

NEIGHBOUR RELATIONS POLICY

1 Purpose

This policy outlines the approach of EACH Housing (EHL) in regard to relationships between renters, neighbours and local communities and also in relation to a variety of cross management issues.

EHL's objectives for this policy are to promote co-operation and exchange of information in resolving any neighbourhood matters, establishing guidelines for positive relationships between our renters, neighbours, local community and service providers. In addition, EHL seeks to outline the approach to neighbourhood disputes.

1.1 Promoting being a Good Neighbour

EHL considers various ways to promote being a good neighbour. In particular, EHL ensures all renters are aware of their legal obligations to provide quiet enjoyment and that they also have a right to enjoy quiet enjoyment.

1.2 Accessible & Open Communication for neighbours to contact EACH Housing Ltd

EHL is open to receive communication from all stakeholders in regard to matters that concern the tenancies EHL manage.

EHL listens and documents concerns raised without any judgement.

EHL has a process for handling the matters raised including investigation and clarity in regard to when the stakeholder will receive further communication.

EHL also provides clarity to stakeholders that it is required to work within certain legal obligations such as the Residential Tenancies Act and its applicable processes.

EHL always communicates in a manner that is professional, respectful and clear.

1.3 Privacy of Renters and Complainants

EHL is mindful of the privacy of renters in its communication per our Privacy Policy.

EHL is also respectful of the privacy of all stakeholders and will seek clarification and permission from the relevant stakeholders if the information they have provided is to be disclosed to other parties.

There are times where a complainant is concerned about safety in disclosing information. In this situation, EHL will provide a statement with no identification to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) and/or seek VCAT suppression of the identity of the complainant.

EHL also communicates, where consent is not given to release information, that this may impact on resolution of the matter.

1.4 Criminal Activity to be reported to Police

Where there are matters of a criminal nature, EHL will encourage the complainant to direct the matter to the Victorian Police.

EHL will investigate breaches of the Residential Tenancies Act (RTA). If an illegal activity is carried out at the EHL's rented property, EHL may request information from the Victorian Police to support any breach of the RTA.

1.5 Compliance with Residential Tenancies Act

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EHL operates within the laws and regulation of the Residential Tenancies Act.

Where a Breach of a Tenancy Agreement has been established, EHL will abide by and act within these laws and regulations and the processes of VCAT.

1.6 Administration

EHL encourages the complainant(s) to keep records and evidence of the dispute or matter of concern. This may include the date, time and location of any relevant event or communication, photographic or video evidence, details of any authorities (e.g. police) involvement including name of the police officer, date and time of involvement and any witness details.

EHL document any matters raised in its system and if required, ensures that it follows all requirements to comply with VCAT.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to all EHL long term properties managed by EHL (owned or leased).

This Policy does not apply to the following:

- Deuchar Place as this is accommodation for respite.
- Programs operated by EACH (not EHL) which include accommodation as part of the program. Examples of this includes Youth Residential Rehabilitation Programs and Residential Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation.

3. Definitions

Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (RTA) - In Australia, laws that apply to tenancy agreements vary from state to state. The legislation that covers Rental Providers and renters in Victoria is called the Residential Tenancies Act (RTA). The purpose of the RTA is to define the rights and duties of Rental Providers and renters/residents of:

- Rented premises
- Rooming houses
- Caravan parks

Renters' rights and duties vary slightly with each of the options.

The provisions in the RTA outline procedures to avoid and/or resolve disputes under the Act.

Renter - A person who occupies land or property rented from a Rental Provider

4. How the Policy can be Changed

EHL may from time to time implement changes to this Policy. The revised Policy will apply to all tenancies on and from the date of the change.

EHL will implement strategies to mitigate the effect of any changes of this policy on renters and households.

5. Contact Officer

The Operations Manager – EACH Housing via email: housing@each.com.au

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6. References/Relevant Legislation

This policy implements the obligations of EHL under:

- Residential Tenancies Act .1997 (Vic)
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Consumer Affairs Victoria
- Housing Registrar
- Victorian Housing Register
- Housing Act 1983 (Vic)

7. Implementation Procedures

Procedures established by EHL include processes to ensure compliance with this policy, including the following:

- Breach of Tenancy Procedure
- Property Inspection Procedure
- Good Neighbour Guideline
- Service Level Agreements (Housing Provider and Support Provider)

8. Related Policies/Documents

- Starting a Tenancy Policy
- During a Tenancy Policy
- Consumer Affairs Renters Rights and Responsibility Booklet
- Ending a Tenancy Policy
- Customer Complaints and Appeals Policy