



# Pacific Community Housing



# POLICY HANDBOOK

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# Introduction

## Who is Pacific Community Housing?

Greater Sydney is place full of opportunities to have a fulfilled life. Having a home that is affordable, accessible and comfortable is a vital ingredient to enable an individual to excel in life in Sydney.

Unfortunately, the cost of housing in Sydney can undermine the opportunities for those who struggle to find housing that is affordable. Pacific Community Housing understands that not everyone in society is able to access quality, safe and secure housing.

Pacific Community Housing is a community housing provider that is guided by the objective of promoting and providing access to safe and secure housing for those in need so they too can share in the opportunities Sydney provides.

We are committed to providing excellent services that will bring dignity to those who are vulnerable by offering financially affordable dwellings so our tenants can afford other basic living costs such as food, clothing, transport, medical care and education.

We seek to use the skills in our organisation and the value generated through our projects to make a difference to the lives of people on low to moderate incomes, including key workers, by reinvesting back into the community and growing the number of secure affordable housing options we provide.

### What is this handbook for?

This handbook outlines the policies and forms Pacific Community Housing will use to ensure high quality performance outcomes as a Tier 3 provider of Community Housing. They are intended to:

- Guide the operations of Pacific Community Housing.
- Guide the management and services of all Pacific Community Housing properties.
- Ensure fair, transparent and impartial allocations of all rental properties.
- Bring dignity to those who are most vulnerable by offering financially affordable dwellings.
- Provide assistance to people who are 'key workers' in an area.

### How was this handbook created?

These detailed policies and forms have been created using the guiding principles of:

- The Goals, Vision, Mission and Values of Pacific Community Housing
- NSW Affordable Housing Ministerial Guidelines
- National Regularly System of Community Housing (NRSCH)
- NRSCH National Regularly Code
- NRSCH Tier Guidelines
- NSW Community Housing Rent Policy

### How will we handle a person's privacy and confidentiality?

Pacific Community Housing will keep applicants', tenants' and residents' information and feedback confidential, in line with privacy laws and standards.

### How will we handle complaints and appeals?

An applicant for affordable housing who is not happy with a decision made by Pacific Community Housing or who believes that Pacific Community Housing has not followed this policy can appeal using the appeals policy that is available on the Pacific Community Housing website [www.PCH.com.au](http://www.PCH.com.au) or by phoning Pacific Community Housing directly during business hours.

### How will we provide quality assurance?

The Eligibility for Affordable Housing Policy will be formally reviewed every two years or when necessitated through a sufficient change in circumstances. These policies will also be assessed every two years or amended as required by Pacific Community Housing's Board of Directors.

### How do we assess our performance outcomes?

All our performance outcomes are guided by the NRSCH National Regularly Code ensuring great quality across:

- Tenancy Management
- Housing Assets
- Community Engagement
- Governance
- Probity
- Management
- Financial Viability



PERMORMANCE OUTCOME 1

# Tenancy Management

# Range of Housing Services Delivered

Policy Number 100 | Edited April 2020

## 1. Purpose

This policy outlines the range of housing services Pacific Community Housing delivers.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all assets managed by Pacific Community Housing.

## 3. Principles

Pacific Community Housing is committed to providing excellent services in supplying affordable housing to people who earn low to moderate incomes. The affordable housing options Pacific Community Housing delivers intends to:

- Ensure fair, transparent and impartial allocations of all rental properties.
- Include people who earn low to moderate income or are going through a significant change in their life which impacts their financial situation - such as having a baby, getting a divorce, people leaving home for the first time, moving into retirement or receiving a government pension or benefit.
- Bring dignity to those who are most vulnerable by offering financially affordable dwellings so they can afford other basic living costs such as food, clothing, transport, medical care and education.
- Provide assistance to people who are 'key workers' in an area where Pacific Community Housing has available housing assets.

## 4. Types of Housing

Types of affordable accommodation Pacific Community Housing delivers include:

- Single bedroom apartments
- Multibedroom apartments
- Studio apartments

## 5. Eligibility

Pacific Community Housing delivers affordable housing in some areas and only to those who are eligible. Eligibility for affordable housing mostly depends on whether a household income falls within the maximum limits set by the NSW and/or Australian Governments. The current limits are set out in the table below. More information can be found by reading the 'Affordable Housing Eligibility' policy.

## 6. Legislative Framework and Related Policies

- 'Affordable Housing Eligibility' - Policy.
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Affordable Rental Housing) 2009
- [Community Housing Providers \(Adoption of National Law\) Act 2012](#)
- NSW Affordable Housing Ministerial Guidelines 2019-2020

# Eligibility for Affordable Housing

Policy Number 101 | Edited April 2020

## 1. Purpose

This policy outlines eligibility and application requirements for affordable housing options managed by Pacific Community Housing.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all assets managed by Pacific Community Housing.

## 3. Principles

Pacific Community Housing is committed to providing excellent services in supplying affordable housing to people who earn low to moderate incomes. This policy outlines the eligibility criteria for people wishing to apply for affordable housing through Pacific Community Housing. It is intended to:

- Give clear guidelines on how Pacific Community Housing allocates properties to applicants.
- Ensure fair, transparent and impartial allocations of rental properties.
- Provide assistance to people who are 'key workers' in an area where Pacific Community Housing has available housing assets.
- Bring dignity to those who are most vulnerable by offering financially affordable dwellings so they can afford other basic living costs such as food, clothing, transport, medical care and education.

## 4. Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for Affordable Housing, a prospective tenant must:

- Establish their identity.
- Generally, be 18 years of age or older.
- Be a citizen or have permanent residency in Australia.
- Be a resident in New South Wales (NSW).
- Meet income limits set in the Affordable Housing State Environmental Planning Policy (AHSEPP).
- Be able to sustain a successful tenancy without support or with appropriate support in place.
- Clear any former debts you may have with other social housing providers (if applicable).

Pacific Community Housing will also consider other factors when assessing eligibility. For example:

- **Housing Need:** Whether the prospective tenant is in housing stress whose housing need cannot be met in the short to medium term, those with the potential to transition into home ownership in the medium term and/or social housing applicants/tenant who are seeking another choice of housing more suited to their needs.
- **Private Rental Market:** Whether the prospective tenant would be able to secure suitable or adequate housing in the private rental market.
- **Owning Assets:** Whether the prospective tenant own any assets (e.g. property) that could be used to solve their housing need.
- **Key Worker Eligibility:** Some properties (usually owned by a local council) are only made available for 'key workers' who are permanently employed within the local government area. These include people working in health services, childcare, education, emergency services, public transport, etc.



## 5. Financial Requirements

In addition to the eligibility requirements, the gross household income must fall within one of the following bands:

### National Rental Affordability Scheme (2020-2021)

Household composition	Initial income limit	Existing tenant income limit*
One adult	\$52,324	\$65,405
Two adults	\$72,341	\$90,427
Three adults	\$92,358	115,448
Four adults	\$112,375	\$140,469
Sole parent with one child	\$72,391	\$90,489
Sole parent with two children	\$89,748	\$112,185
Sole parent with three children	\$107,105	\$133,882
Couple with one child	\$89,698	\$112,123
Couple with two children	\$107,055	\$133,819
Couple with three children	\$124,412	\$155,515

\*This column shows figures which are 25 per cent more than the initial household income limits. If the combined gross household income of existing tenants exceeds the initial income limit by 25 per cent or more (i.e. is at or is more than the existing tenant income limit) in two consecutive eligibility years, the tenants will cease to be eligible tenants.

## 6. Former Tenants Eligibility for Affordable Housing

Former Pacific Community Housing tenants who left their property without debt, left the property in a satisfactory condition and who meet the above eligibility criteria are allowed to reapply for housing. If they are not eligible for tenancy reinstatement as per the Transfer Policy, then they will be assessed the same as a general applicant.

Any former tenant who owes a debt to Pacific Community Housing will be eligible to go onto the waiting list but will not receive an offer for housing until the debt is cleared, or they have made regular repayments for 6 continuous months.

