



Homelessness Week 2021

Supporter Pack

Everybody needs a home
[#HomelessnessWeek21](#)



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#EverybodyNeedsAHome
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Homelessness Week

1-7 August 2021

About Homelessness Week

What is Homelessness Week?

In Australia, there are over 116,000 people experiencing homelessness on any given night.

Homelessness Week aims to raise awareness of the causes and impact of homelessness via national and local community events. This includes providing information on the importance of housing as a solution and educating communities on how they can make a difference.

How do I get involved?

Homelessness Week provides an opportunity to bring the issue of homelessness onto the agendas of local, state, and national governments.

In the lead-up to and during Homelessness Week, individuals, and organisations are encouraged to get involved by running campaigns, hosting events, and sharing messages to help end homelessness.

This pack contains information and resources to support your Homelessness Week activities. If you have any questions or comments please contact admin@homelessnessaustralia.org.au.

What is the theme for Homelessness Week 2021?

The theme for Homelessness Week 2021 is **Everybody needs a home**.

Housing is more than just shelter. An adequate home is foundational to living a healthy life with safety, security, and a sense of wellbeing.

This year's Homelessness Week theme reflects the urgent need for social and affordable housing across the country, and aims to highlight the structural changes required to fix Australia's housing system and end homelessness.

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Supporting Homelessness Week 2021

Attend the Homelessness Week 2021 launch event

Join Homelessness Australia at the official launch of Homelessness Week 2021 on Monday 2 August, with Homelessness Australia Chair Jenny Smith and a line-up of expert speakers. **Find more information about the event and register here.**

You can find other events from across the country as they are added to the **Homelessness Australia website** in the coming weeks.

Host an event

In the lead-up to and during Homelessness Week, you are encouraged to plan an event with your community, local network, parliamentarians, or homelessness service.

Check the tips in this pack on hosting an event and be sure to **register your event with Homelessness Australia** including the event name, date, time, location, and a short description.

Support the Everybody's Home action

This Homelessness Week, Everybody's Home is launching a digital action about housing for women and children fleeing violence, and is encouraging individuals and organisations to speak to their MPs about Australia's housing crisis and how to fix it.

Join the campaign at **everybodyshome.com.au** to get updates on the latest actions. You can also find resources within this pack to support your advocacy with MPs.

Join the conversation

Help amplify the messages of Homelessness Week, and share your stories about homelessness and Australia's housing crisis using the hashtags **#HomelessnessWeek21** and **#EverybodyNeedsAHome**. You can find messaging and resources in this pack to support your communications.

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Homelessness Week

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Hosting a Homelessness Week event

Hosting an event during Homelessness Week is a great way to raise awareness of homelessness and Australia's housing crisis.

In the lead-up to and during Homelessness Week, you are encouraged to plan an event with your community, local network, parliamentarians, or homelessness service.

Event ideas

Some ideas from Homelessness Week events in previous years include:

Invite people with lived experience of homelessness to a morning tea, team meeting, or workshop as a speaker.

Arrange an exhibition of art, photography, or other works created by people who have lived experience of homelessness.

Run a forum or panel discussion – be sure to include people with lived experience of homelessness as speakers.

Host a breakfast, morning tea, or lunch for clients, workers, or the community.

Organise an expo event bringing together various services and resources aimed to support people in need.

Deliver a presentation to a school or community group.

Host a conversation about home and why it's so important with people in your community, including those with lived experience of homelessness.

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Hosting a Homelessness Week event cont'd

Things to consider

- How will you let people know about your event? Think about who you would like to attend and plan your advertising accordingly. **Register your event with Homelessness Australia** to help maximise attendance.

TIP: Create invitations and posters with the details of your event and circulate to your network through newsletters, websites, email, and offices or community buildings. If you are using social media, tag people or organisations who you would like to attend.

- How can you create the biggest impact? Use your event to build political influence by inviting your local MP and media to attend. If you want speakers from the community or organisations at your event, connect with them as early as possible.
- When will your event be held? Ideally your event will be held during Homelessness Week, but be sure to check any clashes with other community events or commitments.

TIP: Homelessness Week 2021 coincides with Parliamentary sitting dates, so if you are planning to invite an MP to your event, consider hosting it prior to Homelessness Week. **Check the Federal Parliament sitting calendar here** and check your state government website for local dates.

- Where will you host your event? Will it be held in-person, online, or a mixture of both? Review the current Covid-19 restrictions and consider the potential for this to change at short notice.

