

Good Neighbour Policy

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Policy context: This policy relates to	
Standards or other external requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• National Regulatory System of Community Housing (NRSCH)
Legislation or other requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Residential Tenancy Act (NT) 1999• Northern Territory Civil & Administrative Tribunal Rules 2016
Contractual obligations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contractual agreements with funding bodies• Residential Tenancy Agreements with tenants
CHCA Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Appeals Policy

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1. Overview

This policy outlines how CHCA supports positive relationships between neighbours. It also explains how CHCA will respond to anti-social behaviour or neighbour complaints

2. Scope

This policy applies to all tenancies managed by CHCA. It also applies to neighbours, property owners and stakeholders.

This policy does not deal with complaints about the quality of our services, staff or contractors, which are dealt with under our **Complaints Policy**.

3. Guiding principles

CHCA is committed to:

- Meeting our contractual, legal, and regulatory duties.
- Helping renters understand their legal responsibilities relating to their rental agreement.
- Responding promptly to allegations of antisocial behaviour with a focus on early intervention and support.
- Working collaboratively with households and communities in an inclusive and responsive way.
- Consistent and transparent decision making with clearly documented evidence of issues, actions taken, resolution or rationale for escalating.
- Tenants, members of the public and other stakeholders have the right to complain and will not be disadvantaged for making a complaint.
- We welcome all feedback which will be used to improve our tenancy and property management procedures.
- Applicants and tenants will be encouraged to get help from an advocate or support person at any point during the complaints process.

4. Supporting Positive Relationships

CHCA is committed to sustaining tenancies and maintaining harmonious communities. We do this by:

- Designing, building and maintaining housing to a high quality.
- Operating a local and accessible office.
- Addressing barriers to social inclusion and participation through community engagement.
- Conducting regular property visits and inspections.
- Working closely with support agencies to sustain tenancies.

5. Anti-Social Behaviour

All households have the right to reasonable peace, comfort and privacy of their home. Renters also have an obligation to abide by the conditions of their rental agreement, this includes responsibility for their visitors.

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Antisocial behaviour is when a household causes or permits (whether intentional or not) significant alarm, distress or nuisance. Examples of antisocial behaviour include, but not limited to:

- Physical assaults, acts of violence, verbal abuse or other threatening behaviour.
- Using, causing or permitting the property to be used for an illegal purpose.
- Damaging and vandalising property.
- Untaxed or unroadworthy vehicles.
- Excessive and persistent noise.
- Dumping of litter and other household rubbish.
- Unruly pets.

6. Responding to Antisocial Behaviour

CHCA takes appropriate action following any reports of antisocial behaviour or interference with quiet enjoyment, including contacting the police if appropriate and/or interviewing the person who reported the incident.

Where it is safe and practical to do so, CHCA encourages neighbours to speak to each other to try and resolve issues as they arise.

If antisocial behaviour is unable to be resolved by the parties involved, CHCA may take the following action as appropriate to the situation:

- Speak to all involved parties.
- Conduct a property inspection or site visit.
- Gather supporting information.
- Contact the police or Public Housing Safety Officers.
- Recommend or organise formal mediation.
- Make a referral to a support service.
- Notify the household in writing of the legal implications of antisocial behaviour.
- Issue a breach notice and take further action in accordance with the Residential Tenancies Act 1999 (RTA) through the Northern Territory Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NTCAT).
- Keeping all relevant parties informed of progress made.

CHCA may receive reports about renter behaviour from other renters, staff, body corporate representatives and members of the public, including neighbours who are not CHCA renters. If a criminal activity has occurred, CHCA encourages the witness to contact the police in the first instance.

CHCA takes all reports of antisocial behaviour seriously and will respond to all reports or complaints received.

7. Definitions

7.1. Complaint

A complaint is when a person reports an event or tenants for behaviours that potentially breach of a tenancy agreement and cause a nuisance to other tenants, neighbours or other stakeholders.

A complaint is not a request for information.

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7.2. Complainant

The complainant is the person making the complaint.

7.3. Working days

Working days means days our offices are open. It does not include weekends and public holidays.

8. How to Lodge a Complaint

If a person wishes to make a complaint under this policy, they should make a complaint as soon as possible.

Acts of Violence or threatened violence towards a person should be reported immediately to the Police.

Our preference is for complaints to be received in writing such as email or letter. However, for urgent matters, CHCA will accept a verbal complaint.

People can complaint by email, phone or send a letter as outlined below:

Email: info@chca.org.au

Telephone: 08 8952 1266

Address: 3/21 Gregory Terrace, Alice Springs, 0870

9. Standards in Responding to Complaints

We will acknowledge complaints in writing within 3 working days of receiving them.

We will assess and respond to a complaint within 20 working days from the date we receive it. If we think there might be a delay in our response, we will tell the person who made the complaint how long we think our response will take and the reasons for the delay.

If the matter falls within the jurisdiction of the NT Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NTCAT), we may tell the person about any time limits that apply if they are thinking about applying to the tenancy tribunal. It is the responsibility of the complainant to determine whether they should lodge an application with the tenancy tribunal.

10. Investigating Complaints

Complaints will be directed to a delegated representative who will formally lodge the complaint and coordinate the complaints handling process.

The delegated representative is also available to discuss complaints to see if the matter can be resolved without the need for a formal complaint.

When we investigate a complaint, we will consider all information available at the time of making the complaint and will be fair and transparent.

11. Responding to Complaints

Once we have investigated the complaint, we will respond to the person in writing and advise them the outcome of their complaint. Our response will explain the reason for our decision and will explain the options if the person remains unhappy with the outcome.

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12. Records of Complaints

Complaints will be confidential, unless the person making the complaint give us permission to disclose the matter or when we are authorised or required to disclose the information by law.

Complaints will only be discussed with our team as needed to investigate the complaint.

Complaints will be recorded in our electronic Feedback Register with limited access by employees. If the person making the complaint is an applicant or tenant, the complaint will be noted on their electronic record.

We will monitor trends in complaints, to improve our service or where required by contractual, legal or regulatory requirements.

13. Feedback

After the complaint process is complete, we might ask the person to provide feedback on their experience. Any feedback received will be confidential and used to improve our service.

14. Other avenues

Making a formal complaint doesn't stop the person from taking other action. This may include:

- Seeking support from their local Member of Parliament. www.parliament.nt.gov.au/members/by-name
- Contacting the Tenants Advice and Advocacy Service www.dcls.org.au/tenants-advice or 08 8982 1111
- Community Legal Centre for information, advice and advocacy. www.naaja.org.au or 08 8982 5100
- Making an application to the NT Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCTCAT) if they believe we have not met our legal duties under the Residential Tenancy Act. www.ntcat.nt.gov.au or 1800 604 622
- Making a complaint to the Northern Territory Registrar for Community Housing. NRSCH.TFHC@nt.gov.au
- Making a complaint through the Northern Territory Government Public Housing Complaints and Appeals Mechanism housing.complaints@nt.gov.au or 1300 301 167

15. Managing unreasonable complainant conduct

We may modify or limit contact with a complainant where a complainant's behaviour has been unreasonable.

16. Related documents/resources

- Complaints Policy
- Appeals Policy
- Customer Service Charter