Any tenant who had a poor tenancy history with either Pacific Community Housing, another Housing Provider, a private landlord, or who was evicted cannot be considered to go on the waiting list unless they can demonstrate to the satisfaction of Pacific Community Housing that they have adequate support in place, and they are now able to maintain a satisfactory tenancy.

## 7. Ongoing Eligibility

A review of ongoing eligibility will be conducted regularly. At each rent review an assessment will take place. However, if a tenant is on a fixed-term tenancy agreement and Pacific Community Housing remains the landlord, then the eligibility assessment will not be carried out earlier than six months before the end of the fixed term.

To remain in a Pacific Community Housing affordable dwelling, households must continue to meet all the criteria set out in section 4 and 5 of this policy. That is, households still need to meet general eligibility criteria, demonstrate an ongoing housing need and not have assets which could reasonably be expected to meet their housing need.

However, as outlined in the above table, existing tenants are permitted to increase their incomes over time and earn up to 25% above the maximum eligibility income before they become ineligible.

The reason for this is to further assist households to achieve a higher standard of living and/or save in order to purchase a property for themselves to own and live in.

### 8. When a Tenant is No Longer Eligible

Where a tenant is found not to be eligible after a review of eligibility, Pacific Community Housing:

- Can use Section 143 of the Residential Tenancies Act 2010 to terminate the tenancy on the grounds that the tenant is no longer eligible to reside in the class of community housing to which the leasing agreement applies.
- Should assist the tenant in assess alternative housing options.
- Allow a tenant to be given up to twelve months to move to alternative accommodation, if possible.

### 9. Legislative Framework and Related Policies

- Transfers - Policy
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Affordable Rental Housing) 2009
- Residential Tenancies Act 2010
- [Community Housing Providers \(Adoption of National Law\) Act 2012](#)
- NSW Affordable Housing Ministerial Guidelines 2019-2020

# Determining Rents for Affordable Housing

Policy Number 102 | Edited April 2020

## 1. Purpose

This policy outlines how Pacific Community Housing determines rents for its tenants.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all Pacific Community Housing assets.

## 3. Principles

Pacific Community Housing is committed to providing excellent services in supplying affordable housing to people who earn low to moderate incomes. This policy outlines how rents are established for tenants. It is intended to:

- Give clear guidelines on how Pacific Community Housing sets and adjusts rental prices.
- Ensure fair, transparent and impartial rent prices for all Pacific Community Housing properties.
- Provide a discount to market rent taking account of household income, their individual situation and the capacity for households to pay rent without being financially burdened.
- Take each individual household's needs and relevant circumstances into account.
- Show compassion and give support when required should tenants fall into arrears and reach a positive agreement to help tenants resolve any rental arrears.

## 4. How Rents for Affordable Housing are Determined

Rent for Affordable Housing properties varies from area to area and will be determined using the principles set out under the National Rental Affordability Scheme Guidelines. If a household is eligible for community housing as outlined in the Eligibility for Affordable Housing policy, Pacific Community Housing will:

- Set rents at 80 per cent or less than the price of similar properties in the local area\*.
- Aim to ensure households with low to moderate incomes not pay more than 30% of their gross income.
- Guarantee the rent is fixed for full term of the lease.

\* A local area is defined as the average rent for a similar sized dwelling within a 3-kilometre radius of the Pacific Community Housing dwelling.

## 5. Adjusting Rents and Rent Reviews

Rent prices will be reviewed every 12 months, on the anniversary date of a tenant's occupancy or at the conclusion of a lease. Pacific Community Housing will assess the current rents in the local area and determine if an adjustment to the rent needs to be made according to market trends.

Each year Pacific Community Housing will assess if a tenant is still eligible to be offered Affordable Housing and ensure any rent changes will adhere to the rental guidelines in section 4 of this policy titled 'How Rents for Affordable Housing are Determined'.

Tenants will be informed in writing at least 60 days prior to any rent increase. The notice must specify:

- The increased rent.
- The day from which the increased rent applies.

The process for implementing rent increases must be consistent with the Residential Tenancies Act 2010 and, where relevant, with the Australian Government's NRAS Policy Guidelines.

## **6. When a Tenant is Found to be no Longer Eligible**

Where a tenant is found not to be eligible after a review of eligibility, Pacific Community Housing:

- Can use Section 143 of the Residential Tenancies Act 2010 to terminate the tenancy on the grounds that the tenant is no longer eligible to reside in the class of community housing to which the leasing agreement applies.
- Should assist the tenant with exit strategies and assistance as outlined in the Breaking or Terminating a Lease policy.
- Allow a tenant to be given up to twelve months to move to alternative accommodation, depending on their circumstances.

## **7. Legislative Framework and Related Policies**

- Eligibility for Affordable Housing - Policy
- Breaking or Terminating a Lease - Policy
- National Rental Affordability Scheme Act 2008
- Income Tax Assessment Act 1997
- NRAS Regulations
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Affordable Rental Housing) 2009
- Residential Tenancies Act 2010

# Water Charges

Policy Number 103 | Edited April 2020

## 1. Purpose

The intent of this policy is to explain how water usage charges are calculated.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all tenants living in Pacific Community Housing properties.

## 3. Principles

Pacific Community Housing requires tenants living in properties owned or managed by Pacific Community Housing to pay water usage charges in accordance with any invoice received from the Water Authority. Each property incurs charges for water in two categories, fixed and usage charges. Fixed charges include water supply, sewerage and storm water charges. Link Housing pays for these costs in total and they are not passed on to tenants. Usage charges relate to the amount of water used by the household. give clear guidelines on how Pacific Community Housing sets and adjusts rental prices.

## 4. How Water Charges are Calculated

### a) For properties with separate water meters:

Pacific Community Housing will charge tenants for their water usage in accordance with an invoice received from the Water Authority. Water charges invoices will be sent to the tenant and added retrospectively to the tenant's account following each water-billing cycle.

### b) For properties with shared water meters:

Pacific Community Housing will pay for the estimated water usage for all common areas. Pacific Community Housing will deduct 5 percent off the total water usage bill for the property before charging the remainder of the costs to the tenants sharing the property.

Water usage charges will be levied on the number of people per household. For example, if you live in a block of apartments and there are a total of 50 people living at that block, the bill, after the 5 percent deduction for common area usage, will be divided by 50, and then be multiplied by the number of people in the household.

The water usage charge for new tenants will be adjusted to reflect the tenant's predicted water use from the commencement of tenancy. Shared water meter rates will be charged for the days in residence.

Where significant change in water usage has occurred at each site that is unexplained Pacific Community Housing may investigate to ensure there are no leakages at the site.

## 5. Ending a Tenancy

Tenants who leave their home are required to pay any water charges outstanding at the end of the tenancy, adjusted as at the termination date.

## 6. Legislative Framework and Related Policies

- NSW Community Housing Water Charging Guidelines
- Residential Tenancies Act 2010

# Allocations Policy

Policy Number 104 | Edited May 2020

## 1. Purpose

This policy outlines how Pacific Community Housing will make allocations for affordable community housing.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all Pacific Community Housing assets and the people applying for an affordable dwelling managed and leased by Pacific Community Housing.

## 3. Principles

Pacific Community Housing is committed to providing excellent services in supplying affordable housing to people who earn low to moderate incomes. Pacific Community Housing will therefore work diligently to treat every person with the dignity and respect they deserve as a human being. This policy therefore is intended to:

- Ensure all eligible people seeking affordable housing have equal access to such properties.
- Maintain a fair, just and respectful needs-based allocation process.
- Ensure applicants are not discriminated against based on their age, disability, race, colour, national or ethnic origin or immigrant status, sex, pregnancy, marital or relationship status, sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status as outlined in the relevant anti-discrimination laws of Australia.
- Provide an open and transparent application process.

## 4. Allocations Process

Generally, these are the steps Pacific Community Housing will take to select new tenants for vacant properties. These steps are the same steps for every home offered to ensure a fair and just process. They include:

### **Making an Application**

- Potential tenants will need to first contact Pacific Community Housing to make an initial enquiry.
- A Pacific Community Housing team member will answer any questions potential tenants may have.
- If a potential tenant sounds like they may be eligible for affordable housing Pacific Community Housing will provide an 'Application Form', which can be found on the pch.com.au website.
- Potential tenants will then return the completed form with any supporting documentation that may help their application be successful.

