



ACHL Customer Feedback Policy (Version 1.0)

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1. Introduction

Aboriginal Community Housing Limited (ACHL) aims to provide a high standard of service in all areas of our operations. We recognise however that there will be occasions when customers and others receiving services from us, providing services to us or significantly affected by ACHL's operations may wish to compliment, comment on or complain about an aspect of our service. ACHL appreciates any feedback that our customers choose to provide and aim to resolve any complaints in a timely manner.

- A complaint is a registered expression of dissatisfaction with a service, lodged by a complainant or their representative. It must relate to a specific occurrence or episode, including the non-delivery of service, which has an impact in the individual complainant. It may be lodged verbally, in writing via post, email or by completing a form available from our office, or online by visiting the website, or over the telephone, or in person.

This policy describes our overall arrangements for responding to comments and complaints. It is supported by detailed operational procedures. The policy and procedure applies to any person[s] who receives, requests or provides a service from or to us, or is significantly affected by ACHL.

2. Aim

The aim of the policy is to ensure that:

- All comments on the standards of services are considered and where appropriate acted upon, with a response provided to the person providing the feedback.
- All complaints are dealt with in a timely manner within the prescribed timeframes, and where possible to the satisfaction of both the complainant and ourselves.
- Any improvements to our policies and procedures identified as a result of a comment or complaint are implemented.
- We perceive comments and complaints as an opportunity for positive action.

3. Principles of ACHL Customer Feedback Policy

3.1. General

ACHL is committed to the efficient and fair resolution of all comments and complaints lodged.

The management of complaints will meet all legislative requirements, industry standards and guidelines and comply with any specific program requirements.

3.2. Visibility

Information on how to provide feedback and/or make a complaint will be available in the form of brochures located at all ACHL offices and on the ACHL website at www.ACHL.org.au.

The ACHL Customer Feedback Policy will be published on the organisation web site and can be requested to be viewed by a customer at any time. This will include information on external bodies that customers can contact to assist in resolving the complaint.

3.3. Responsiveness

All complaints will be dealt with courteously. We will aim to respond within specified timeframes. The current timeframes are detailed in Complaints Indicative Timeframes document and in the ACHL Customer Promise.

3.4. Confidentiality

ACHL staff members shall respect the privacy of complainants and treat all documentation as confidential. A customer's personal information will not be given to another person unless there is lawful reason to do so and/ or with consent. Wherever possible, we will respect the confidentiality of complainants and those being complained about. Where it is necessary to reveal the name, we will only do so with the individual's consent.

3.5. Objectivity

To provide ACHL customers with the opportunity to have feedback received by ACHL and any complaint to be reviewed in a fair and equitable way. To encourage continual improvement in the operational policies and practices of ACHL.

3.6. Accountability

The complaint handling procedure must follow due process and be just to all parties. All complaints will be dealt with fairly and professionally without consequence to the customer or their status as a ACHL customer.

3.7. Accessibility

We will, where necessary, assist those wishing to make a comment or complaint by arranging translation facilities or providing help for those with hearing or sight impairment. An advocate can assist a customer during the complaints procedure.

The person making the complaint may advise ACHL in writing if they wish to authorise a particular person to act on their behalf. The authority will include the advocate's name, contact number and relationship to the customer.

Staff should also acknowledge that some complainants may only wish to make a verbal complaint and in those instances, they should be treated no differently to complaints lodged in writing via post, email or by completing a form available from our office, or online by visiting the website or over the telephone.

3.8. Appeal

A person making a complaint has the right to pursue a formal Appeal Process if they are dissatisfied with the ACHL Complaints Process and subsequent outcome. Any complaint received from a customer that fails to be resolved within the ACHL Complaints Process will be referred to the internal appeal process with the permission of the customer.

Should the customer still not be satisfied with the outcome of this process, they will be referred to an appropriate external Appeal Body for their State and requirements in which ACHL has operational presence. A list of agencies that may assist in resolving the complaint is detailed in the External Avenues of Appeal document.

3.9. Staff

If a complaint involves investigations into staff conduct, ACHL Disciplinary Procedures may be applicable. In the case of complaints being made against the Managing Director, the Board of Management will undertake the investigation.

4. How ACHL aims to achieve these policy principles

4.1. Responsibility

The Manager of each business unit is responsible for ensuring this Policy is implemented. They must:

- ensure the *Complaints Procedure* is adhered to
- ensure that all complaints received are entered into the *ACHL Customer Feedback Register*

4.2. Monitoring

ACHL will:

- record and respond to all complaints received and ensure it is operating effectively and responding to changing needs and circumstances.
- make changes to policies and procedures if this is recommended as a result of a complaint. The approval of the ACHL Board of Directors is required.

5. Related legislation, industry frameworks and standards, ACHL policy and procedures

5.1. Standards

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| National Community Housing Standards |
| Department of Human Services Standards |

Related legislation, industry frameworks and standards, ACHL policy and procedures (cont.)

5.2. Legislation

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| Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983 No. 42 (NSW) |
| Housing Assistance Act 1996 (COM) |
| Housing Act. 1983 (VIC) |
| Housing Act 2003 (QLD) |
| The Australian Consumer Law, 2011 (ACL) |
| The Privacy Act 1988 |
| Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 |
| Queensland Human Rights Act 2019 |

5.3. Residential Tenancy Acts

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| Residential Tenancies Act. 1997 (VIC) |
| Residential Tenancies Act 2010 (NSW) |
| Residential Tenancies Act 1987 (WA) |
| Residential Tenancy Act 1997 (TAS) |
| Residential Tenancies Act 1995 (SA) |
| Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008 (QLD) |

5.4. Codes, frameworks and agreements

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| National Disability Insurance Scheme (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018 |
| The National Affordable Housing Agreement |
| OOH, Homelessness Assistance Program Guidelines and Conditions Funding 2006-2009 (VIC) |
| Consumer Charter for Community Managed Housing and Homelessness Services |
| Western Australian Community Housing Regulatory Framework |
| National Regulatory Code |
| Victorian Regulatory Framework |
| The Human Rights and Responsibilities Charter Act 2006 (VIC) |

5.5. ACHL related policies and processes

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| ACHL Housing and Homelessness Policies and Procedures |
| ACHL Customer Promise |
| ACHL Complaints Procedure |
| ACHL Appeals Policy and Procedure |
| ACHL Disciplinary Action Policy |
| ACHL Disciplinary Action Procedure |
| ACHL Tenancy Manual |

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