TIP: If your event is in-person, consider setting up a live-stream on Zoom for those who are unable to attend. For a quick introduction to Zoom, **register for a 30-minute tour** (Monday to Friday) or **watch recorded training sessions** for more advanced Zoom tools.

- Do you need volunteers or donations to help with your event? Many local community members or businesses are happy to get involved.

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Hosting a Homelessness Week event cont'd

Attracting media attention to your event

If you are holding a Homelessness Week event, consider inviting local media to attend. The best way to let media know of your event is by sending a media release via email, with a follow-up phone call.

TIP: Draft a media release with the basic details of the event – include key facts and quotes, and don't forget to include a contact name and number.

Contact details for your local newspaper can be found in the print version of the paper (usually on the inside first page).

Local newspapers will want to print the story during Homelessness Week (newspapers usually come out on a Wednesday), so provide them with a photo opportunity in the week prior for it to appear in print during Homelessness Week.

TIP: A strong photo opportunity is one of the best tools for gaining media coverage. Inviting your local MP can support this.

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Meeting with your MP

This Homelessness Week, individuals and organisations are encouraged to speak to their MP about homelessness and housing.

Arranging a meeting with your MP can be highly effective in putting homelessness and housing on the agenda. It's a chance to raise concerns, address questions, and set actions for change.

Before the meeting

- Research your MP and check records of the issues in which they have expressed an interest.
- Be aware of the agenda and language currently being used by Government and other political parties, and tailor your approach and tone to be in-tune with the person you are lobbying.
- Make initial contact in writing (email or letter) including a brief outline of why you want to meet and what you want to discuss. If you haven't heard back in ten days, follow up politely by phone.
- About a week before your meeting, send through briefing material from a trusted source, and also take the material with you and hand it to the MP in the meeting.
- Get prepared to answer questions — make a note of any anticipated questions and your responses.

TIP: If you plan to meet with an MP, get in touch with Everybody's Home via andrea@chp.org.au as early as possible for additional support and to coordinate key messages.

During the meeting

- If possible, have someone take notes so you can record action points and observations.
- MPs aren't necessarily experts on homelessness, so aim to position yourself as an authority helping them to understand the issues. However, you won't have time to explain every complexity, so stay concise in your message.

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Meeting with your MP cont'd

- Provide facts about the rates of homelessness and housing affordability in your MP's electorate, and how building more social housing would create both safe homes and jobs.

TIP: Use the Everybody's Home **Homelessness heat maps** to source information about homelessness and social housing need in local electorates.

- Ideally tell a story about a particular client and/or bring a person with lived experience of homelessness with you.
- Be positive in your approach, remembering that you are there to shape government policy rather than criticise it.

At the end of the meeting

- Invite the MP to your Homelessness Week event or arrange for them to visit your organisation's homelessness service to meet workers and/or clients.
- Get to know the name and contact details of the MP's staffer, as you will likely be following up with them.
- Thank the MP for their time, confirm any action points you have agreed upon, and ask them to keep you informed of progress.

After the meeting

- In the weeks after the meeting, follow up with the MP on any commitments or action points made.
- Write about your experience in your website, newsletter, or other communications.
- Give yourself a huge congratulations on taking action to put homelessness and housing firmly on the political agenda!

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Writing to your MP

Writing to your MP is something everyone can do to raise concerns about homelessness and housing — particularly if you don't have the resources or the time to meet with them.

How to write to your MP

- **Find the contact details for your MP** and research their involvement and interest with your issue.
- Keep your letter short and concise. Prepare three to five key points, and include facts and figures where possible. Signposting to further reading or local coverage of the issue is always useful.

TIP: Many advocacy organisations will have template letters to support your writing. Contact Everybody's Home via andrea@chp.org.au if you require support for Homelessness Week 2021.

- Be polite and adapt your tone to the person you are addressing. For example, if your MP is interested in creating jobs, you can focus on why social housing is good for the economy.
- Request the MP to take a specific action — **find out what you can ask your MP to do**.
- Request a reply and include your contact details. If you haven't received a reply within a month, you can follow up with a phone call.

Writing to your MP checklist

Have you...

- Used the correct title for your MP? Find out **how to address Senators and Members**.
- Stated a clear purpose in the opening paragraph? "I am writing to you to discuss..."
- Kept your letter to one to two pages?
- Included your contact details to get a reply? Don't forget to include the date of your letter.