### **Initial Assessment of Eligibility**

- Once an application has been received it will be dated and the eligibility assessment begins.
- All applications will be assessed according to the eligibility criteria set forward in the 'Affordable Housing Eligibility' policy and relevant ministerial guidelines.
- Should the applicant meet the eligibility guidelines their application will be stamped 'eligible' and may be contacted for an interview to finalise the eligibility assessment.
- Pacific Community Housing will advise the applicant if their application has been successful and inform them that, though eligible, it does not guarantee being offered an affordable housing property managed and leased by Pacific Community Housing.

### **Waiting List**

- If there are no Pacific Community Housing properties vacant, they will go on a waiting list.
- Applicants should be advised they can apply for affordable housing through other providers listed with the Department of Social Services.
- Applicants have the responsibility to keep Pacific Community Housing up to date with any changes to their contact details or circumstances that might no longer make them eligible.
- Pacific Community Housing may in future contact eligible applicants on their wait list should an appropriate housing option become available.

### **Matching Applicants to Properties**

In order to match applicants with the most appropriate property Pacific Community Housing will consider:

- The unique circumstances and needs of each individual household.
- Whether the prospective tenant is in housing stress.
- How much rent the applicant can reasonably pay in order to afford other necessities.
- Which property types are vacant (such as ground floor property, level access property, properties with yards, studio and high-rise properties, special modifications, maximum number of stairs etc.)
- Location of property to applicant's workplace and/or important relatives.
- Whether the applicant is considered a 'key workers' who are permanently employed within the local government area. These include people working in health services, childcare, education, emergency services, public transport, etc.
- Number of bedrooms according to family size (taking into account future accommodation needs).
- Background checks and previous rental history.

Pacific Community Housing will work closely with all eligible applicants to ensure that:

- the property being offered reflects the needs of the applicant's household.
- the location matches the applicant's needs.
- the neighbourhood and the new tenant are compatible.
- the rental value will not place the new tenant under any unreasonable financial stress.

### **Housing Offers**

Once a suitable property match for an applicant is found the following will happen:

- Pacific Community Housing will contact the applicant and make arrangements for them to view the property as soon as possible.
- If the applicant cannot be contacted or fails to respond within 3 working days, the offer will be withdrawn, and the next suitable applicant will be offered the property.
- Pacific Community Housing will provide the applicant with a Lease Agreement Form.
- Once the property has been viewed by the applicant, they will have 24 hours to accept or decline the offer. If no response is received within the 24-hour timeframe the offer will be withdrawn and it will be permanently marked on their record for any future applications.
- If declined the applicant has 28 days to submit in writing the reasons for their rejection.
- Pacific Community Housing supports the rights for applicants to appeal any decision. Should Pacific Community Housing deem the reasons for their rejections as reasonable they will try to find an alternative suitable property.

- Applicants who continually reject suitable properties offered will no longer be eligible to apply for affordable housing through Pacific Community Housing and will permanently be placed on an ineligibility list. They may however apply through another affordable housing provider.

## 5. Legislative Framework and Related Policies

- Affordable Housing Eligibility - Policy
- Range of Affordable Housing Services - Policy
- Affordable Housing Rents - Policy
- Leasing Agreement - Form
- National Rental Affordability Scheme Act 2008
- Income Tax Assessment Act 1997
- NRAS Regulations
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Affordable Rental Housing) 2009
- Residential Tenancies Act 2010



# Tenant Rights and Responsibilities

Policy Number 105 | Edited April 2020

## 1. Purpose

This policy outlines the rights and responsibilities of each tenant/household living in a Pacific Community Housing property.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all Pacific Community Housing assets and its tenants.

## 3. Principles

Having access to affordable housing is a human right, but it is also a privilege. This policy therefore outlines the rights and responsibilities each tenant/household has if they wish to continue to access affordable housing provided by Pacific Community Housing. The majority of these rights are defined in the Residential Tenancies Act 2010. This policy is intended to:

- Provide a clear understanding of a person's rights as a tenant
- Outline the responsibilities of a tenant
- Highlight the consequences should a person fail in their responsibilities as a tenant

## 4. Rights as a Tenant

A tenant living in one of Pacific Community Housing's properties has certain rights under law, including:

- Being treated fairly and respectfully.
- Being explained their tenancy, including how much rent they will pay.
- Being informed of all decisions made about their tenancy, including rent reviews, applications for additional occupants, relations and transfers.
- Being given copies of all documents required for tenancy.
- Having Pacific Community Housing's policies and procedures clearly explained to them when necessary.
- Having access to an interpreter, if needed.
- Having the right to have someone (an advocate) act on their behalf.
- That the property is reasonably clean when they move in and for repairs and maintenance to be arranged during the duration of their lease agreement.
- That the property has adequate security and a working smoke alarm/s.
- That Pacific Community Housing requests permission to access the property unless in an emergency.
- That Pacific Community Housing fulfils their obligations to refer child protection issues to the appropriate authorities.
- Having the right to enjoy the home peacefully.
- Having the right to end their tenancy early with no consequence if they are in circumstances of domestic violence and are not the perpetrator.
- That Pacific Community Housing provide the tenant with adequate notice for any breach of their tenancy agreement or notice to evacuate if the tenancy is at an end.

## 5. Responsibilities of the Tenant

Living in a Pacific Community Housing property means you live as part of a wider community. Therefore, in addition to the rights of a tenant, a person accessing the benefits of community housing

also has a number of responsibilities to ensure the property and the larger community are safe and well respected.

A tenant is also responsible for all household members and any visitors who visit the property. These responsibilities include:

- Paying rent on time and continuing to pay rent until the tenancy ends.
- Meeting all payment responsibilities on time, including rent, water usage charges and bonds etc.
- Keeping the property clean and tidy to a reasonable standard, including gardens.
- Ensure no damage is done to the property by them, a household member or visitor.
- Reporting any repairs and maintenance to Pacific Community Housing as soon as problems occur.
- Personally, occupying the premises.
- Notifying Pacific Community Housing within 28 days of any change to your circumstances, such as employment, total income or number of people living in the property.
- Asking Pacific Community Housing for permission before making changes to the property.
- Looking after the security of the property, including advising if there are any issues with smoke alarms or other safety hazards.
- Treating all employees of Pacific Community Housing fairly and respectfully.
- Strictly abiding by Pacific Community Housing's Pets Policy.
- Having a good community spirit, helping keep the place you live in safe and pleasant.
- Ensuring the people living in your home and/or visitors do not cause a nuisance or annoyance to your neighbours and surrounding community.
- Not participating in any anti-social behaviour, including but not limited to, criminal activity, emission of excessive noise, littering, dumping of cars, vandalism and defacing of property.
- Not participating in and reporting abuse of any kind, including domestic abuse.
- Not discriminating someone for their age, being disabled, gender, gender identity, marital status, being pregnant or having a child, religious beliefs, race, skin colour, birthplace born or sexuality.
- Giving fair notice if you intend to move.
- Leaving the property in a good and clean condition as you found it.
- Paying all outstanding debts to Pacific Community Housing.

## 6. Consequences for Failing in the Responsibilities as a Tenant

If a tenant fails in their responsibilities as a tenant or if a complaint is logged against them, Pacific Community Housing will:

- Fairly and impartially investigate the issue or complaint.
- If not legally obliged otherwise, where possible, give the tenant in writing a formal warning and a reasonable timeframe to make reparations for their actions.
- When required evict the tenant adhering to Pacific Community Housing's 'Breaking or Terminating a Lease' policy.

## 7. Legislative Framework and Related Policies

- Breaking or Terminating a Lease - Policy
- Pets - Policy
- National Rental Affordability Scheme Act 2008
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Affordable Rental Housing) 2009
- Residential Tenancies Act 2010

# Tenure of a Lease

Policy Number 106 | Edited April 2020

## 1. Purpose

This policy outlines how long a tenant can lease an affordable housing property through Pacific Community Housing.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all Pacific Community Housing assets and its tenants.

