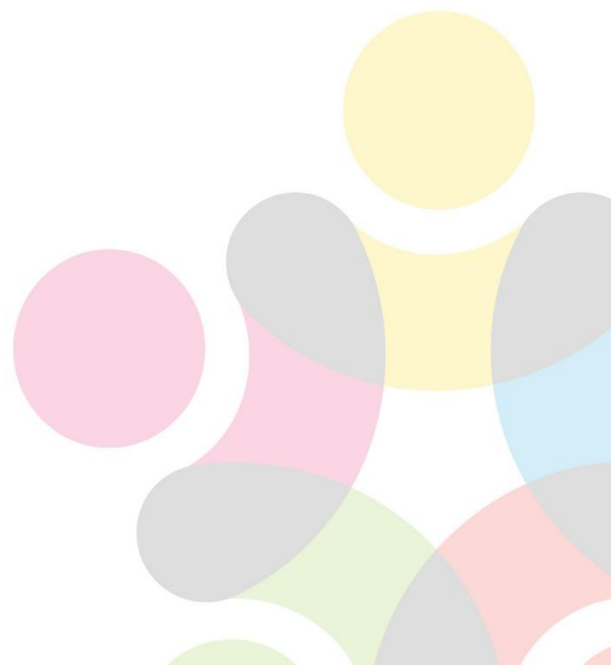




Tenant Information Kit

31 July 2017



Our vision is to
build resilient,
inclusive
communities
through the
provision of
housing

Contents

Contacting Us	4
After Hours	4
Housing Staff.....	4
Our Commitment.....	6
Tenants and other partners	7
Being a good neighbour	7
Visitors.....	8
Maintenance Trouble Shooting Guide.....	8
Repairs & Maintenance – Types & Definitions.....	10
Repairs & Maintenance – Tenant Guidelines	11
Applying for a transfer	12
Ongoing eligibility	13
Paying your rent.....	13
How your rent is calculated	14
Managing rent arrears.....	15
Getting help with your debts.....	16
Your feedback	16
Your Privacy	17
Forms.....	18
Further information / Useful Links	19
Your tenancy.....	19
Tenancy advice information	19
Legal Advice.....	20
Local councils	20
Government departments.....	20

We treat everyone with **RESPECT**

We always act with **INTEGRITY** in
relation to tenants and other partners

We aim to provide **EXCELLENCE** in
our service delivery

We acknowledge, respect and
accommodate the **DIVERSITY** of
people

We do what we say we will do



Contacting Us

Reception Office Hours at 383 Boundary Street,
Spring Hill:

Monday to Friday 9:00am - 5:00pm

You can also contact us by sending an **email** to
info@bric.org.au

or **phoning** (07) 3230 5555.

You may also leave a **message** on the answering machine at any time and a staff member will return your call as soon as possible or on the following working day.

After Hours

Bric Housing provides an **After Hours Service**.

Phone (07) 3230 5555, follow the prompts, and you will be connected to an on-call staff member who can assist you.

Housing Staff – Tenancy Service Officers

There are Tenancy Service Officers who deal directly with tenants regarding tenancy issues. You can contact your Housing Worker if you require any assistance regarding your tenancy.

The management of your accommodation is a responsibility we take very seriously and you are invited to contact us if you have any tenancy issues.

Bric Housing wants to ensure that we deliver a quality service and you can assist us in continuing to improve our service.

More information about Bric Housing can be viewed on our web page, www.bric.org.au

Ph: (07) 3230 5555

PO Box 688

Spring Hill QLD 4004

**Email: info@bric.org.au
www.bric.org.au**

Welcome

On behalf of the team at Bric Housing it is my pleasure to welcome you and provide the information in this kit, which has been prepared to assist you in successfully establishing and maintaining your tenancy and your accommodation, your home.

We understand our tenants each have differing life stories and experiences which may have brought them to our door and our services. At times any amongst us may have complex circumstances and support needs which are to be taken into account in our dealings and relationships with each other.

This Information Kit provides a balance of shared responsibilities and commitments to each other.

For Bric Housing, and our Service Partners we approach our work with experience, insight and sensitivity. We believe every person has the potential for positive participation in the community and recognise personal success is best measured in the eyes of each individual. We commit to being on time, thorough and honest in our dealings with you.

