

## How to measure the social value of your core housing activities

The social housing sector creates large scale social value through the provision of housing and transitioning people into more secure types of housing. Translating this value for stakeholders into a form they can understand can help the sector tell its story of social impact and how vital it is to continue to invest in the sector.

The Australian Social Value Bank provides organisations with a method for collecting outcomes data and to calculate the social value of these outcomes.

This document outlines how an organisation would implement the ASVB as their data collection tool and measure the social value of their core housing activities.

### Selecting Outcomes

The ASVB has outcomes and social values which directly align to the core activity of social housing providers which is transitioning people into more secure types of accommodation or housing.

Each outcome and value in the ASVB has a defined piece of evidence required to understand that the outcome has been achieved for an individual. This evidence is either administration data or a dedicated pre/post question. Organisations may want to adapt the data collected as evidence or already have an existing method of collection, this does affect the level of validity for the outcome. However, many organisations will adapt the evidence required and outline the assumptions behind the decision within their reporting.

#### Which outcome is most relevant to your program?

We have provided our recommended ASVB outcomes for measuring your core housing activities.

You may wish to adapt these outcomes based on the type of housing and services your organisation provides.

We have more values which relate to other activities and programs you may want to measure. Please see our list of current ASVB Outcomes ([Hyperlink](#)).

#### Can I add multiple values for the same tenant?

In your core housing activities, we would recommend that you only apply a single outcome value to each tenant or person you work with. If they have transitioned between two types of housing in a single year, you may decide to count both for the length of time the outcome applied.

#### Can I add multiple values for different tenants?

Yes. The primary outcome of moving into different types of social housing will be achieved for tenants coming into your properties. You may need to run separate social value calculations for parts of your core housing activities and then combine the results. This is because the ASVB limits you to three outcomes per value statement, so you should break your core

housing activities down into smaller programs or projects which look at each of the housing transitions outline in the Table.

### Duration

**Duration is the number of months the benefit lasts for the tenant.**

We recommend reporting on your social value on an annual basis on the same timeline as your financial reporting. You can apply outcomes for up to a maximum of 12 months in your ASVB calculations. The decision on whether to continue counting tenants achieving the same outcome in multiple years depends on the outcome being assessed and how your organisation decides to make your judgements.

The core housing outcomes relating to changes in housing circumstances can be calculated based on your administrative data on tenancy length.

Our recommendation would be to only report the social value of the outcome in the initial year as in year two and subsequent years of a tenancy, the social value of the outcome to that individual starts to diminish in value.

The ASVB methodology generally assumes social benefits last a maximum of one year as longer-term benefits become increasingly difficult to attribute to a program.

### Number of Beneficiaries

A beneficiary can be:

1. A tenant in your properties or using your program who achieves the outcomes

How to identify the beneficiaries:

- Attendance records
- Other administrative data
- Surveying participants and other potential beneficiaries

### Ethics and Consent

#### National Statement on Ethical Conduct

The National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007) (National Statement (2007)) outlines the principles and practices for any type of research relating to humans. National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) created this guidance and is responsible for its use in academic research. While the NHMRC has no ability to penalise organisations not directly funded by academic institutions who break the code of conduct, it is important for any organisation who carries out social research to apply the code of conduct in their work.

Ethical Principles:

1. Whether there is harm to participants?
2. Whether there is a lack of informed consent?
3. Whether there is an invasion of privacy?
4. Whether deception is involved?

## [The National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research \(2007\) \(National Statement \(2007\)\)](#)

There are specific sections within the code which relate to vulnerable groups, Indigenous participants and children and young people. We highly recommend you read these guidelines and decide how best to apply them to your collection of outcomes evidence.

### [Informed Consent](#)

To collect evidence on the outcomes you are achieving you may need to ask tenants questions (surveys) or collect data about them, you will need their informed consent.

Informed consent means that the individual taking part needs to be fully informed about the information being collected, the purpose of collecting the data, how the data will be used and how they can withdraw their participation. Importantly, the individual must have the capacity and be capable of providing informed consent.

### [Data Protection \(Privacy Policy\)](#)

The data you are collecting on outcomes for tenants will be stored and used by your organisation the same way as other tenant information is for administration and business purposes.

