

echorealty

RESIDENT HANDBOOK



echorealty

WHAT WE DO

At EchoRealty, we aim to do more than put a roof over our residents' heads. Our purpose is to enable more people in need to live in quality and affordable homes in thriving and inclusive communities.

EchoRealty can refer residents to our referral support service, accessible through Evolve Housing. Our Support Officers can work with you to create a Personal Support Plan that addresses your needs. They will then refer you to programs or external specialist organisations to help with finances, health, employment, education, or social and community support.

A PERSONAL SUPPORT PLAN

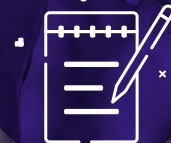
A HOME

Our affordable housing residents are offered a home that is well suited to their needs and budget. Our ability to provide high-quality, affordable properties with fair property management practices enables our residents to achieve financial stability, relieving them from the financial and housing stress faced by many Australians.



A PORTAL

As a client of EchoRealty, you have access to our Information Management System portal. The portal provides you with 24x7 online access to important information about your tenancy.



Our residents have the opportunity to access the EchoLIVING magazine which is distributed to residents twice-yearly. We will use this magazine to share information about events and programs that are available to you as an EchoRealty resident.

A COMMUNITY

EchoRealty can provide eligible residents with grants of up to \$700 for children (under 18 years) to participate in physical or cultural activities including sports, scouts, and cultural dance. This program enables children in EchoRealty households to participate in programs that contribute to their health and well-being while ensuring they remain connected to their local community.

A GRANT



A VOICE

Residents are welcome to contact EchoRealty to provide feedback on our services. Annually, EchoRealty residents will be asked to participate in our Annual Tenant Satisfaction Survey which will help us improve our services to you. We encourage all our residents to visit our website to learn more about providing feedback and getting in touch.

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July, 2023

ENVIRONMENT

Evolve Housing cares about the environment. This Handbook is printed on FSR® certified paper traceable to certified sources.



Cover photo: Gertrude and Martin, residents

echo realty

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01

Welcome home



Welcome to your new home. Please keep this handy reference where you can find details such as the name of your Property Manager, your Tenant Reference Number and all our contact information.

EchoRealty (EchoRealty NSW & ACT Limited – ERNAL) is an award-winning real estate agency and Tier-2 Community Housing Provider specialising in Affordable Housing management. Here at EchoRealty, our purpose is to enable more people in need to live in quality and affordable homes in thriving and inclusive communities.

IMPORTANT
Urgent repairs
Tel. 1800 693 246



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

EchoRealty NSW and ACT Limited (ERNAL) acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land where we deliver our housing and services. We acknowledge and pay our respects to all Elders past, present and future. We welcome all First Nations People to our services, as we walk together towards reconciliation.

YOUR DETAILS

Please fill in your details for easy reference.

Your Property Manager is:

Your address is:

OUR CONTACT INFORMATION

Head office address: 9– 13 Argyle Street, Parramatta NSW 2150

Opening hours: 9.00am to 5.00pm

Post: PO BOX W124 Parramatta Westfield, Parramatta NSW 2150

Telephone: NSW 1800 693 246 ACT 1800 324 622

Email: NSW info@echorealty.com.au ACT info@echorealtyact.com.au

Website: echorealty.com.au

Welcome from the CEO

Dear resident,

Welcome to your new home and your new journey as a resident of EchoRealty where we believe in everyone's right to live in a secure home and be part of an inclusive community.

EchoRealty is an award-winning real estate agency and Tier-2 Community Housing Provider specialising in Affordable Housing management. Our purpose is to enable more people in need to live in quality and affordable homes in thriving and inclusive communities.

We are committed to offering you an exceptional standard of customer service and treating you with respect, dignity and fairness at all times. Our exceptional team have a combined over 75 years of property expertise and are passionate about helping our clients achieve their property goals, whether it be through renting, developing or investing.

The supportive team at EchoRealty will work with you to provide opportunities for choice and inclusion in your new tenancy while supporting your independence and ability to exercise choice and control in the pursuit of your goals and personalised support services.

