**REQUEST FOR FIRST TIER REVIEW**

[the names and facts in this letter are fictional]

**The decision**

On 7 March 2021, Jane Smith lodged an application for social housing at the Maroubra office of DCJ Housing. Jane had been given a notice of termination from her private rental property and she and her two children were at risk of homelessness.

On 10 April 2021, Jane received a letter from DCJ Housing telling her that her application for social housing had been approved and that her application had been listed on the Housing Register as ‘wait turn’. The letter said that Jane had not been approved for priority housing because she could resolve her housing needs in the private rental market.

**Reasons for reviewing the decision**

Jane is a 37-year-old woman with two children, aged 4 and 7 years old. Jane was living in a private rental at 1 Bondi Street Bondi Junction NSW 2022, having fled domestic and family violence perpetrated by her former partner. On 1 March 2021, Jane received a notice of termination from her landlord on the grounds of rent arrears and Jane’s tenancy was terminated by the NSW Civil & Administrative Tribunal on 28 March 2021.

Jane and her children are currently staying in a refuge in the eastern suburbs and are effectively homeless.

Jane lives with post traumatic stress disorder and chronic depression, having experienced serious and sustained family and domestic violence over a number of years. Jane has a number of doctors and supports in the eastern suburbs area and maintaining access to those supports is important for her mental and physical health.

Jane’s supports in the eastern suburbs area include:

* Dr John Smyth, general practitioner in Bondi Junction.
* Dr Susan Williams, a registered psychologist in Waverley.
* Bondi Families Support Service, who provide Jane with counselling and a support group.

Jane’s oldest child Dana, attends the local state primary school in Waverley. She is part of an assisted learning program that helps her with reading and writing. The school counsellor’s view is that it is very important for Dana’s wellbeing and learning for her to maintain her connection with the school and the learning assistance program.

Jane has made considerable attempts to secure a private rental property within her affordability of $370 per week. Jane has attended local real estate agents and has applications for a number of properties rejected. Jane has been told by the letting agents that it is very unlikely that they will have suitable properties for her at a rent that she can afford.

Jane lives with ongoing medical conditions that require her to engage with ongoing support services. Those conditions also limited her ability to obtain housing from the private market. Jane conditions are serious, and it is through longstanding contact with trusted doctors and support services that she is able to manage her mental health. It is very important that Jane can maintain her connection with her supports, whose treatment has a direct benefit on Jane’s health. Also, Dana directly benefits from access to her school’s learning assistance program, and this assistance would not necessarily be available if the family are forced to move out of the area.

Without an approval for priority housing and the prospect of being offered a social housing property, Jane and her children are at risk of long-term homelessness. The impact on the family would be serious and detrimental to their physical and mental wellbeing.

For the reasons above, Jane asks that DCJ Housing review their original decision and approve her social housing application for priority housing.