

Safer Families Assistance Program 2018 (No 1)

Disallowable Instrument DI2018-271

made under the

Housing Assistance Act 2007, s 19 (1) (Approved housing assistance programs)

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

The Safer Families Assistance Program 2018 (No 1) (the program) is designed to assist people seeking to escape family violence to establish or sustain a family home, and related expenses, through the provision of \$2000 worth of assistance. This program is designed to support victims of family violence who stay in their home as well as those who are forced to flee their home.

The program acknowledges the impact family violence has on victims and that this impact affects the ongoing safety and stability of their home. The scope of assistance available under this program for eligible items recognises that there are costs incurred due to domestic violence events that impede victim's abilities to successfully sustain or re-establish homes. These costs include, but are not limited to, costs relating to pet care and accommodation and costs associated with children's activities that help the child to regain a sense of normality.

Section 19(1) of the *Housing Assistance Act 2007* provides for the establishment of a housing assistance program which is approved by the Minister.

Details of the Safer Families Assistance Program 2018 (No 1)

Clauses 1, 2, 3 and 4 are formal requirements. These clauses refer to the name of the program, the commencement date of the program, the object of the program and defines particular terms used in the instrument.

Clause 5 and 6 enable the housing commissioner to make determinations and operation guidelines for the program.

Clause 7 establishes the amount of assistance the housing commissioner may provide to an eligible applicant for the purposes of establishing or sustaining the family home. This clause also describes (but does not limit) a range of activities that are establishing or sustaining the family home.

Clause 8 allows, but does not require an application to be an approved form. This clause also describes who may refer an application for safer families assistance.

Clause 9 refers to the eligibility criteria and income thresholds for safer families assistance under the program. Under clause 9(4), unless the Commissioner decides otherwise, this clause also restricts

people from accessing safer families assistance who are already receiving another form of housing assistance, other than rental bond loan assistance.

Clause 10 provides the housing commissioner with discretion to disregard the eligibility under clause 9 if in the housing commissioner's view the applicant is experiencing hardship.

Clauses 11 and 12 describes how the commissioner determines income for the purpose of the program.

Clauses 13 enables the housing commissioner to seek further information from an applicant relating to clauses 8, 9 and 10.

Clauses 14, 15 and 16 outline the process for a review of decision under this program and when an application may be made to the ACAT regarding a decision made under the program.