## 3. Principles

Though there are no set limits on the length of time a household can remain in an affordable housing property, this policy intends to show how Pacific Community Housing will offer services, where possible, in an ongoing and ever-growing way.

## 4. Tenure

A tenant living in one of Pacific Community Housing's properties may continue to rent the property for either:

- A fixed term.  
or
- A continuous basis.

This is conditional on whether or not:

- A tenant remains eligible to access affordable housing as outlined in Pacific Community Housing's Eligibility for Affordable Housing policy.  
or
- Pacific Community Housing can reasonably demonstrate a better agreement for both the tenant and the provider. If this is the case, then Pacific Community Housing must have offered the tenant a similar or better and reasonable alternative property.

Should a tenant become ineligible to access affordable housing or if Pacific Community Housing can reasonably demonstrate a better agreement for both the tenant and the provider then the Breaking or Terminating a Lease policy will be followed.

## 5. Legislative Framework and Related Policies

- Eligibility for Affordable Housing - Policy
- Breaking or Terminating a Lease - Policy
- National Rental Affordability Scheme Act 2008
- NRAS Regulations
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Affordable Rental Housing) 2009
- Residential Tenancies Act 2010

# ***Pets Policy***

**Policy Number 107 | Edited May 2020 | Version 1**

## **1. Purpose**

This policy outlines what pets are and are not allowed in properties owned by Pacific Community Housing.

## **2. Scope**

This policy applies to all Pacific Community Housing assets and its tenants.

## **3. Principles**

Pacific Community Housing residents live as part of a wider community. Therefore, this policy aims to maintain a safe, peaceful and harmonious environment among all its residents.

## **4. Pets**

With very few exceptions, Pacific Community Housing permanently maintains a 'no pets' policy.

## **5. Exceptions**

Tenants may apply to keep a pet if:

- They require a companion animal for documented medical reasons. These requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- The animals are small fish in an aquarium or small caged birds, such as budgerigars.
- If the specific property has a site specific pets policy.

## **6. Before Getting a Pet**

Pets require a certain amount of attention and care. Pacific Community Housing will therefore ask the tenant to consider if they have the time and finances to care for a pet with the kind of time and attention it needs to live a happy and healthy life. The RSPCA provides lots of excellent information about how to care for a pet. Information can be found on the RSPCA with their article titled [What do I need to know before I get a new pet?](#)

## **7. Written Requests**

A tenant wanting to have a pet needs to send in a written request to Pacific Community Housing and receive approval before getting a pet. The following information needs to be provided:

- The type and breed of pet.
- The size of the pet.
- How many pets they want (for example - 10 fish).
- How the tenant will care for the pet.

Pacific Community Housing will assess applications within 14 days. If approval is given, the tenant will need to sign a pet agreement before getting a pet.

## 8. Consequences

Should a tenant be found to be housing a pet that is not allowed under this policy or if the tenant has not formally applied to keep the pet living with them, then:

- Pacific Community Housing will use the Breaking or Terminating a Lease policy to reasonably assess the situation.
- Pacific Community Housing has the right to ask the tenant to find another suitable home for the pet.

## 9. Legislative Framework and Related Policies

- Breaking or Terminating a Lease – Policy
- Companion Animals Act 1998
- Residential Tenancies Act 2010
- Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979

# Breaking or Terminating a Lease

Policy Number 108 | Edited April 2020

## 1. Purpose

This policy outlines what happens if a tenant breaks a lease agreement early or if Pacific Community Housing needs to terminate a lease and evict a tenant.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all Pacific Community Housing assets and its tenants.

## 3. Principles

Pacific Community Housing will work diligently to treat every person with the dignity and respect they deserve as a human being. This policy therefore is intended to:

- Honour and support tenants, should they struggle to fulfil their rental agreement.
- Highlight the rights Pacific Community Housing has should tenants fail to adhere to the 'Tenant Rights and Responsibilities' policy.

## 4. Breaking or Terminating a Lease

Should a tenant break a lease early a nominal break fee will be charged for administration purposes. Should there be any damage to the property or is left in an unsatisfactory way the tenant's bond will not be refunded. If a tenant intends to break a lease for any reason, Pacific Community Housing must be notified in writing at least 60 days prior. If notice is not given in the appropriate timeframe their bond will not be returned. The notice must specify:

- Why the tenant is breaking the lease agreement early.
- The day from which they will move out from the property.

Pacific Community Housing has the right to evict a tenant should they fail to adhere to the 'Tenant Rights and Responsibilities' policy. The following situations constitute a breach of agreement:

- Failure to pay rent.
- They are consistently late with payments.
- Damage is caused to the property.
- Being a nuisance to neighbours.
- Using the property for illegal purposes.
- Breach of any other obligations as outlined in the 'Tenant Rights and Responsibilities' policy.

If Pacific Community Housing intends to evict a tenant, they must:

- Provide an opportunity for the tenant to rectify the problem giving them a timeframe to reform.
- Highlight the opportunities under the Exit Strategies and Assistance of this policy.
- Give written notice at least 14 days prior to the eviction.
- Provide valid reasons for the eviction.
- Proceed to the appropriate governing body when necessary if a tenant does not respond to the request to vacate the property.
- Can get a warrant for possession from the tribunal if the tenant does not vacate. This warrant enables sheriff's officer to remove a tenant from the property.
- Keep written records of everything.

## 5. Exit Strategies and Assistance

Pacific Community Housing will work with tenants in a positive way to help them reach the end of their lease agreement. Any reached exit agreement should benefit and not hinder either the tenant or Pacific Community Housing.

Prior to an eviction for failure of rental payments Pacific Community Housing will first encourage the tenant to use government or third party budgeting programs (for example [www.mybudget.com.au](http://www.mybudget.com.au)) to help with budgeting, paying rent, paying back any arrears owed and/or saving for home ownership.

## 6. Vacating a Property

Pacific Community Housing may organise an initial inspection to clarify any issues that may need to be resolved prior to the tenant moving out. Discussion with the tenant arising from the inspection may include, but is not limited to:

- Repayment of any rent owed
- Any other outstanding debts
- Work which need to be done to leave the property in a reasonable condition
- Removal of items/furniture/garbage
- Access to the property for viewings
- Forwarding address for mail
- Returning all keys

Pacific Community Housing and the tenant will then set a date for the final inspection of the premises when, or as soon as possible after, the tenancy has ended.

## 7. Legislative Framework and Related Policies

- Tenant Rights and Responsibilities – Policy
- Complaints and Appeals - Policy
- NRAS Regulations
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Affordable Rental Housing) 2009
- Residential Tenancies Act 2010
- Community Housing Providers (Adoption of National Law) Act 2012 (NSW)

# Arrears Management

Policy Number 109 | Edited May 2020

## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear framework for the management and collection of rent and non-rent arrears based on a fair and consistent approach. The policy recognises that early action is crucial if tenants' arrears are to be kept under control, thus avoiding the build-up of a debt they cannot repay, and which may ultimately lead to the loss of their housing.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all Pacific Community Housing tenants.

## 3. Principles

Tenants are responsible for ensuring that their rent and other charges (e.g. rental bond, rent, water charges or repayment of costs relating to property damage) are paid in full when due. Pacific Community Housing will take action to seek payment of this debt, in keeping with the relevant Residential Tenancies Act. Pacific Community Housing will manage this by:

- Monitoring the payment of rent and other charges and where appropriate will liaise with tenants to help them avoid arrears or to pay off arrears by instalments.
- Reminding the tenant that failure to pay rent and non-rent charges on time may ultimately result in Pacific Community Housing taking action to terminate the tenancy.

## 4. Applying this Policy

Early intervention is crucial when a tenant's rent account goes into arrears, in order to protect the tenant from further debt. Pacific Community Housing will monitor accounts and contact a tenant if they fall into arrears, with a view to clearing the debt. This may include contact by phone, letter, email or home visits.