We would advise that you check your privacy policy to ensure it covers the collection of data for the purpose of measuring impact and in particular:

- Outlines that data collected may be linked with other data sources internally
- Covers the data collection tool or method you will be using to collect outcomes data and data storage method for this information
- Finally, that this data may be shared anonymously for reporting purposes.

The privacy statement does not need to specifically mention impact measurement or outcomes but within the general statements ensure these activities are covered.

### [Calculating Program Costs](#)

This should include any variable costs, overhead costs and capital investment required to deliver the housing outcome.

What you should consider including in costs for housing outcomes:

- Tenancy management costs
- Tenancy support costs
- Service delivery staff salaries
- Corporate, administration and office costs
- Planned maintenance property
- Responsive repairs property
- Depreciation
- Loan fees and interest
- Council rates and water consumption

You can use information for total costs for any of the above and then divide by the percentage of properties related to that housing outcome. Alternatively, you could also decide on a fixed percentage of total organisation time that each housing outcome takes and apply this to total running costs of the organisation.

#### Should your costs be gross or net of rental income?

This is a decision for each provider to take dependent on the purpose of the results. We recommend using your gross costs as this will produce the most conservative valuation of social impact. The use of net costs is not incorrect but will produce very different results.

**Note:** It is essential to know the budget that is allocated for each housing outcome or program so that social returns can be compared to the investment (total cost) of the program in question. If a program lasts longer than a year, please estimate the annual cost of running the program. If the program lasts less than a year, please estimate the cost of running the entire program.

#### Approach to Data Collection

We would highly recommend that data collection for the purposes of outcomes measurement is embedded into the workflow and existing systems of your organisation. This will ensure that it is a business as usual activity and does not risk being supplementary to tenancy management.

The evidence required for outcomes measurement can be collected through a combination of your client management system and housing management software.

Some of the data can be extracted from data you would already collect such as start and end dates for tenancies, which could be used to calculate the length of time a tenant has been in social housing having moved from homelessness.

You may need to add survey questions to existing forms for new tenant sign-ups or you might decide to create a separate bespoke survey that collects outcomes evidence. As mentioned above we would recommend it being part of your current systems and forms where possible.

The exact wording for survey questions is provided by the ASVB and you just need to add it to your chosen data collection tool. Organisations may want to change the wording of questions for several reasons including making it more relevant to their tenant group or wanting to simplify the language used in the wording. If you choose to do this, you need to outline in the assumptions why you have made these changes and be aware that from a methodological perspective you are affecting the validity of the measure and therefore the social value being created.

We understand that some organisations will change the questions and the data type collected to prove outcomes delivered for tenants.

## Data Collection for Core Housing Activity Outcomes

Core Housing Activities ASVB Outcome Values	Description	Evidence Required Notes
Homelessness to temporary accommodation	This outcome shows the social impact of participants moving from homelessness to temporary accommodation.	Use relevant records or use Question Q4 from the ASVB home surveys (for before and after a program)
Homelessness to secure accommodation	This outcome shows the social impact of participants moving from homelessness to secure accommodation.	Use relevant records or use Question Q4 from the ASVB home surveys (for before and after a program)
Homelessness to Social Housing	This outcome shows the social impact of participants moving from homelessness to social housing.	Use relevant records or use Question Q4 from the ASVB home surveys (for before and after a program)
Temporary accommodation to Social Housing	This outcome shows the social impact of participants moving from temporary accommodation to social housing.	Use relevant records or use Question Q4 from the ASVB home surveys (for before and after a program)
Temporary accommodation to secure accommodation	This outcome shows the social impact of participants moving from temporary accommodation to secure accommodation.	Use relevant records or use Question Q4 from the ASVB home surveys (for before and after a program)
Improved condition of Social Housing property	This outcome shows the social impact of improvement in a participants' home.	Use relevant records or use Question Q5 from the ASVB home surveys (for before and after a program)
Housing is no longer overcrowded	This outcome shows the social impact of participants having adequate space in their household.	Use relevant records or use Question Q3 from the ASVB home surveys (for before and after a program)
Housing Quality - Reduced impact of noise	This outcome shows the social impact of participants who are no longer affected by loud traffic noise and noise from airplanes, trains or industry when they are at home.	Use Question Q1 from the ASVB home surveys (for before and after a program)