

More than 10 per cent of Qld's public housing is under-occupied

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More than 10 per cent of Queensland's social housing stock is classed as under-occupied, as thousands of other public homes experience overcrowding.

As of June 30 last year, 8536 government-owned and managed social homes were listed as "under-occupied" by the state's Housing Department.

Housing Minister Leeanne Enoch revealed the figures in response to a parliamentary question on notice where she pointed to a social housing report that also showed about 3200 homes were overcrowded.

It means about one in five of the more than 54,000 social homes that are managed and owned by the government are either overcrowded or under-occupied.



Minister for Communities and Housing Leeanne Enoch. File picture: Liam Kidston

Asked about the figures, a Housing Department spokeswoman said that where under-occupancy and overcrowding was identified, the department worked with households to transfer them to a property that “better suits their needs”.

“This helps to maximise the department’s portfolio and assist another household into a property,” she said.

“When managing occupancy, the department works proactively with households as their circumstances change to understand their needs and provide support and information,” the spokeswoman said.

“This may include a review of the household’s ongoing requirements for specific features of a property, including size, type of housing and location.”

The spokeswoman said that a number of factors were affecting Queensland’s housing market as a result of the pandemic.

“And it is not unexpected that people are seeking housing stability, with people remaining in housing or people rejoining households,” she said.

Queensland Council of Social Services chief executive Aimee McVeigh said while the number of under-occupied dwellings had remained “steady”, there

had been a 28 per cent increase in overcrowded social housing tenancies between 2017 and 2021.

She said overcrowding was a “serious issue” that all levels of government needed to respond to.

“People’s health and wellbeing is significantly affected by overcrowding,” Ms McVeigh said.

“Children are particularly impacted, especially with regards to their ability to engage meaningfully at school.

“A person’s privacy, health and mental health, and safety is also significantly impacted,” she said.