We ask of you similarly, and that you take the steps to ensure your rent is paid on time and you do your best to work with our staff and look after your accommodation. Please respect the privacy and rights of your fellow tenants and let us know of any key issues which may affect your accommodation or your tenancy with us.

We believe safe and secure accommodation is a key foundation for a person to build a full and happy life. Please feel encouraged to utilise the staff, services and linkages which Bric Housing and our service partners offer and we wish you every success and opportunity in your path ahead.

Sincerely,



Craig Brennan
Chief Executive Officer

Our Commitment

Bric Housing will...

- Provide clean, safe, well-maintained, affordable homes
- Be friendly, timely and responsive in all our dealings with tenants and other partners
- Provide respectful and courteous service at all times
- Listen to and acknowledge issues and concerns raised by tenants
- Communicate in a clear and open manner
- Be proactive in our approach to tenancy and housing management including repairs and managing issues that impact on a tenancy
- Provide new tenants with comprehensive information about their tenancy on entry
- Inform you of your rights and responsibilities
- Provide information and assistance to link with community activities and the broader neighbourhood
- Work with interpreters whenever needed
- Work within the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008 and ensure appropriate legal arrangements as well as compliance by Bric Housing with the Act
- Provide opportunities to have input and give feedback
- Respectfully engage with you about feedback and complaints
- Work with you to sustain your tenancy and link you with other support when it is needed
- Provide access to tenant meetings and advisory groups and other opportunities to give input and feedback and shape service delivery
- Connect with services providers, community leaders, businesses and residents to help with supporting the sustainability of Bric Housing
- Innovate and be creative through projects designed to build community links and improve social connections
- Take appropriate tenancy management action to address any activities that impact in a negative way on other tenants or that pose risks to others
- Help to plan effective transitions into other housing options when needed
- Respect your privacy
- Continually improve

Tenants and Other Partners are asked to...

- Be respectful of others
- Respect the cultural backgrounds and privacy of others
- Act in an honest and respectful way that doesn't threaten others
- Provide honest and up-to-date information
- Provide accurate information and maintain open lines of communication
- Inform us if circumstances change
- Participate and provide feedback on the quality and future of the service
- Meet your legal obligations as a tenant including paying rent on time and looking after your property
- Connect with support services if you need further assistance to sustain your tenancy
- Work openly and honestly with Bric Housing to sustain a tenancy if there are problems or issues
- Let us know about repairs and maintenance
- Allow access for contractors doing repairs or maintenance

Being a Good Neighbour

- Keep noise, in or near your home, to a minimum, particularly between 10pm and 7am. Do not slam doors, sound car horns or shout. You should always try to be considerate outside of these times. Be aware of how easily noise can travel in a unit property.
- If you have a dog, always clear up any mess it makes and try to make sure it does not bark excessively.
- Talk to your children about how their playing habits and behaviour might affect your neighbours.
- Control the volume on televisions, radios and so on. Do not put these systems against shared walls. Place them on a rubber mat or carpet.
- Let your neighbours know when you are going to do something particularly noisy such as maintenance activities or having a party.
- Tell visitors not to slam communal doors.
- Never leave external doors open or use the Fire Doors to enter or leave the building.
- Never let anybody into the building if you do not know who they are.
- Always report anything suspicious to the Police.
- Always lock your door and look after your keys.

Visitors

Bric Housing encourages all tenants to maintain friendships and connections with the wider community, but you are responsible for the behaviour of your guests and you must ensure they also comply with your lease agreement when they enter the premises.

Maintenance Trouble Shooting Guide

Plumbing Leaks

The most common problem in properties is water leaking from areas (e.g. bathrooms, laundries, kitchens), into adjoining rooms. A regular check for water leaks is advisable. If the carpet/ floor is wet, sponge and dry the area thoroughly and check again after use. Contact Bric Housing maintenance on 3230 5555 if there is still a problem.

If the problem is a serious water leak, this is classified as an emergency repair and we must be notified immediately.

Faulty Power / Light Switches or Fans

Do not attempt to fix it yourself. Do not use switches. Contact Bric Housing maintenance on 3230 5555 as soon as possible.

Hot Plates / Oven

Check if the power is connected or check the power box for a tripped switch. Contact Bric Housing maintenance on 3230 5555 if the problem persists so necessary repairs can occur.

