

WINTRINGHAM HOUSING MANAGING DISPUTES POLICY

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Purpose This policy will set out how Wintringham Housing will manage disputes and conflict between renters.

Policy Statement Wintringham Housing respects the rights of all renters to live in quiet enjoyment, in a home that is safe and affordable and free from conflict.

This policy outlines the approach to managing disputes between renters, rental providers and other parties in a fair, transparent, and consistent manner. It aims to foster a positive living environment, encourage clear communication, and resolve conflicts efficiently, while respecting the rights and responsibilities of all parties involved.

Commitment Wintringham Housing is committed to:

- having a fair and respectful approach to managing renter disputes that arise
- promoting respectful and cooperative relationships
- ensuring issues are resolved in a timely and effective manner
- providing assistance on an impartial basis
- being pro-active rather than reactive in its response to complaints or grievances being raised.

Scope This policy applies to residents residing in Wintringham owned or managed properties across Victoria and Tasmania.

This policy should be read in conjunction with Wintringham's [Complaints Policy](#) (L_M 3.20)

Definitions

GMHCS	General Manager Homelessness and Client Support
HHS Manager	Housing and Homelessness Support Manager
Owned	Properties owned by Wintringham Housing
Managed	Properties managed on behalf of another owner of the property by Wintringham.
Renter	May also be referred to as a tenant, is a person who has the right to occupy a residential property under a residential tenancy agreement.
RTA	Residential Tenancy Act
Rental Provider	May also be referred to as the landlord, is the owner of a property, but it can also include agents acting on behalf of the owner.
Wintringham Housing	Refers to both Victoria Wintringham Housing owned and managed and Tasmania Wintringham managed properties unless stated.

Responsibilities

Tenancy Management Worker (TMW) & Housing Support Worker (HSW)	Responsible for proactively addressing any arising issues that may escalate between renters and escalating issues or concerns with their line manager.
HHS Coordinator	Responsible for providing ongoing supervision to Housing Support Workers, in order to strengthen their skills when providing housing support. The HHS Coordinator will also keep the HHS Manager informed of any arising or ongoing disputes.
HHS Manager / Tenancy Manager	Responsible for supporting their staff to effectively deal with disputes. They will also be available to address disputes that have escalated and require management intervention.
GMHCS	Have oversight of this policy, by ensuring there is a partnership between the Tenancy and Support teams.

Procedure

1. In the event that a dispute arises between renters in Wintringham Housing properties, Wintringham will assess the nature of the issue, to determine the appropriate course of action.
 - 1.1.1 If the matter relates to support or advocacy needs, it will be referred to Wintringham's Housing Support team, to assist the renter to access the most appropriate avenues for support.
 - 1.1.2 If the matter relates to the tenancy, it will be referred to the Tenancy Management Worker for follow-up.
2. Matters between renters living in properties managed by another provider, may need to be referred to that provider's Tenancy Management Worker for investigation if the matter relates to a complaint under the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic & Tas)*.
3. If the dispute requires further investigation, the Tenancy Management Worker will liaise with team members as to the most effective means of resolution.
4. If the matter constitutes a complaint under [Complaints Policy](#) (L_M 3.20), the renter/s will be assisted to follow this procedure.

The resident should also be made aware of their right to advocacy services. Refer to [Advocacy Guidelines](#) (L_M 3.21)
5. If the dispute is ongoing and proves to be unresolvable, a renter may be re-referred to the social housing waitlist.
6. A renter may be offered a transfer to another property in accordance with [Wintringham Housing - Housing Transfers Policy](#) (TMM 1.7).
7. Where the dispute in question is between a Wintringham Housing property and the complainant is a neighbour who is not living in a Wintringham Housing property, the complainant will be asked to complete a [Wintringham Housing - Non Wintringham Neighbour Complaint Form](#) (TMM Fm 1.8a).

8. For criminal matters, the issue will be referred to the Police, and outstanding tenancy-related matters will be directed to the Victorian Housing Registrar, Tenants Union, or the Tasmanian Dispute Settlement Centre, as appropriate.
9. All complaints and/or feedback will be logged in Riskware to support trends analysis.

Legislation & Standards

Residential Tenancies Act (1997) Vic
Residential Tenancies Act (1997) Tas
Residential Tenancies Act Regulations (1998)

Resources

DFFH Tenancy Management Policy and Procedures Manual (2003)
National Community Housing Standards Manual (2003)

Related Documents

TMM 1.7	Wintringham Housing - Housing Transfers Policy
TMM Fm 1.8a	Wintringham Housing - Non Wintringham Neighbour Complaint Form
L_M 3.21	Advocacy Guidelines
L_M 3.20	Complaints Policy

Authorisation

This policy has been authorised by General Manager Homelessness and Client Support – January / 2025

Review Date

January / 2028

This policy is published on the Wintringham website www.wintringham.org.au