Tenants are encouraged to speak to Pacific Community Housing staff before they get into difficulty with their payments. Managing rent and non-rent debt may involve different strategies depending on the circumstances. These strategies may include:

- Negotiating a repayment plan. If a tenant is unable to clear the debt in one payment, a minimum weekly repayment amount will be determined based on the tenant's gross household income.
- Referral to financial counselling or assistance (such as [www.mybudget.com.au](http://www.mybudget.com.au)).
- Seeking government assistance.
- Obtaining a Specific Performance Order (SPO) through the relevant Civil and Administrative Tribunal. An SPO is a legally binding order.

An SPO will generally be sought only when Pacific Community Housing has been unable to make contact with the tenant, the tenant refuses to seek financial counselling and/or assistance or if the tenant does not meet payments under an agreed repayment plan. In cases where the tenant repeatedly fails to keep to a repayment plan or SPO, or has arrears due to persistently late payments, Pacific Community Housing may issue a Termination Notice and proceed to the relevant Civil and Administrative Tribunal to terminate the tenancy. However Pacific Community Housing will only seek to terminate a tenancy when all alternative strategies have been tried and failed.

## 5. Legislative Framework and Related Policies

- Breaking or Terminating a Lease - Policy
- Residential Tenancies Act 2010



# Complaints and Appeals

Policy Number 110 | Edited April 2020

## 1. Purpose

This policy explains what a complaint is, how people can make a complaint and how Pacific Community Housing will manage complaints received.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to complaints received from applicants, tenants and stakeholders of Pacific Community Housing and its subsidiaries. This policy does not deal with complaints from tenants about other tenants.

## 3. Principles

Applicants, tenants and stakeholders have the right to complain and will not be disadvantaged for making a complaint. Pacific Community Housing will:

- Be fair and transparent when dealing with complaints.
- Welcome complaints and will use the outcomes to improve all services.
- Encourage applicants and tenants to get help from an advocate or support person at any point during the complaints process.
- Any applicants, tenants and stakeholders to remain anonymous when making complaints.

## 4. Definitions

### Complaint

A complaint is when a customer tells Pacific Community Housing that they are unhappy with our service or products and the person expects a response from us. A person can complain about our services or products even if the service or product is being provided by a 3rd party on behalf of Pacific Community Housing. A complaint is not a request for information and is different to an appeal.

### Complainant

The complainant is the person making the complaint.

### Appeal

An appeal is when someone asks us to review a decision we made.

### Working Days

Working days means days our offices are open (e.g. Monday and Friday). It doesn't include weekends and public holidays.

## 5. Lodging a Complaint

If a customer is unhappy with our services or products, they should make a complaint as soon as possible.

People can complain by email, letter and phone or by completing a Complaint form. This is on our website or a copy is available from our office.

Complaints should be made within 3 months from the time of the issue.

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

## 6. Investigating and 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 NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (the tenancy tribunal), we may tell the person about any time limits that apply if they are thinking about applying to the tenancy tribunal.

Complaints will be directed to the Customer Feedback Representative who will formally lodge the complaint and coordinate the complaints handling process.

Any complaints received about the CEO or a Director will be directed to the Chairman of the Board of Directors. Complaints being handled by the Chairman of the Board of Directors will be monitored via Board meetings. Any complaints other than those about the CEO or a Director, received by a Director will be referred to the CEO who will delegate the 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.

It is the responsibility of the complainant to determine whether they should lodge an application with the tenancy tribunal.

## 7. Responding to Complaints and Record Keeping

Once we have investigated the complaint, we will respond to the person in writing and tell them the outcome of their complaint. Our response will explain the reason for our decision and will explain the options the person has if they still aren't happy.

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.

Substantiated complaints about our employees will be kept in the employees personnel file and action will be taken under our relevant policies and procedures.

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.

## 8. 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 services.

## 9. Corruption

If a complaint concerns corrupt conduct, the matter will be referred to the CEO or a General Manager. All such information will be treated in a confidential manner.

## 10. 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.
- Contacting the Tenants Advice and Advocacy Service or Community Legal Centre for information, advice and advocacy.
- Making a complaint to the Federation of Housing Associations (FHA). FHA will address complaints against community housing providers who are signed up to the Code of Practice, when the person has tried to resolve the complaint through our internal complaints process and if the complaint relates to a breach of the Code of Practice.
- Making a complaint to the Registrar of Community Housing. The Registrar investigates complaints about community housing providers that have been registered under the Housing Act. Complaints can be lodged about a community housing provider's performance against the Regulatory Code.
- Making an application to the tenancy tribunal if they believe we haven't met our legal duties under their tenancy agreement.

## 11. Managing Unreasonable Complainant Conduct

We may modify or limit contact with a complainant where a complainant's behaviour has been unreasonable. Refer to our 'Managing Unreasonable Complainants' policy for more information.

## 12. Requests for Compensation

If a person requests compensation, they must submit the request in writing and provide details of the date of the incident, what happened and what they are claiming. After an investigation, the Head of Governance and Commercial Advisory will make a recommendation to the CEO for approval or advise the applicant that the matter should be dealt with at the tenancy tribunal. We will respond to the person, in writing, within 20 working days from the date we received the request. If there is likely to be a delay, we will tell the person how long we expect our response to take and the reasons for the delay.

## 13. Legislative Framework and Related Policies

- Complaints - Form
- Managing Unreasonable Complainants - Policy
- NRAS Regulations
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Affordable Rental Housing) 2009
- Residential Tenancies Act 2010

# Managing Unreasonable Complaints

Policy Number 111 | Edited April 2020

## 1. Purpose

This policy explains what will happen if a tenant makes an unreasonable complaint or continues to contact Pacific Community Housing in an unreasonable and persistent way.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all tenants living in a property owned or managed by Pacific Community Housing.

## 3. Principles

Pacific Community Housing is committed to being accessible and responsive to all complainants who contact us for assistance with a complaint or a way to improve services. At the same time the success of Pacific Community Housing to provide quality affordable housing services depends on:

- Our ability to do our work and perform our functions in the most effective and efficient ways possible.
- The health, safety and security of Pacific Community Housing staff.
- Our ability to allocate our resources equally and fairly across all tenants.

When complainants behave unreasonably in their dealings with us, their conduct can significantly affect our ability to work effectively for the benefit of all. As a result, Pacific Community Housing will take proactive and decisive action to manage any complainants or ongoing behaviour that negatively and unreasonably affects our ability to function as an efficient provider of affordable housing.

## 4. What is Deemed to be Unreasonable

The five categories Pacific Community Housing deems to be unreasonable conduct are:

- Unreasonable persistence.
- Unreasonable demands.
- Unreasonable cooperation.
- Unreasonable arguments.
- Unreasonable behaviour.

## 5. Definitions

### Unreasonable Persistence

Unreasonable persistence is continued, incessant and unrelenting conduct by a complainant that has a disproportionate and unreasonable impact on Pacific Community Housing staff, services, time and/or resources. Some examples of unreasonably persistent behaviour include, but is not limited to:

- An unwillingness to accept reasonable requests and considerations.
- Continually appealing a reasonable decision following a complaint.
- Reframing a complaint in an attempt to have a decision reviewed.
- Constantly contacting staff by phone, email, letter or visits.
- Bypassing Pacific Community Housing to contact 3rd party contractors directly to get their demands met.

### **Unreasonable Demands**

Unreasonable demands are any demands (express or implied) that are made by a complainant that have a disproportionate and unreasonable impact on Pacific Community Housing staff, services, time and/or resources. Some examples of unreasonable demands include, but is not limited to:

- Insisting on talking to a Senior Manager when it is not warranted.
- Issuing instructions to staff or contractors on how things should be conducted.
- Using emotional blackmail or threats with the intention to guilt, intimidate or shame.
- Demanding services that are of a nature or scale that Pacific Community Housing cannot provide.