Hot Water Systems

If your supply of hot water is not hot or does not seem to last as long as it should, your hot water system may need topping up. Locate the filter filler valve on the side of your hot water system and lift the floppy lever until water flows from the overflow. Repeat this process every few months. Otherwise, check – Is the power switched on? Has the power box tripped the switch? Has your shower routine changed or increased (tank capacity will affect this)? Remember in winter, efficiency of the hot water tank is less than in summer and the water will cool more quickly.

Note: Please follow the above procedure before requesting maintenance. If it does not rectify the problem, please contact Bric Housing maintenance on 3230 5555 so that necessary repairs can occur. Remember, a leaking hot water tap will cause poor supply of hot water and high electricity accounts.

Leaking from Toilet

Regular mopping and turning off the tap between uses is adequate until a tradesperson arrives. Please Bric Housing maintenance on 3230 5555 so necessary repairs can occur.

Lights

Ensure the power is on and the switch has not tripped in the power box. Please contact Bric Housing maintenance on 3230 5555 if the problem persists so necessary repairs can occur.

Power

If your neighbours have also lost power contact your Electricity Supplier. Otherwise check if you have a Safety Switch, which may have tripped. If so, reset the switch. If it trips again unplug all appliances from power points. Reset the Safety Switch and plug in appliances one at a time until the faulty appliance is located.

Note: If this does not fix the problem, please contact Bric Housing maintenance on 3230 5555 so necessary repairs can occur.

Washing Machine – if supplied by Bric Housing

Check...

- that the power is connected
- that the water taps are turned on
- the load of the clothes is not off balance or too high
- the lid is connecting with the on/ off switch when closing
- hoses are securely attached
- if leaking, check hoses for splits

When all else fails, please contact Bric Housing maintenance on 3230 5555 so necessary repairs can occur.

Water Eruption

Water bubbling out of the ground could be a serious problem and could lead to further complications. Please contact Bric Housing maintenance on 3230 5555 immediately as this is an 'emergency matter'.

Repairs & Maintenance – Types & Definitions

Emergency Repairs - 4 hours

Usually a fault or damage likely to injure a person, damage property or unduly inconvenience a tenant of the premises in which immediate repairs are required. Examples of emergency repairs include:

- a burst water service or a serious water service leak
- a blocked or broken toilet system
- a serious gas or roof leak
- a dangerous electrical fault
- serious storm, flood, fire or impact damage
- a failure or breakdown of the gas, electricity or water supply to the premises
- a failure or breakdown of an essential service or appliance on premises for hot water, cooking or heating
- a fault or damage that makes premises unsafe or insecure
- a serious fault in any staircase, lift or other common area which inhibits or unduly inconveniences residents in gaining access to or using the premises

Priority Repairs- 24 hours

Usually a fault or damage in which there is no immediate risk of injury to persons, damage to property or there will be only moderate inconvenience for a tenant should the repair be completed within the next working day. Examples of priority repairs include:

- a minor water service leak
- a minor roof leak
- minor storm, flood, fire or impact damage
- a failure or breakdown of a non-essential service or appliance on the premises
- a non-operational light fitting or power point
- difficult to open and/ or close door locks
- a faulty stove element
- security lighting not working
- no power to half of the residence

General Repairs 7 – 14 days

Usually a fault or damage in which there is no risk of injury to persons, damage to property or there will be minimal inconvenience for a tenant should the repair completed within 14 working days. In most cases, general repairs will be scheduled for completion during the next available day the Bric Housing Maintenance Team is in your area. Examples of general repairs include:

- patching and painting of internal walls
- tightening of kitchen/ bathroom cupboard door hinges
- repairs to furniture and fittings
- servicing of sliding doors
- replacement of common area light bulbs
- slow dripping taps
- trees which need lopping
- leaking gutters or downpipes
- faulty internal door locks
- water hammer
- doors jamming
- uneven hard paving (trip hazards)

Repairs & Maintenance – Tenant Guidelines

Maintenance Requirements During Business Hours

The Bric Housing Office is open 9:00am to 5:00pm – Monday to Friday (excluding Public Holidays).

There are 3 ways to register your maintenance request:

1. Telephone: Contact Bric Housing on 3230 5555 and request to speak to maintenance team for all maintenance requirements
2. Bric Housing website: log on to www.bric.org.au – for tenants – maintenance request – complete a form and select submit
3. Repairs Request Form: 3 copies of maintenance request forms included in tenant kit. The Repairs Request Form should include as much detail as possible is provided of the required repairs.
 - Post the Repairs Request Form to: Bric Housing, P O Box 688 Spring Hill 4004, or hand deliver to our office at Level 1, 383 Boundary Street, Spring Hill.