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Messaging for Homelessness Week

During Homelessness Week, you are encouraged to share your stories and insights on homelessness and Australia's housing crisis. You may find the following messaging useful for your communications. You can gather additional and/or localised information using links in the 'Useful resources' section of this document.

Facts about homelessness

- On any given night, 116,000 people in Australia are experiencing homelessness.
- A lack of affordable and secure housing is the number one reason for people seeking homelessness support in Australia — for women and children, family and domestic violence is the number one reason.
- Over 1.5 million Australians live on JobSeeker or Youth Allowance, but 0% of rentals are affordable to them.
- There is currently a 433,400 shortfall of social housing dwellings across Australia, impacting every electorate. Check your electorate with the **Everybody's Home Homelessness heat maps**.
- In the past 12 months, national house rents have increased by 15.1% — while the proportion of social housing has declined.
- Building social housing would help end homelessness and create jobs. Building 30,000 homes over four years could create up to 18,000 jobs per year.

Homelessness is not 'rooflessness'

Only 7% of people without a home are sleeping rough. The vast majority of homelessness is hidden - people in crisis accommodation, rooming houses, insecure housing, overcrowded dwellings, or couchsurfing. **A home means security, stability, privacy, safety, and being able to control your space.**

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Messaging for Homelessness Week cont'd

Suggested social posts for Homelessness Week

You are welcome to use the following suggested posts on your social accounts during Homelessness Week — feel free to adapt to suit your preferred tone and add imagery or graphics.

Please use the hashtags **#HomelessnessWeek21** and **#EverybodyNeedsAHome**. You can also tag Homelessness Australia on Twitter **@HomelessnessAus**

It's #HomelessnessWeek21 and right now, 116,000 Australians are experiencing homelessness. We need commitment from all levels of government to build social and affordable housing. #Auspol #EverybodyNeedsAHome

This #HomelessnessWeek21, join the call to fix Australia's housing crisis and help end homelessness because #EverybodyNeedsAHome. Get involved via the Everybody's Home campaign: www.everybodyshome.com.au

Rents in Australia have soared by 15.1% in just one year, while the proportion of social housing has declined. Without action, more people will struggle to afford rent and be at risk of homelessness. #HomelessnessWeek21 #EverybodyNeedsAHome

Homelessness is a structural failing, not a personal one. A lack of affordable and secure housing is the number one reason for people seeking homelessness support in Australia. #HomelessnessWeek21 #EverybodyNeedsAHome

Over 1.5 million Australians live on JobSeeker or Youth Allowance, but 0% of rentals are affordable to them. #HomelessnessWeek21 #EverybodyNeedsAHome

Family and domestic violence should never end in homelessness, yet it is the number one reason for women and children seeking homelessness support in Australia. #HomelessnessWeek21 #EverybodyNeedsAHome

#EverybodyNeedsAHome
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Digital assets and posters

Homelessness Australia has developed a range of assets to support your communications during Homelessness Week. You are encouraged to download and distribute to your organisation and networks. Feel free to place your own organisation's logo on the designs.

[Click here for a full suite of social files, digital assets, and posters.](#)

Social files

A range of share graphics sized for Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.



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Digital assets

Website banners and an email signature to display leading up to and during Homelessness Week.

Support #HomelessnessWeek21
1-7 August 2021
homelessnessaustralia.org.au

Posters

A4 posters to print and display in physical locations.



homelessnessaustralia.org.au
#EverybodyNeedsAHome



#EverybodyNeedsAHome
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Useful resources

Homelessness factsheets

A range of information on issues relating to homelessness and what is needed to address them.
www.homelessnessaustralia.org.au/homelessness-resources

Make your MP work for you

Resources from Oxfam on writing to your MP, visiting your MP, and what you can ask them to do.
www.oxfam.org.au/get-involved/campaign-with-us/make-your-mp-work-for-you

Homelessness heat maps

Heat maps from Everybody's Home containing localised information on homelessness and housing.
www.everybodyshome.com.au/heat-maps

Housing Assistance in Australia

Data about housing assistance in Australia from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
www.aihw.gov.au/reports/housing-assistance/housing-assistance-in-australia

Rental Affordability snapshot

Snapshot of housing affordability in Australia released yearly by Anglicare Australia
www.anglicare.asn.au/publications/rental-affordability-snapshot-2021

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For more information

For more information visit www.homelessnessaustralia.org/homelessness-week
or contact admin@homelessnessaustralia.org.au.

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