### **Unreasonable Cooperation**

Unreasonable cooperation is an unwillingness and/or inability by a complainant to cooperate with Pacific Community Housing staff, or complaints system and processes that result in a disproportionate and unreasonable use of our services, time and/or resources. Some examples of unreasonable cooperation include, but is not limited to:

- Writing a letter or issuing a complaint which is unreasonably lengthy, incomprehensible, disorganised or intended to harm the reputation of Pacific Community Housing instead of dealing with the situation.
- Giving little detail when making a complaint.
- Refusing to follow reasonable instructions, suggestions or advice.
- Acting dishonestly or giving misinformation.

### **Unreasonable Arguments**

Unreasonable arguments include any arguments that are not based in reason or logic, that are incomprehensible, false or inflammatory, trivial or delirious and that disproportionately and unreasonably impact upon Pacific Community Housing staff, services, time, and/or resources. Arguments that are unreasonable may include, but are not limited to:

- Failing to follow a reasonable and logical order.
- Not being supported by evidence.
- Being trivial when compared to the amount of time and resources the complainant demands.
- Being intentionally inflammatory or defamatory.

### **Unreasonable Behaviour**

Unreasonable behaviour is conduct that is unreasonable in all circumstances – regardless of how stressed, angry or frustrated that a complainant is – because it unreasonably compromises the health, safety and security of Pacific Community Housing staff or the complainant. Some examples of unreasonable behaviours may include, but is not limited to:

- Acts of aggression including physical or verbal abuse.
- Derogatory, racist, sexist or defamatory remarks.
- Harassment, intimidation or emotional manipulation.
- Rude, confronting or threatening correspondence.
- Stalking (in person or online).

## 6. Managing Unreasonable Behaviour

Should Pacific Community Housing deem a tenant's behaviour to be unreasonable according to the above five descriptions of unreasonable behaviour, Pacific Community Housing will initially serve a formal warning letter to the tenant about their conduct and outlining what Pacific Community Housing reasonably requires of them. The formal letter of warning may include, but is not limited to:

- Who the tenant may have contact with at Pacific Community Housing.
- How they are allowed to make contact.  
The length of time they may visit or the length of phone calls made.
- What they are and are not allowed to raise with Pacific Community Housing.

If the tenant continues with the unreasonable behaviour a second warning letter will be issued reminding them of the above requirements and also issuing a warning of possible:

- Refusal to respond to their correspondence.
- Return all correspondence to the tenant.
- Restrictions on allowing only one complaint per month.
- Eviction should their behaviour remain unreasonable.
- Intervention from police and/or other authorities if needed.

## 7. Legislative Framework and Related Policies

- Complaints – Form
- NRSCH Complaints Management - Policy
- NRAS Regulations
- Residential Tenancies Act 2010

PERFORMANCE OUTCOME 2

# Housing Assets



# Asset Maintenance

Policy Number 200 | Edited October 2019

## 1. Purpose

This policy outlines how Pacific Community Housing will manage maintenance of all their properties. Pacific Community Housing will undertake maintenance of all owned properties to:

- ensure all our tenants live in properties that are safe, clean and liveable, as defined in Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC) Asset Performance Standards.
- maximise the useful life of our properties.
- ensure our maintenance decisions align with the Strategic Portfolio Planning and Programming.
- ensure maintenance on our properties is efficient, affordable, reliable, timely and to a good standard.
- meet our legal and regulatory duties as set out in any regulatory framework to which we are bound.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all properties owned, managed and leased by Pacific Community Housing and its subsidiaries. We carry out maintenance on all properties except for leasehold properties.

## 3. Principles

This policy sits within Pacific Community Housing's Asset Management Framework, which outlines a process for strategic asset planning, including 10-year plans and annual asset plans. Pacific Community Housing has a 10 Year Plan and Annual Plan for our overall portfolio and also has policies and procedures that cover all asset management activities.

Pacific Community Housing will:

- Base our planning and investment on agreed measures and rules around asset condition and portfolio need.
- Optimise our investment in maintenance across the whole portfolio to maximise the value for money achieved from this expenditure.
- Formulate our maintenance program in collaboration with Finance as part of budget management process.
- Consult widely with stakeholders, including tenants and LAHC, in developing asset plans.
- Look for opportunities to achieve broader social outcomes for tenants such as training or employment in the delivery of property services where it can be done cost effectively.
- Work collaboratively with LAHC to deliver on Government priorities.
- Work closely with stakeholders and other housing providers, particularly community housing providers in adjacent regions, and develop an efficiency in joint plans where appropriate.



#### 4. Internal Maintenance

For maintenance inside properties, the general principle is that we will undertake work where it is most needed. Priority is derived from regular inspections of the properties with an emphasis on those Below Maintained Standard (BMS) or categorised as high priority. In practical terms, this means Pacific Community Housing will:

- Use data from assessment of the properties to develop an annual plan and allocate our budget.
- Obtain concurrent agreement and incorporate recommendations from LAHC.
- Create work scopes for properties below maintained standard and high priority component items.
- Review work scopes and prioritise to meet budget allowing a contingency.
- Issue work scopes and monitor the completion of the work.
- Assist with responsive repairs as required, whilst aiming to minimise responsive maintenance by optimising our planned maintenance.

To assess a properties condition and maintenance priority, we use a standard Property Inspection Report.

#### 5. External maintenance

For external works on buildings and cyclical maintenance, Pacific Community Housing will:

- Assess the need for planned works based on whole buildings (not piecemeal work by component).
- Manage each building to a life cycle and factor replacement of essential items into plans (e.g. safety and emergency) based on condition surveys rather than replacement to a pre-set cycle (5/10/15/20 years).
- Manage common areas on a cycle of work—we have identified the regular maintenance requirements and have factored these into our plans (yearly or as required, such as essential services, lawns and grounds).
- Maintain quality by having a Quality Officer/Auditor to review work scopes and reports to confirm that the required work has been undertaken and delivered to LAHC Asset standards.
- Manage structural repairs and fire engineered compliances.
- Only replace items when they fail or are very close to failure to maximise their useful life.

#### 6. General asset management

##### Common Area Management

This applies to common areas we manage. Where common areas are managed by a Strata Manager, responsibility for maintenance remains with the Strata Manager.

The common area management responsibilities encompass components such as:

- Building exterior
- Building entrance and lobby
- Stairs, walkways, passages, lifts
- Common carpark
- Common gardens and lawns
- Essential Fire Safety Services maintenance

### **Keys to properties**

Pacific Community Housing will only keep keys for common areas and vacant properties.

Common Area keys are stored at Pacific Community Housing's Head Office and they are recorded in our housing and tenancy management database.

For high rise apartment buildings, we will install a security coded lock box on site which will contain Common Area keys to be used in case of emergency.

Vacant property keys will be stored on site in contractor's security lock box.

### **Tenant charges**

Pacific Community Housing may charge tenants for repairing damage to a property or other costs which are the tenant's responsibility e.g. a locksmith to let the tenant into their property if they are locked out or replacing lost keys.

If the tenant is responsible for repairing damages or other costs and Pacific Community Housing will arrange the repairs or services and will charge tenants for the costs. These are known as Tenant Charges.

## **7. Legislative Framework and Related Policies**

- Quality Assurance - Policy
- Repairs and Maintenance - Policy
- Property Inspection Report - Form
- Residential Tenancies Act 2010 (NSW)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) (Disability Discrimination Act)
- Community Housing Provider (Adoption of National Law) Act 2012 (NSW) (CHP Act)
- National Regulatory System for Community Housing (NRSCH)
- National Construction Code (NCC)
- Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Control Act 1999 (Cth) (EPBC Act)
- Heritage Act 1977 (Heritage Act)
- Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (NSW) (EPA Act)
- Swimming Pools Act 1992 (NSW) (Swimming Pools Act)
- Strata Schemes Management Act 2015 (NSW) (Strata Schemes Act)
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW) (WHS Act)
- Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011 (NSW) (WHS Regulations)
- Dividing Fences Act 1991 (NSW)
- Housing Act 2001 (NSW)
- Home Building Act 1989 (NSW)

# Quality Assurance

Policy Number 201 | Edited October 2019

## 1. Purpose

This policy outlines how we ensure that our maintenance work is completed to an approved Pacific Community Housing standard.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all properties owned, managed and leased by Pacific Community Housing and its subsidiaries.