Bric Housing's maintenance team will arrange for the repairs to be carried out by the internal maintenance staff or an appropriate tradesperson within a reasonable time frame.

Power Outage

If your power is out please check with neighbours if they have power as it could be an issue with the area – if this is the case please call your electricity provider or Energex on 13 62 62.

Emergency Repairs Required Outside Business Hours

Bric Housing provides an After Hours Service – phone (07) 3230 5555 and you will be directed to an on-call staff member.

Bric Housing wants to ensure that we deliver a quality service and you can assist us in continuing to improve our service. We welcome your calls to inform us once the work has been completed, indicating if the work was done in a professional and timely manner. Should we not hear from you, we will endeavour to call you for your feedback.

Applying for a Transfer

You can apply for a transfer to another property if you can demonstrate that your current home is no longer appropriate to meet your housing need.

To be considered, you must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- your safety is at risk
- you need to live in a particular location in order to access essential services, secure you employment, meet cultural obligations, to gain access to your children or for family/informal support
- design and/or size of your current housing does not meet your household's needs.

In addition, it is expected that your rent and any maintenance payments will be up-to-date and that your current home has been kept in good condition.

To apply for a transfer, please contact or visit our office so that we can get a transfer application to you. You are required to complete the transfer form, attach the necessary evidence to support your transfer request and submit it back to Bric Housing. It will be passed onto the Housing Services team to be assessed.

We will advise you of the outcome of your application in writing or will contact you for further information if required.

If you are approved for a transfer you must list six locations (suburbs, towns or cities) of your choice, except where you have demonstrated the need to live in a particular location. We will attempt to identify a suitable property within our housing portfolio to transfer you to.

If a suitable property is not available, we will attempt to initiate the transfer with another housing provider or via the Department of Housing and Public Works.

For further information on the transfer process, please contact our office on (07) 3230 5555.

Ongoing Eligibility

Tenants and their household members living in either Community Housing or Public Rental Housing are assessed against the following 'ongoing' eligibility criteria:

- your combined gross assessable income (for all tenants and their partners) is more than \$80,000 per year
- you or any member of the household owns, or part owns property in Australia or overseas
- your household's ongoing match and need for the property you are living in.

As part of the review process, you are required to provide details of your current household income to Bric Housing, regardless of the property you occupy.

If you are no longer eligible for housing assistance due to a change in your circumstances, we will work with you to support your transition to an alternative, more appropriate housing option.

We may need to serve you with a Notice to Leave in order to formalise this process.

For further information about the process and the relevant policy, please visit the Department of Housing and Public Works website at:

<https://www.qld.gov.au/housing/public-community-housing/ongoing-eligibility>

Paying your Rent

Bric Housing offers various rent payment methods including Centrepay Deductions, deposit books and internet banking or direct transfer. Please contact us for payment method details and set up.

Centrepay Deductions

Regular payments can be automatically deducted from your Centrelink benefits using Centrepay Deductions. This option provides convenience and security at no extra cost to you.

You can complete a Centrepay Deduction form, which we can then set up on your behalf using access to the Centrelink website. Alternatively, you can arrange deductions directly with Centrelink. You will require our service Centrelink Reference Number and your BRIC ID number to arrange a deduction.

Internet Banking and Direct Transfers

Internet banking or other direct transfer options are available to you from your own bank. Generally with internet banking options, you can set up a transfer to re-occur when required.

Some banks also provide automatic transfers, which can be set up from a bank or over the phone. These types of transactions can sometimes incur a fee, so please check with your individual institution.

Although Centrepay or Internet banking are preferred, Bric Housing has two other methods for rent payment:

EFTPOS

Bric Housing has an Eftpos facility to enable you to pay your rent with your bank debit card. Please contact your Housing Worker if you would like to use Eftpos. Please note we do not accept cash for rent payments.

Deposit Books

Deposit books can be provided for regular over the counter bank deposits. They are pre-printed with our bank account details.

Deposit books can be used at any Bank of Queensland branch.

How your Rent is Calculated

As a Bric Housing tenant, you are required to pay rent for your home, along with a rental bond and, in some instances, utility charges.

