

Question on Notice
No. 601
Asked on Wednesday, 17 June 2020

MR M HART ASKED MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND PUBLIC WORKS; MINISTER FOR DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY; MINISTER FOR SPORT (HON M DE BRENNI)

With reference to applications for housing assistance—

Will the Minister advise how many applications were on the housing register for each month from November 2019 to present (reported in table format from lower to very high under housing need)?

ANSWER

Through the Service Delivery Transformation, the Department of Housing and Public Works is implementing reforms as part of the *Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2027* to enable more responsive, person-centred services, including business process simplification to intake, assessment and allocation of housing assistance through the implementation of Pathway Planning for customers.

The department continues to manage the housing register for social housing, which represents people seeking social housing assistance from the department and non-government providers.

Eligible applicants for social housing continue to be allocated properties from the housing register, based on their application date; the nature and complexity of their housing needs, and match to an available property.

This approach ensures households with higher and more complex need are allocated to social rental housing ahead of people with lower, less complex needs, continuing the consistently high level of allocations to households with greatest need.

The *Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2027* is the government's long-term agenda for improving housing outcomes for Queenslanders. Driving reforms to ensure those most in need are supported by a safety net of targeted interventions, flexible packages of support, supportive social housing and genuine wraparound services.

The department works proactively with all customers to access the right services at the right time, including people on the housing register, in addressing their immediate housing needs with other solutions. This includes support into the private rental market with bond loans, rental grants and RentConnect services.

The coordination of housing assistance with customers experiencing multiple and complex needs is delivered with a strong focus on partnerships, referral pathways, support to navigate systems and a multi-agency response, broadening our service offer across the housing continuum.

The department also provides a number of private rental market products which are designed to stabilise private market tenancies and enable customers to build a positive rental history, contributing to the department's commitment to providing safe, secure and affordable housing for Queenslanders. This includes support for seniors and people with disabilities to undertake critical home maintenance that help maintain independence. These are already delivering successful housing outcomes for people.

Households may access private market solutions, while still remaining on the housing register and also as households' circumstances change their level of housing need is reviewed.

Importantly, many of those who have registered interest on the housing register have already been assisted to address their immediate housing needs with other solutions such as:

- bond loans, bond loan plus and rental grants;
- other support into the private rental market through RentConnect, including tenancy assist and tenancy guarantees; or
- transitional housing.

Often these products are better placed to meet their immediate needs, particularly households with moderate and lower needs, which in turn removes their need for allocation to social housing. It is anticipated that over time more Queenslanders will be assisted to find housing solutions across the housing continuum and that social housing will not be the only answer.

The department has also responded to the COVID-19 pandemic through the \$24.7 million Housing & Homelessness COVID-19 Immediate Response, providing temporary accommodation, brokerage, outreach and other support to people experiencing homelessness, while protecting vulnerable people and supporting public health outcomes. Across Queensland, we have been working closely with our sector partners to support people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and have supported 2,414 families and individuals with emergency housing assistance (as at 9 July 2020).

The pandemic period has seen an increased demand on housing services. The department has continued the provision of these services to the community by adapting current service models in line with Queensland Health advice.

Housing Register, Queensland: Number of applications by Level of Need as at specified date

Data Date	Level of need				Total
	Very High	High	Moderate	Lower	
31-May-20	14,182	6,289	4,522	620	25,613
30-Apr-20	13,704	6,498	4,606	624	25,432
31-Mar-20	13,312	6,726	4,727	637	25,402
29-Feb-20	12,753	6,885	4,810	653	25,101
31-Jan-20	12,433	7,112	4,894	664	25,103
31-Dec-19	12,136	7,315	4,984	671	25,106
30-Nov-19	11,871	7,503	5,041	676	25,091