## 3. Principles

Our quality assurance covers:

- Condition assessments – based on Property Inspection Reports for our own properties.
- Safety compliance.
- Assessment of structural integrity.
- Audits of work performed by our Multi Trade Contractors (MTC).

We inspect all properties biennially using the Condition Assessment Survey Inspection methodology (CASI). This method assesses asset quality for safety, function and appearance including identification of structural defects (see Property Assessment policy).

## 4. Safety Compliance

We undertake a Property Safety Compliance Assessment (PSCA) annually for each owned, managed or leasehold property to make sure that we comply with our legal obligations and obtain annual certification where required for:

- Annual Fire Safety Statement, where applicable for each Essential Fire Safety Measure installed in the building as per legal requirements.
- Annual smoke alarm testing & servicing for statutory compliance.
- Residual current devices (RCD) testing compliance.
- Key window locks compliance.
- Swimming pool barriers compliance (as required).
- Thermostatic mixing valves compliance.

We conduct routine structural integrity checks of owned, managed or leasehold properties every two years. These assessments allow us to identify structural repairs and plan for any items that need repair (see Structural Repairs procedure for each asset for detail).

## 5. Contractor Audits

We check work done by our contractors to make sure it is satisfactory. Audits include desktop reviews of completed work orders, site inspections or call-backs to tenants after the work is undertaken to confirm that the work is complete and assess tenant satisfaction.

## 6. Privacy and Confidentiality

Pacific Community Housing will keep applicants', tenants' and residents' information and feedback confidential, in line with privacy laws and standards.

## 7. Legislative Framework and Related Policies

- Quality Assurance – Policy
- Repairs, Maintenance and Damage – Policy
- Property Inspection Report – Form
- NRAS Regulations
- Residential Tenancies Act 2010

# Repairs and Maintenance

Policy Number 202 | Edited May 2020

## 1. Purpose

Pacific Community Housing is dedicated to providing quality, safe, well maintained and affordable housing. This policy applies to the repairs, maintenance and general upgrades for all properties managed and leased by Pacific Community Housing. It also outlines what happens should any damage be caused to the property during the tenancy.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all properties owned, managed and leased by Pacific Community Housing.

## 3. Principles

Pacific Community Housing will work diligently to ensure their properties are always fit to live in.

Pacific Community Housing will therefore:

- Be responsible for repairing and maintaining each property so that it is in a reasonable state of repair.
- Consider the age of the property, the amount of rent being paid, and the prospective life of the property before deciding what repairs or maintenance is required.
- Respond to maintenance requests or inspection reports and complete any repairs or maintenance in a timely fashion.

Tenants also have the responsibility to:

- Consider the age of the property before starting a tenancy.
- Keep the property in a reasonable state of cleanliness.
- Maintain minor things such as replacing light bulbs, cleaning windows (where possible), dusting, removing cobwebs and routine gardening such as watering, mowing and weeding (if required).

## 4. Repairs or Maintenance Reporting

Tenants must report all known property maintenance issues and faults to Pacific Community Housing in writing through their website [www.PCH.com.au](http://www.PCH.com.au) or if it's an emergency by phoning Pacific Community Housing on [02 xxxx xxxx]. It is preferable that tenant use Pacific Community Housing 'Repairs or Maintenance Reporting' Form.

## 5. Issue Types and Response Times

Pacific Community Housing categorise all repair or maintenance requests into one of four possible streams. Pacific Community Housing will respond to each request based on its urgency. These include:

Type of Repair or Maintenance Request	Typical Response Time
<b>Emergencies</b> (e.g. Gas Leak, Dangerous Electrical Faults, Significant Water Loss)	<b>0 to 6 Hours</b>
<b>Urgent</b> (e.g. Broken Toilet, Smoke Alarm, Smashed Window)	<b>6 to 24 hours</b>
<b>Non-Urgent</b> (e.g. Ovens, Air-Conditioner, Hot Water System)	<b>1 – 28 Days</b>
<b>Major Upgrades</b> (e.g. Kitchen or Bathroom Replacement)	Subject to contractors and budget

## 6. Types of Urgent Repairs

Pacific Community Housing will work towards the above times for the following urgent repairs:

- smoke alarms
- a burst water service or a serious water service leak
- a blocked or broken toilet
- a serious roof leaks
- a gas leaks
- an electrical fault
- flooding or serious flood damage
- serious storm or fire damage
- a failure or breakdown of the gas, electricity or water supply to the property
- a failure or breakdown of the hot water service
- a failure or breakdown of the stove or oven
- a failure or breakdown of a heater or air-conditioner
- a fault or damage which makes the property unsafe or insecure.

## 7. Damage

Both Pacific Community Housing and tenants have the responsibility to ensure properties are kept safe and well maintained. Tenants must not cause or allow damage to be caused, either intentionally or through lack of care. These include every member of the household and any visitors. If the tenant causes or allow damage to be caused to the property, Pacific Community Housing has the right to ask the tenant to repair the damage or pay for the costs of the repair to be done by Pacific Community Housing. For more information refer to the Tenant Damage Policy.

## 8. Legislative Framework and Related Policies

- Quality Assurance – Policy
- Tenant Damage – Policy
- Property Inspection Report – Form
- NRAS Regulations
- Residential Tenancies Act 2010

# Tenant Damage

Policy Number 203 | Edited May 2020

## 1. Purpose

Both Pacific Community Housing and tenants have the responsibility to ensure properties are kept safe and well maintained. Tenants must not cause or allow damage to be caused, either intentionally or through lack of care. These include every member of the household and any visitors. If the tenant causes or allow damage to be caused to the property, Pacific Community Housing has the right to ask the tenant to repair the damage or pay for the costs of the repair to be done by Pacific Community Housing.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all properties owned, managed and leased by Pacific Community Housing.

## 3. Principles

Pacific Community Housing will work collaboratively with its tenant to ensure properties are always fit to live in. This includes responding to damage caused by a tenant. Tenants will be held responsible for any damage to their property either intentionally, through lack of care, failure to act to a reasonable request by the landlord or damage caused as a result of a crime, such as domestic violence.

This policy outlines:

- The responsibilities of a tenant.
- The rights Pacific Community has when damage to a property has occurred.
- How Pacific Community Housing will deal with tenant when damage has occurred.

## 4. Tenant Responsibilities

Section 51 of the Residential Tenancies Act, 2010 (NSW) states that tenants should:

- Keep the property reasonably clean.
- Notify the landlord of any damage to the premises as soon as practicable.
- Not intentionally or negligently cause or permit any damage to the premises.
- Leave the premises as near as possible in the same condition (except for reasonable wear and tear) as set out in the original condition report.

For more information on the responsibilities of a tenant refer to the Tenant Rights and Responsibilities Policy.

## 5. Procedure

Housing and asset management staff should be aware of any evidence of tenant damage when visiting or inspecting properties.

Where tenant damage is suspected, enquiries should be made as to how the damage occurred and why it has not been reported. If it is established that the tenant is responsible, arrangements must be made for the repairs to be carried out in accordance with this policy.

In working out responsibility for the damage staff from Pacific Community Housing will discuss the damage with the tenant and other residents. Consideration will be given to a range of factors including:

- The type of damage.
- The condition of the premises at the beginning of the tenancy, as stated in the Property Condition Report.
- Damage from reasonable wear and tear.
- Whether sickness, serious ill health or inability to maintain the premises has contributed to the damage.
- Whether a crime may have been committed.

Where Pacific Community Housing pays for the repairs with the expectation that the tenant will pay the debt, the amount will be charged to the tenant's non-rent account. In the event the tenant vacates, any unpaid amount to Pacific Community Housing will be deducted from the bond or pursued as a former debt if either the bond (where it has been paid) is not sufficient to meet the cost or no bond has been charged.

Where a tenant refuses to pay for work that occurs as a result of deliberate or negligent actions by the tenant, family member or visitor, and negotiations fail, the Housing Manager will seek an order for repayment through the NCAT within 90 days of raising the debt, in accordance with the Arrears Management Policy.