Charges may vary according to the specific type of housing provided, your income or your individual circumstances. All fees are calculated in accordance with our rent policy.

Your rent has been calculated based on a percentage of your gross assessable household income (or capped at the market rent value for the property, whichever is less), including Commonwealth Rent Assistance:

- Affordable Housing Program – 30% of your income
- Community-Managed Studio Units (furnished)– 28% of your income
- Community Rent Scheme – 25% of your income
- Long-term Community Housing – 25% of your income.

Note Community-Managed Studio Units incur the additional 3% cost to cover maintenance and replacement of furniture and appliances that are supplied.

As part of your initial interview and offer of accommodation, you will have been provided with a rent assessment report to demonstrate the income that has been assessed as part of your review and how your rent is calculated.

For further information and the relevant policy, please visit the Department of Housing and Public Works website:

<http://www.hpw.qld.gov.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/YourRentInCommunityHousing.pdf>

Rent Assistance

Community Housing tenants who receive a Centrelink benefit are eligible to receive Commonwealth Rent Assistance.

The amount of rent assistance you receive is calculated by Centrelink based on the amount of rent you pay.

It is your responsibility to advise Centrelink of your updated rent amount.

To receive rent assistance, you must supply Centrelink with a rent statement or other evidence of your rent amount.

Public housing tenants are not eligible for this payment.

Whether you rent in community housing or in the private market, you do not get to keep your rent assistance payment – it goes towards your rent.

Managing Rent Arrears

If you have problems paying your rent, you should contact Bric Housing as soon as possible as any delay could seriously affect the way we are able to help you.

We are sympathetic to anyone who is having difficulty paying their rent and will try to help you as much as we can.

We treat each enquiry with courtesy and understanding, and all information is treated with the strictest confidence.

Your Housing Worker can either telephone you at home, visit you, or you can meet with your Housing Worker at our office.

They will discuss your arrears situation with you and depending on your circumstances, set up a realistic repayment plan.

If you do not pay your rent, we will pursue a firm but fair approach to the recovery of rent arrears. Using the *Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008* as a guide, we have a series of steps to follow when tenants do not pay their rent on time, including:

- a phone call or reminder letter to bring to your attention that the rent has not been paid
- issuing you with a Notice to Remedy Breach if your rent is more than seven days overdue (four days overdue if you are in a boarding house room). If you receive a Notice, you should contact your Housing Worker immediately to discuss your situation and arrange a repayment plan
- issuing you with a Notice to Leave due to the level of your debt if your rental arrears are not paid by the expiry of the Notice to Remedy, even where a payment plan is in place
- applying for a Warrant of Possession from the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal if you still have rent arrears outstanding when the Notice to Leave expiry date has passed. If you have a payment plan in place and are making repayments, then action on the warrant can be

postponed. The warrant could be cancelled once the arrears have been cleared and you are maintaining your rent payments in accordance with your lease agreement.

- immediately executing the Warrant to end your tenancy if you do not have a repayment plan or are not maintaining the repayment plan.

Maintenance Debts

From to time, tenants will incur maintenance debts during their tenancy. These debts occur for a range of reasons including locksmith charges, and minor repairs or damage not considered fair wear and tear. It is important that these debts are paid promptly or a payment arrangement entered into. Remember, we are here to help you.

The earlier we know about a problem, the easier it will be for us to help you resolve it.

For further information, please contact our office on (07) 3230 5555.

Getting Help with Your Debts

If you have difficulty in paying any debts, we can offer confidential help and advice. It is important to try to deal with debts before they become more serious or get out of hand.

A number of organisations offer confidential information and advice on dealing with debt.

For further information about these organisations, please feel free to download the Money Smart Guide, Dealing with Debt:

<https://www.moneysmart.gov.au/>

Your Feedback is Welcome

Bric Housing values feedback from our tenants and stakeholders.

If you wish to provide us with feedback, you can do so by sending your comments or suggestions to feedback@bric.org.au

If you would like to make a formal complaint or are not happy with the way a matter has been handled, you may contact Bric Housing:

In writing – Bric Housing, P O Box 688, Spring Hill Qld 4004

Through the Bric Housing website: <https://www.bric.org.au/about-bric/contact-us>

In person – Level 1, 383 Boundary St, Spring Hill Qld 4000 and ask to speak with a Housing Worker.