This handbook has been designed to give you all the general information to help you settle into your new home with ease. If you find that you have any questions at any point during your tenancy with us, please feel free to call our contact centre on 1800 693 246 or get in touch with your Property Manager.

Kind regards,

Lyall Gorman, CEO Evolve Housing



About us

EchoRealty is a profit-for-purpose provider specialising in affordable property management. The team have a combined 75+ years of property expertise and are driven by our purpose of enabling more people in need to live in quality and affordable homes in thriving and inclusive communities.

The incredible team at EchoRealty go above and beyond for our tenants and believe that everyone deserves safe, stable, and secure housing. The ability to assist and house residents in affordable properties with fair property management practices enables them to achieve financial stability, relieving them from the financial and housing stress faced by many Australians.

EchoRealty stands out by reinvesting all profits to help grow the supply of affordable housing in NSW while going beyond best practice as a profit-for-purpose real estate.

Our commitment to our clients extends beyond property management, as we also offer them access to ongoing support, educational and social opportunities. Our purpose is to enable more people in need to live in quality homes in thriving and inclusive communities and we work tirelessly to ensure our client's property experience is as smooth, transparent and successful as possible.

Our Values

INSPIRATION

We approach opportunities and challenges with creativity and enthusiasm. We encourage those around us to imagine, learn, innovate and do things better.

HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

We are honest, fair and ethical in all interactions. We do the right things for the right reasons all the time.

EMPATHY

We are aware of and sensitive to the feelings and perspectives of others and use that understanding to guide our actions.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPECT

We act with professionalism and take responsibility for our decisions and actions while treating others how we would like to be treated. We value and encourage individuality and diversity.

Our Purpose

Our purpose is to enable more people in need to live in quality homes in thriving and inclusive communities

Who We Are

EchoRealty (EchoRealty NSW & ACT Limited, ERNAL) is an award-winning real estate agency and a Tier-2 Community Housing Provider specialising in Affordable Housing management. Here at EchoRealty, our purpose is to enable more people in need to live in quality and affordable homes in thriving and inclusive communities.



02

Your tenancy with EchoRealty

As your affordable housing provider, EchoRealty will work with you to manage your rent and maintain the property you're living in. We also offer support programs and run social events and activities to get you involved in your community.

A new home checklist will be provided to you once you have signed your tenancy agreement. This checklist will ensure you have all required paperwork and understand what is required of you.

Whether you're in NSW or the ACT, each state has its own legislative requirements. Please ensure you look at the correct one. If you have any problems, speak to your Property Manager.



For more information, please visit echorealty.com.au.

NSW Home Checklist



To help you get started in your new home, we will provide you with:

- One copy of the lease agreement
- Two copies of the completed condition report. One is for you to keep and one is for you to return to us after you've completed it
- One set of keys to the property
- One Payway card to pay rent and non-rent charges (however we strongly recommend direct debit).

Property condition report

The property condition report is to record the condition the property is in before you move in. It is then compared to the condition of the property when you move out. Therefore, it is very important you fill it in carefully when you first move in. If you need help completing it, please let your property manager know and they will gladly assist you.

When filling out the report, please ensure that you:

- Check that you agree with what is shown on the report
- Add anything about the property that is not shown on the report
- Add photos or videos to support your report, if you would like to do so.
- If any damage occurs to the property, please notify us immediately.

ACT New Home Checklist



To help you get started in your new home, we will provide you with:

- One copy of the lease agreement
- Two hard copies, or one electronic copy of the completed condition report. One is for you to keep and one is for you to return to us after you've completed it
- One set of keys to the property
- One way to pay the rent that does not involve paying a fee to a third party.

Property Condition Report

A landlord or real estate agent is required to give you two copies of the condition report no later than the day after you move in. Condition reports must be substantially the same as the form published by the ACT Government.

When filling out the report, please ensure that you:

- Check to see if you agree with the report. If you disagree with the report, make comments on the report about which parts you disagree with and why
- Send a signed copy (with your comments, if any) back to the landlord or agent
- You must send the report back within two weeks
- You might wish to take photos of the condition of the property, and in particular any signs of damage or parts of the condition report with which you disagree. Photos or videos can be attached to the condition report when you send it back.

