

Fact sheet

July 2011

Community housing related complaints (general)

What is community housing?

Community housing is a part of the social housing system. Community housing is one of the three ways social housing is provided in NSW, the others are 'public housing' and 'Aboriginal housing'.

What are community housing providers?

Community housing providers (which can be referred to as community housing organisations or a type of social housing provider) are either non-government (eg. housing associations, housing co-operatives or faith-based organisations) or local government organisations that are independent of NSW government. Registered community housing providers may receive assistance from Housing NSW to provide affordable rental housing to people on low to moderate incomes, and people with special needs. For the purpose of explaining community housing complaints, issues and appeals, this Fact Sheet will refer to all of these types of organisations as 'community housing providers'.

How will the information in the fact sheet assist me?

The information in this fact sheet is applicable if you are a member of the public or an organisation and have a complaint relating to a property/ies managed by a community housing provider.

As community housing providers are independent organisations, the internal complaints and appeals procedures will differ from organisation to organisation. Because

of this, the steps outlined in this fact sheet are broad. Once a complaint is received by an organisation, the staff in that organisation will ensure the matter is dealt with through the organisation's complaints management system.

Where do I go if I have a complaint relating to a social housing managed property?

Any complaint in relation to a property or tenancy will be handled, in the first instance, by the landlord.

If the tenancy is under the management of Housing NSW, this is regarded as a public housing tenancy and Housing NSW is the landlord. You will need to contact the local Housing NSW office. For a list of offices and contact numbers go to www.housing.nsw.gov.au or ring 1300 HOUSING (1300 468 746).

If the tenancy is under the management of a community housing provider then that organisation is the landlord and your contact for any complaint. You can find a list of community housing providers by going to www.communityhousing.org.au or you can telephone the NSW Federation of Housing Associations on 02 9281 7144. For contact details of other providers consult the White Pages or the internet.

How do I make a complaint to a community housing provider?

The first step is to contact the community housing provider and ask to speak with a housing worker about your concern. The housing worker will discuss the situation with you to try and resolve your concerns.

What if I am still unhappy with the situation?

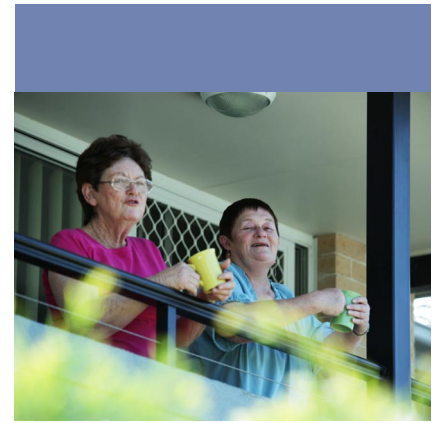
If you remain dissatisfied, you can write to the community housing provider (check with the provider on who to address your correspondence to) to formally raise your concern. The provider will investigate your concerns and respond to you. Your letter to the provider should include:

- Your name, address and telephone number
- A description of what has occurred
- A request for an investigation
- Any supporting documentation that will help the community housing provider understand your complaint
- Your signature and the date

For information on other organisations that may be able to assist you refer to the [Complaints, Issues and Appeals Management Referral Map](#).

How will my complaint be investigated?

All registered community housing providers are required to make information about internal complaints and appeals processes accessible to community housing clients. You can ask your community housing provider for a copy of the organisation's internal complaints and appeals processes. If you are not satisfied with what has been provided, advise the community housing provider.



Community housing related complaints (general)

Are there any other avenues for my complaint?

You also have the option of lodging a complaint with the NSW Federation of Housing Associations if the community housing provider is a signatory to the Housing Providers Code of Practice (see www.communityhousing.org.au for further information). The Code contains obligations in relation to dispute resolution.

What if I want to complain on someone else's behalf?

If you want to complain on someone else's behalf, the other person will need to give their written permission for you to act on their behalf as their agent or representative. This documentation will need to be provided to the community housing provider or any other organisation involved in the complaint.

Further information

[Community Housing Division Complaints, Issues and Appeals Management Framework](#)

[Fact Sheet - Roles and Responsibilities](#)

[Complaints, Issues and Appeals Management Referral Map](#)

[Fact Sheet – Tenant of Community Housing – Complaints and Appeals](#)

[Fact Sheet - Applicant of Community Housing – Complaints and Appeals](#)

It is illegal for an officer of Housing NSW to ask for money or favours or other benefits of any kind in exchange for helping you with your housing needs.

It is also illegal for you or anyone else to offer money or favours or other benefits of any kind to an officer of Housing NSW in exchange for helping you. If you have any information regarding this, please contact Business Assurance on 1300 HOUSING (1300 468 746). Housing NSW may refuse the provision of further housing services to anyone who has engaged or sought to engage in corrupt or illegal conduct.