

Minimum accommodation requirements checklist

Accommodation for Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme workers must meet the following requirements. Please note this is intended as a quick reference guide only. Employers must refer to the relevant clauses of the [PALM scheme Deed of Agreement](#) and [PALM scheme Approved Employer Guidelines](#) and ensure all requirements outlined in those documents are met.

Fair and good value

- The cost must be fair and provide good value for money and be comparable to market rates.
- Any bond deducted must be registered with the appropriate authority.
- The weekly cost is to be divided equally among all occupants whether they are PALM scheme or non-PALM scheme occupants.

Costs are transparent

- The basis for the rent charged must be provided in the accommodation plan, including a breakdown of the costs. Accommodation, rental charges and inclusions must be at cost and not include or reflect cost of labour or profit margins.
- Where considering value for money, 'like for like' properties in the region will be considered if possible. Employers must ensure accommodation costs are comparable to local market rates.
- The cost of accommodation must be communicated clearly to the workers in the offer of employment with an explanation of what is included (e.g. rent, utilities, cleaning).
- Adequate, decent housing should not cost workers more than a reasonable proportion of their income.

Fit for purpose and in good condition

The accommodation and its amenities, furnishings and inclusions must be commensurate with the safety, comfort and convenience of the number of occupants within it. The accommodation must:

- be fit for occupation and use at the time of entry
- comply with any WHS legislation and state and territory government/local government legislation and codes that may apply to such accommodation (e.g. fire safety, overcrowding)
- be clean, sanitary and tidy at the time of arrival of workers
- have piped water supply, including hot water, that is continuously available and safe for drinking, cooking, bathing and washing
- have adequate facilities to store food safely, cook and eat (including stove, refrigerator and other electrical appliances, cooking pots/pans, cooking utensils, crockery, cutlery and drinkware)
 - kitchen and dining facilities must be adequate for the number of workers and duration of stay (full kitchen facilities not required if catering is supplied)
- have adequate heating, cooling and ventilation as required suitable to the local climate
- have access to adequate laundry (washing and drying) facilities for the number of workers
- be maintained in good condition.

Accessible, safe and secure

The accommodation must:

- allow 24-hour access
- be lockable by the occupants
- ensure any house rules are reasonable, non-discriminatory and clearly communicated
- where the dwelling will accommodate both male and female workers, provide separate bathroom facilities with lockable doors for single men and women
- provide separate lockable storage for each worker's valuables
- ensure any entry of the premises by third parties for the purposes or repairs, maintenance or inspection is done with prior notice to workers unless invited by the worker(s) or it's an emergency.

PALM scheme workers are able to arrange their own accommodation

- Workers may elect to arrange their own accommodation at their own cost.
- Employers must not coerce any worker into arranging their own accommodation. If any worker chooses to arrange their own accommodation, this decision must be made under their own free will.

Other requirements

The accommodation must:

- have adequate bathroom facilities for the number of workers
 - as a minimum, there must be one toilet, hand basin, and shower (or bathtub with shower facilities) for every 10 workers (or part thereof)
 - portable toilets cannot be provided to meet minimum requirements
 - transportable toilet blocks may be acceptable, such as dongas
- provide uncrowded sleeping areas for all workers - there should be a reasonable walking space between beds, the exits and storage
 - sleeping areas must not be set up in shared spaces such as living rooms or kitchens
- provide a separate bed with a base or bed frame, comfortable and clean mattress, pillow and linen for each worker
 - bunk beds should be minimised, triple bunks are prohibited
 - where bunk beds are provided, there must be enough clear space between the upper and lower bunks, and the upper bunk and the ceiling and any fixtures on the ceiling (such as lights and fans) or walls (such as air conditioners and lights)
- provide workers with suitable storage for personal items (e.g. wardrobes, dressers, built-in robes)
- provide means for communication via telephone (mobile or landline with international calling) or internet (Wi-Fi) to communicate with the families back home
- have appropriate window coverings in good working order in all sleeping and bathroom areas to ensure worker's privacy
- have adequate collective social and rest spaces across common areas, including sufficient comfortable seating for the number of workers (i.e. one seat for each worker).

