

# Home rents out of reach

CHILD CARE, retail, hospitality and other minimum-wage earners are being priced out of Melbourne's rental market.

The finding comes as charities warn that less than 1 per cent of properties in Melbourne are affordable for the unemployed.

Tenants Union of Victoria spokesman Toby Archer said a full-time minimum wage no longer covered the average Melbourne rent.

"The median rental property is now unaffordable for most low-income household types, even those in paid employment," Mr Archer said.

"Unless you are earning well

**JOHN DAGGE**  
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above the minimum wage you will struggle to rent affordably."

A full-time worker on minimum wage with two children takes home \$897 a week if they receive full rent assistance and family tax benefits.

An affordable rent, classified by the union as no more than 30 per cent of income, would be \$269.

The average rent for a three-bedroom house in Melbourne is \$330 while the average rent for a two-bedroom apartment is \$340.

Mr Archer said better-paid, workers such as nurses and

teachers, were also handing over more than 30 per cent of their pay packets to landlords.

"In many instances households will expend more than double this figure," he said.

The unemployed face a tougher time with a survey of 14,000 rental advertisements by Anglicare Victoria finding less than 1 per cent were affordable.

"Unaffordable public rentals means low-income youth and families are being pushed into accommodation that is inappropriate in terms of its stability, safety, habitability or location," said Sarah Wise, general manager of policy,

research and innovation at Anglicare Victoria. "The only other alternative is to do without other basic essentials such as heating, electricity and nutritious food."

About 30 per cent of rentals were affordable for the unemployed in country areas.

Dr Wise said ever-rising rents were increasing demand on charities and pushing more families into shared accommodation.

Rents climbed by 5 per cent in Melbourne last year and 8 per cent in regional Victoria, according to the Office of Housing.

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**Priced out:** Rent affordability is down.