



MICHAEL BERKMAN MP

Member for Maiwar ▲

12 June 2022

The Hon Leeanne Enoch MP
Minister for Communities and Housing
By email: communitiesandhousing@ministerial.qld.gov.au

Cc:
Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal
By email: enquiriesqcat@justice.qld.gov.au

**URGENT: Follow up regarding social housing tenant facing eviction
(QCAT claim: 0000693/22)**

Dear Minister Enoch,

Thank you for your letter, dated 10 June 2022, in response to my earlier correspondence regarding the upcoming eviction of my constituent, Mr David Barker, from social housing at 5/25 Waverley Rd, Taringa.

On 1 June 2022, QCAT ruled that the Department's decision to issue a Termination Order to Mr Barker and order a Warrant of Possession be approved, despite Mr Barker's attempt to stay the decision.

I appreciate that this is not a simple case, and that the Department has been working with Mr Barker over the past two years to address some of the issues that have led to this decision. However, I remain concerned about the serious negative consequences for Mr Barker if you persist with this decision, both immediate and long term consequences, and I again implore you to reverse the decision.

No guarantee as to where Mr Barker will be relocated

Both you and the Department have stated on numerous occasions that "the Department does not evict people into homelessness", and that "the Department will continue working with [Mr Barker] in relation to his accommodation needs", including just this morning in an interview on ABC Radio Brisbane with Rebecca Levingston.

The Department has made several suggestions and promises that they would find alternative accommodation for Mr Barker at the Park Hotel, or similar accommodation such as with the Brisbane Housing Company (BHC). I understand that Mr Barker has now filled in forms for a referral to the Park Hotel and BHC, but has yet to receive any indication or guarantee that there is any vacancy at the moment, and no indication of a long-term solution.

Moving Mr Barker to Spring Hill or Fortitude Valley would also mean isolating him from his community of 25+ years. He is well known by patrons of the Indooroopilly Activity Hub, the Indooroopilly Men's Shed, Moore Park Baptist Church, and other local organisations. I have no doubt that the social isolation caused by COVID-19 has had a negative impact on his mental health, and removing him from his community once again, not long after restrictions have been eased, will certainly not help Mr Barker's wellbeing.

Contact Us

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1/49 Station Road, Indooroopilly
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Pathway forward

I would be happy to assist Mr Barker in figuring out a pathway going forward, which allows him to remain in his current home and in a community that wants to help.

Some ongoing support that I believe would be helpful to both the Department and Mr Barker include:

- An ongoing caseworker (likely from Community) who understands Mr Barker's condition and can provide more hands-on support;
- Regular (e.g. monthly) visits to a mental health professional, provided free of charge by the Queensland Government;
- Regular (e.g. quarterly) working bees with help from community members to help Mr Barker keep the place tidy enough to prevent future breaches. I have been approached by several community members who would be happy to assist.

So once again, **I urge you to immediately revoke the Termination Order and the Warrant of Possession issued to Mr Barker**, noting that it is set to be executed at 10am on Friday 17 June 2022. As his eviction draws nearer I intend to take whatever steps I can to prevent Mr Barker's unnecessary and harmful eviction, including direct action, and to put a spotlight on this callous decision.

I would be more than happy to discuss this matter with you in more detail if required. Please do not hesitate to contact my office on 07 3737 4100 if you would like to discuss this further.

Kind regards,



Michael Berkman MP