with the NT Government, and has called on the government to release data and modelling on the impact of the Framework on tenants.

“With less than two weeks until the Framework is implemented, we’re concerned the government is pushing ahead without having properly modelled its impact on tenants and communities,” Ms Thompson said.

Media enquiries: Skye Thompson, CEO Aboriginal Housing NT - 0488 273 013