Residential Tenancy Agreement



A Residential Tenancy Agreement will be prepared and presented to you by your new property manager. The agreement will include important details including

- Tenant names
- Weekly rent amounts
- Lease terms
- Pet approvals (if applicable).

This agreement will also outline each party's legal obligations and it is important to read and understand this document prior to signing.

03

How your tenancy works

Understanding your rent

EchoRealty understands the struggles faced by Australians trying to secure a home and not being able to pay private market rents.

When you are renting a property through EchoRealty, the majority of our portfolio is discounted by an average of 20% depending on the affordable housing property program. Relevant applicants will need to meet key eligibility criteria, which may vary between properties.

Examples of affordable housing programs offered include properties delivered through the Housing State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP), Council and Public Authorities and Essential Worker Affordable Housing Programs.



Property Programs

EchoRealty offers a variety of property programs to help Australians enter the property market.

Essential Worker Affordable Housing is a program offered through EchoRealty for people who work in essential industries such as aged care, health care, education, emergency services, law enforcement and childcare.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing is another program that is offered in which the key criteria is that the applicant must be of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent and able to supply supporting documentation.

EchoRealty manages affordable housing properties on behalf of **Councils and public authorities**. This type of housing is for workers within certain local government areas and eligibility criteria varies depending on property type and location. EchoRealty manages the affordable housing portfolios of the City of Parramatta Council, Willoughby City Council and Bayside City Council.

Private market housing is also offered through EchoRealty without the affordable housing obligation. No matter the property type, our team will work tirelessly to support our clients with their enviable depth of knowledge and experience.

Rent review

Every year, EchoRealty is required to review your household circumstances to understand if your rent needs to increase or decrease. For your tenancy to continue with us, we will send you a form in the mail and it's important that you complete and return this to us before the listed due date.

A letter will be sent to you via email or post prior to the anniversary of the first initial household income assessment that would've been made when you were first approved for the property.

At any time if you cannot pay your rent, please contact your Property Manager to discuss how we can help.

Being a good neighbour

All residents have the right to live peacefully in their property and in harmony with their neighbours. We encourage all residents to work together to build a positive community where they live.

A letter will be sent to you via email or post prior to the anniversary of the first initial household income assessment that would've been made when you were first approved for the property.

Information about how to engage a mediator can be found here:

<https://www.cjc.justice.nsw.gov.au/>



If your safety is at risk, or if you believe someone has broken the law, please call the police on 000 (or call your local police station if the matter is not urgent).



Pets



In some situations, tenants can have a pet live with them in their home. There are conditions regarding the type of animal and the type of housing you're living in. To understand if a pet is allowed in your property, please contact your Property Manager.



When it's time to leave your property

When you are ready to move out, you must give us notice in line with your tenancy agreement. When you do move, please ensure that the property is completely clean, and no rubbish or personal items remain.

Leaving the property

To complete your tenancy agreement, you and your Property Manager will do a walk through and inspection of the property together.

You will compare the condition to what was written on the property condition report when you first moved in. This is why the property condition report is important to complete carefully when you first move in.

Providing feedback

There are different ways you can provide feedback to us or contribute to making our service better.

- Every year, we ask our residents to participate in a Tenant Satisfaction Survey. This survey aims to gather information on how residents are experiencing our services and how we can improve.
- If you would like to make a complaint about the service EchoRealty has provided (or a company hired by EchoRealty), please talk to an EchoRealty staff member, call **1800 693 246** or email **ihear@echorealty.com.au**.

04



Home Repairs & Maintenance

EchoRealty will ensure the property you live in is safe and secure. We are committed to maintaining a standard of service that ensures our residents are comfortable in their homes, therefore, property maintenance is always high on our agenda. As a property ages, different repairs and maintenance are required to ensure it remains in a good condition.

You can promptly report a repair online through your tenant portal and provide all necessary information for our assessment.

