



HOUSING OPTIONS FOR OLDER PEOPLE

COTA NSW Policy Position

COTA NSW supports the right of all older people to housing that is affordable, adaptable and stable to enable people to remain independent and in their own communities.

Ageing in place allows older people to remain socially connected, access existing social networks and utilise existing familiar services. COTA NSW asserts that there is a need for a well-advertised, easily accessible, independent and personalised housing advisory service that will enhance the ability of older people to make informed decisions about their future housing choices.

Rationale for COTA's NSW position –

- The supply of affordable, suitable and accessible housing for older people is inadequate, particularly for those who are poor, live alone and are in a rental property.
- Older people are currently not prioritised for social housing until the age of 80. There are long waiting lists for public housing that meets their physical and social needs.
- Access to affordable and appropriate rental properties is dire, particularly for those receiving social security payments.
- Homelessness amongst older people is increasing, with older women particularly vulnerable.
- There is currently no single entity that can provide free, independent advice and information about housing options specifically for older people.
- Current planning and regulatory systems in NSW often hinder the development of innovative solutions to provide affordable housing choices to older people.
- Current design and building standards for new housing is inadequate in meeting the need for adaptable housing to enable older people and those with disabilities to age in place.

COTA NSW calls for –

- Increase the supply of social housing and decrease the age of eligibility to priority housing to 70.
- NSW Government to amend SEPP 70 to include inclusionary zoning measures across all local government areas.
- Increase the security of tenure for renters through the removal of no grounds eviction from the Residential Tenancies Act.
- Review of planning and regulatory systems to provide greater flexibility for innovative housing solutions and models to suit the needs of older people.
- Provision of a housing options information service that can provide free and independent advice to older people about housing choice.
- Introduce minimum universal design standards and specific targets within state and local government planning legislation.
- Introduce concessions on stamp duty payable by older people to encourage downsizing.