



Australian Government

Resilient Families; Strong Communities

North-West Aboriginal Housing Fund

What is the North-West Aboriginal Housing Fund?

The North-West Aboriginal Housing Fund is a major initiative of the State Government's regional services reform to improve the lives of Aboriginal people in regional and remote Western Australia. It is one of 10 priority actions in the 'Resilient Families; Strong Communities' roadmap.

Through a range of projects, the Fund aims to create a pathway for the economic empowerment of Aboriginal people in the Kimberley and Pilbara through the development of a sustainable, transformed housing market that supports better health, education and employment outcomes.

How will the fund work?

The fund will use a strengths-based approach to support hundreds of Aboriginal people to move into transitional housing, private rental accommodation or home ownership.

It will initially achieve this by expanding on the State Government's successful transitional housing model, developed in partnership with Wunan Foundation, which is operating in several Kimberley towns. This model helps Aboriginal participants to set life management goals, manage personal finances and access community support networks.

Transitional housing also requires children to go to school, adults to work and householders to fulfil tenancy obligations and engage with support services, in exchange for affordable housing and support to transition to private rental accommodation or home ownership. The results of the transitional housing model include strong school attendance and employment, properties maintained in excellent condition, support services engaged and home ownership.

How is the fund different to the existing transitional housing program?

- The fund will provide opportunities for the State Government to co-design projects with local Aboriginal organisations to ensure projects are targeted and tailored to the needs of Aboriginal people.
- The fund will encourage innovation in the design of transitional housing dwellings, which are constructed to a higher specification than public housing.
- The fund will provide an opportunity for native title trusts and social or private investors to co-invest in housing with the State Government.
- All fund projects that involve the construction or refurbishment of housing will provide apprenticeships, traineeships and jobs for local Aboriginal people.

What will the fund achieve?

Over four years, the fund is expected to achieve:

- increased school attendance for at least 600 Aboriginal children
- participation in jobs and training by at least 300 adults
- apprenticeships for 30 young people
- eventual home ownership for at least 15 families
- about \$25 million in services and construction contracts for Aboriginal organisations

When will the fund be implemented?

Implementation of the North-West Aboriginal Housing Fund will begin with the construction of 50 more transitional housing dwellings in the Kimberley. Construction of these houses is expected to begin by March 2018.

What wrap-around support will be provided?

The project to build the 50 additional transitional houses in the Kimberley will be partly co-designed with Binarri-binyja yarrowoo Aboriginal Corporation, the backbone organisation of Empowered Communities in the East Kimberley.

This co-design will include plans for intensive, wrap-around services that will support the tenants, and ongoing assessment of the services to ensure they are relevant and effective.

How will the fund help provide jobs for local Aboriginal people?

All projects under the fund will be required to achieve Aboriginal employment targets and facilitate local Aboriginal apprenticeships and traineeships.

The Aboriginal employment targets for the fund have been set at 40 per cent in the Kimberley and 20 per cent in the Pilbara, with the exception of the project to construct 50 transitional housing dwellings in the Kimberley which requires a 45 per cent Aboriginal workforce.

Why does the fund have a focus on housing?

Access to a choice of appropriate and affordable housing helps families to attain and maintain good health, family, education and employment outcomes.

The model of transitional housing has been successful in helping Aboriginal individuals and families achieve greater economic independence and increased participation in education.

What is the lifespan of the fund?

Four years – from 2017 to 2020

Why is the fund only for Aboriginal families in the North-West?

The majority of Aboriginal households in the North-West are in social housing - more than 70 per cent of Aboriginal households in the Kimberley and more than 50 per cent in the Pilbara.

Compared with non-Aboriginal residents, Aboriginal people in the Kimberley and Pilbara regions are far:

- less likely to have completed Year 12
- less likely to have a post-secondary qualification
- less likely to have a job
- more likely to have a personal weekly income of less than \$400
- more likely to live in an overcrowded house
- less likely to own their own home

How much money has been invested in the fund?

The fund has a value of \$200 million, which comprises \$175 million from the State Government and a \$25 million commitment from the Australian Government.