Independent Help with Your Tenancy

QSTARS (Qld Statewide Tenant Advice and Referral Service) provides advice, information and assistance about tenancy matters. If you would like advice about your tenancy you may contact QSTARS for free and independent advice for renters:

Statewide advice number: 1300 744 263

Hours: 9am – 5pm Monday – Friday (with extended hours to 7pm Tuesdays and Wednesdays)

Website: <https://qstars.org.au/>

Your Privacy

Bric Housing will protect your privacy and we write this to inform you of how we protect the information you provide to us.

When you apply for a tenancy with us, you are asked to provide personal details, such as

- Your name, date of birth, gender, addresses and contact phone numbers.
- Income related information e.g. occupation, Centrelink payments and other relevant information.

We need these details to assess your housing referral and to manage your tenancy with us. We also ask you to sign an Information Release Form so that we may regularly check your eligibility for housing with the Department of Housing and Public Works.

If you apply for a tenancy, we collect information directly from you. However, we may also need to collect information from your employer or Centrelink – we will obtain your consent.

We will not provide your personal information to anyone except if:

- we believe we have a duty of care to disclose
- we are authorised by law, e.g. a subpoena issued under tax laws or to a Court

We will disclose personal information to third parties where you have given us permission to do so.

All of your information is kept in secure systems that are accessed by authorised Bric Housing staff only. At any time, we can request to access the information we hold on you.

After your tenancy ceases with us, we hold on to your personal information for 10 years in our archives. Your tenancy is made inactive immediately in our computer system. The papers held in archives are destroyed once the 10 year time period has expired.

Forms (Included in Tenant Pack)

Bric Housing On the Move

Let On The Move reduce your stress and save you time by arranging your utility connections at the property ... at no extra cost! We will contact you within 24 hours to confirm.

RentConnect Brochure

RentConnect helps Queenslanders to find and secure a home to rent in the private market.

Your Rent In Community Housing

Community housing tenants pay a rent amount based on a percentage of their gross household income plus the Commonwealth Rent Assistance to which the household is entitled, or the market rent of the property, whichever is less.

Further Information / Useful Links

Bric Housing

<https://www.bric.org.au>

Your Tenancy

Community Housing Resources for Tenants	http://www.hpw.qld.gov.au/aboutus/ReportsPublications/FactSheets/Pages/CommunityHousingTenants.aspx
Community Housing Information for Tenants	http://www.hpw.qld.gov.au/Housing/SocialHousing/CommunityHousing/Pages/InformationForApplicantsAndTenants.aspx
Community Housing Rent Policy	http://www.hpw.qld.gov.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/CommunityHousingRentPolicy2013.pdf
Social Housing Eligibility Fact Sheet	http://www.hpw.qld.gov.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/SocialHousingEligibilityCriteria.pdf
Social Housing Eligibility Fact Sheet	http://www.hpw.qld.gov.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/SocialHousingEligibility.pdf

Tenancy Advice Information

Residential Tenancies Authority	https://www.rta.qld.gov.au/
Residential Tenancies Authority Dispute Resolution	https://www.rta.qld.gov.au/Disputes
Queensland Statewide Tenant Advice and Referral Service (QSTARS)	https://qstars.org.au/
The Qld Dispute Resolution Centre (Mediation Services)	https://www.qld.gov.au/law/legal-mediation-and-justice-of-the-peace/settling-disputes-out-of-court/dispute-resolution-centres
Inner North Tenant Advice and Advocacy Service 967 Brunswick St New Farm QLD 4005 Ph: (07) 3358 3951	No website

Legal Advice

Legal Assistance	http://www.lawright.org.au/
Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT) Level 9, 259 Queen Street, Brisbane QLD Ph: 1300 753 228	http://www.qcat.qld.gov.au/
The Anti-discrimination Commission of Queensland 20/53 Albert St, Brisbane City QLD 4000 Ph: 1300 130 670	https://www.adcq.qld.gov.au/

Local Councils

Brisbane City Council	https://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/
Moreton Bay Regional Council	https://www.moretonbay.qld.gov.au/

Government Departments

Queensland Government Department of Housing and Public Works	http://www.hpw.qld.gov.au/Pages/home.aspx
Department of Human Services	https://www.humanservices.gov.au/
Your Local Member of Government	http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/members/current/list

Ph: (07) 3230 5555

PO Box 688

Spring Hill QLD 4004

Email: info@bric.org.au

www.bric.org.au