Your login details will be provided to you upon signing your lease with EchoRealty. If you are unsure of your login details, please contact our office and our experienced team will be able to assist you.

<https://client.propertytree.com/login>

Reporting an URGENT Repair



EchoRealty's office hours are 9am–5pm Monday to Friday. For non-urgent repairs, please lodge your report through the tenant portal at any time. If you have already reported a repair and would like an update, please contact our office, and our customer experience officers will be able to assist you with your request.

**For URGENT repair requests ONLY,
please contact 1800 693 246.**

**For URGENT repair requests ONLY,
please contact 1800 693 246**



A list of repairs classified as URGENT include:

- A burst water service
- A blocked or broken toilet
- A serious roof leak
- A gas leak
- A dangerous electrical fault
- Flooding or serious flood damage
- Serious storm or fire damage
- A failure or breakdown of the gas, electricity, or water supply to the residential premises
- A failure or breakdown of any essential service on the residential premises for hot water, cooking, heating or cooling
- Any fault or damage that causes the residential premises to be unsafe or insecure.

Not all repairs are urgent



Not all repairs are considered the same. To make sure we attend to all repairs, we separate them by how urgent the repair need is. In some emergencies, such as a burst water pipe inside your property, **we will access the property without your consent if we cannot contact you immediately.**

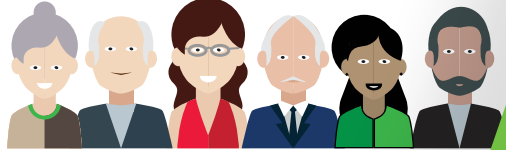
As part of your tenancy, you are required to maintain your property, ensuring it is kept clean and tidy at all times. An example of this may be keeping your property well-ventilated so that it is free of mould, ensuring any lawns or grounds that you have are well maintained, and that any property damage caused by you, or a member of your household is repaired.

If you have any questions about repairs or maintenance, please contact us.

For more information about repairs visit:
echorealty.com.au/all-about-repairs

05

Your community



Tenant Portal

As a client of EchoRealty, you have access to our Information Management System portal. The portal provides you with 24x7 online access to important information about your tenancy.

Features include:

- Secure access to your information
- Accessible 24/7 from anywhere
- An organised customer-centric communication system
- Access your tenant portal via web browser or via app (Android and IOS)
- New maintenance & status requests including image download to support your request
- Access to upcoming events
- Access to your most recent rent receipts
- Rental information
- Ability to update your personal information
- Ability to retrieve your username and password access or change your password.

Please contact your Property Manager directly for information and login details to access this online portal, or contact us by phoning **1800 693 246** or emailing **info@echorealty.com.au**.

EchoLIVING Magazine

EchoRealty publishes the EchoLIVING Magazine twice a year. EchoLIVING is an exciting feature magazine that you'll receive by email. It features property listings, featured stories, helpful hints, and programs available to our residents.



Take a look at our EchoLIVING Magazine here:
echorealty.com.au/echoliving-magazine



Support programs

Through EchoRealty's parent company Evolve Housing, tenants have access to grants and support programs tailored to individual circumstances.

Go! Grants

The Go Grants Program provides financial support to children participating in physical and cultural activities. EchoRealty can provide eligible residents with grants of up to \$700 for children (under 18 years) to participate in physical or cultural activities including sports, scouts, and cultural dance. This program enables school aged children in EchoRealty households to participate in programs that contribute to their health and wellbeing while ensuring they remain connected to their local community.

Personal Support Plans

The Personal Support Plans is another service where tenants can be referred to the Evolve Housing Support team who have dedicated caseworkers who will work with tenants to create tailored support plans that match their needs.

If you would like to find out more, please call 1800 693 246.

For more information about our programs, please visit:
echorealty.com.au/tenancy-information/our-community-support-programs/

Keep connected with us

We'd love to stay connected with you so be sure to follow us on our accounts below.

Please visit our website and social media pages:



echorealty.com.au



facebook.com/echorealtyau



linkedin.com/echorealty





DOING PROPERTY DIFFERENTLY

LEADERS IN AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

CONTACT INFORMATION

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