



## Housing and homelessness funding amounts to crumbs

Homelessness NSW says the government's \$224 million housing package amounts to crumbs and barely scratches the surface of the state's homelessness crisis.

"We should not let the pursuit of budget savings punish the state's most vulnerable people by putting off meaningful investment in housing and homelessness," said HNSW A/CEO Amy Hains.

"We need to be honest about the scale of the challenge and the need for significant new investment – not window-dressing commitments.

"NSW does not need more vehicles for housing and homelessness finance; we need direct investment – now – in housing and services at a scale that is going to make a real difference in this crisis."

NSW has a shortage of 221,500 social and affordable homes, rents are hitting record highs and demand for homelessness services soared 10 per cent in the first three months of this year.

"The \$5.9 million in homelessness services funding still leaves frontline services facing a huge funding shortfall given the increased cost of delivering services," said Ms Hains.

"The reality is, services need \$50 million over two years to ensure they can continue operating and are not forced to make heartbreaking decisions about who to turn away."

HNSW had called for a 10 per cent funding boost to homelessness services, \$400 million to build and acquire more social housing, and \$50 million for the Together Home program that has helped house more than 1000 rough sleepers since 2020.

"The \$11 million allocated for Together Home means that hundreds of rough sleepers will miss out on the chance to access safe, stable and secure housing," said Ms Hains.

"Social housing has suffered from decades of underinvestment. The \$70 million to build more social and affordable housing, and \$35 million to maintain existing stock barely scratches the surface of what's needed to reverse this.

"Failing to invest sufficiently in social housing will only result in higher demand for hospitals, police and other community services because vulnerable people do not have access to a safe and stable home.

"More and more people are being priced out of the private rental market amid tough competition for a tight supply of homes. Building enough social housing will ease this pressure, ultimately helping bring down rents and reducing homelessness."