## 6. Legislative Framework and Related Policies

Tenant Rights and Responsibilities – Policy

- Arrears Management – Policy
- Breaking or Terminating a Lease - Policy
- Property Inspection Report – Form
- NRAS Regulations
- Residential Tenancies Act 2010



PERMORMANCE OUTCOME 3

# Community Engagement

# Tenant Engagement and Participation

Policy Number 300 | Edited October 2019

## 1. Purpose

This policy outlines how Pacific Community Housing tenants can participate in activities and have their say.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all tenant participation activities organised by Pacific Community Housing and its subsidiaries.

## 3. Principles

Pacific Community Housing will:

- Give tenants real opportunities to participate in activities, get information and have their say.
- Help tenants to get the skills and resources they need to improve their lives and their communities.
- Make sure that all tenants can participate by providing access to interpreters and disability access.
- Value input from our tenants and use their input to improve our services.
- Regularly tell tenants about opportunities to get involved.
- Help tenants to get involved in projects, activities and programs that help them to improve their lives.
- Encourage tenant involvement in community events, block meetings, outings and social gatherings.
- Understand that not all tenants will want to participate in our activities and events and respect a tenant's choice not to participate.

## 4. Feedback Form and Consultation with Tenants

Pacific Community Housing will gather feedback from our tenants:

- During home visits, tenant meetings, phone calls, face to face discussions and office interviews.
- Through tenant satisfaction surveys, evaluations, tenant consultations, suggestion box.

Pacific Community Housing will consult with tenants as appropriate by:

- Talking to a representative group of tenants.
- Block meetings.
- Postal surveys.
- Telephone surveys.
- Home interview surveys.
- Email surveys.
- Relevant associations or stakeholders.

Pacific Community Housing will make sure that tenants have opportunities to participate in decision-making by:

- Attending block meetings, local tenant meetings.
- Attending annual tenant forums.
- Attending community consultation on place making sites.

## 5. Informing Tenants

We will tell tenants about what is going on through:

- Our regular tenant newsletter.
- Our website, brochures and fact sheets.
- Social media.
- SMS message.
- Our publicly available policies.

## 6. Legislative Framework and Related Policies

- NRAS Regulations
- Residential Tenancies Act 2010
- NSW Affordable Housing Ministerial Guidelines 2019-2020

PERMORMANCE OUTCOME 4

# Governance

# Governance

Policy Number 400 | Edited October 2019

## 1. Purpose

This policy outlines how Pacific Community Housing is governed as a provider of affordable housing.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all directors, board members, employees of Pacific Community Housing.

## 3. Principles

This policy sits within our quality governance structures which have been established to meet Pacific Community Housing goals of:

- Meeting affordable housing needs by increasing our property portfolio.
- Delivering quality homes and housing services.
- Governing effectively.
- Managing the business sustainably.
- Bringing on staff and supporting our people and improving our workplace.
- Enhancing our communication and increasing our profile.

In addition, aligning the governance structure to abide consistently with Pacific Community Housing's vision, mission and values to ensure the provision of affordable and sustainable housing for our tenants by:

- Providing housing which is affordable, has long-term tenure and appropriate services to live comfortably.
- Assisting residents to access housing and to maintain links with their communities.
- Ensuring that the development of housing improves social, economic and environmental sustainability.
- Creating employment and training opportunities in the development of housing wherever possible.
- Assisting the development and sustainability of strong communities with social diversity by fostering community building initiatives to improve the health and wellbeing of disadvantaged people.

## 4. Governance Policies

The way in which Pacific Community Housing will be governed is outlined in detail in the following documents:

- Pacific Community Housing - Business Plan 2020-2021
- Pacific Community Housing - Company Constitution

## 5. Legislative Framework and Related Policies

- Pacific Community Housing - Business Plan 2020-2021
- Pacific Community Housing - Company Constitution
- NSW Affordable Housing Ministerial Guidelines 2019-2020

PERMORMANCE OUTCOME 5

# Probity

# Code of Conduct Policy

Policy Number 500 | Edited May 2020

## 1. Purpose

To outline the standard of behaviour expected of individuals who represent Pacific Community Housing in the course of carrying out their roles and responsibilities for the Company.

## 2. Scope

This Code of Conduct (Code) applies to all Pacific Community Housing directors, employees (including staff engaged as contractors) and volunteers.

## 3. Principals

It is the Company's policy to engender an environment of inclusiveness, trust and integrity in serving the needs of customers and stakeholders by ensuring directors and employees:

- Demonstrate behaviours which support and are consistent with the Company's core values.
- Perform duties in a professional manner.
- Adhere to Company policies and relevant law, standards and applicable 3rd party policies and procedures.
- Act appropriately when a conflict arises between self-interest and duty to the Company.
- Exert responsible stewardship of Company resources.
- Uphold and enhance the reputation of the Company.

## 4. Core Values

Pacific Community Housing directors and employees are required to adopt the following core values at all times in the workplace with colleagues and all other stakeholders including housing applicants, residents, government authorities, partners and suppliers.

**Honesty and Integrity** – we act with sincerity; we do what is right not what is easy.

**Empathy** – we understand what others are going through and are there to help.

**Accountability** – it's what we do and do not do, for which we are accountable.

**Respect** – we show people they are important to us by what we say and do.

**Inspiration** – we instil the motivation and courage to do it better.

## 5. Personal Conduct

In demonstrating Pacific Community Housing's core values and complying with this code, directors and employees are expected to, for example:

- Treat everyone with courtesy, respect, kindness, consideration, and sensitivity to their rights.
- Act honestly and in good faith.
- Refrain from perpetrating or condoning all forms of bullying, intimidation and abuse, or harassment and discrimination based on gender, race, religious belief, political affiliation, pregnancy, disability, sexual orientation or illness.
- Respect each individual's rights to privacy and keep confidential information confidential.
- Consider the impact of decisions and behaviour on the well-being of others.
- Refrain from acting in any way that would unfairly harm the reputation or career prospects of other directors or employees.
- Refrain from allowing personal relationships to affect professional relationships.
- Seek advice from an appropriate manager or (in the case of a director) the Chair where a colleague's behaviour is perceived to be in breach of the Code, and report any suspected corrupt, criminal or unethical conduct to the People and Culture Manager or the CEO, or in the case of a director to the Chair of the Board.

## 6. Professional Conduct

Directors and employees should behave professionally in all situations and with all stakeholders. Professional conduct is to be exhibited through methods of communication, personal appearance and the quality of workplace interactions.

Directors and employees are expected to, for example:

- Perform their duties diligently, impartially, conscientiously, with integrity, and to the best of their ability.
- Take responsibility for their health and safety and of others in the workplace.
- Keep up to date with advances and changes in the body of knowledge and the professional and ethical standards relevant to their area of expertise.
- Comply with any relevant legislative, regulatory and policy requirements.
- Foster teamwork and collegiality among all employees, and always give due credit for the contribution of others.
- Maintain adequate documentation to support any decisions made.
- Not make improper use or take advantage of any confidential information of which they become aware.
- Refrain from allowing personal political views and/or affiliations or other personal interests to influence the performance of duties or exercise of responsibilities.
- Refrain from developing personal relationships with clients, including after hours.

## 7. Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment

Pacific Community Housing has zero tolerance for discrimination, bullying and harassment. For further information and guidance refer to the Company's Equal Employment Opportunity & Anti-Discrimination Policy and the Bullying Policy.

## 8. Gifts and Benefits

Directors and employees must not solicit gifts, bribes, hospitality, benefits, services or favours as this may be considered corrupt conduct. Certain types of corrupt conduct may amount to a breach of a state or federal law.



Directors and employees may accept gifts or benefits of a nominal or token value in accordance with the Company's Gifts Benefits Policy, provided full disclosure is made in accordance with that policy.

For further information refer to the Company's Gifts Benefits Policy and Conflict of Interest Policy.

### **9. Conflicts of Interest**

Directors and employees are to avoid any potential, actual or perceived conflict of interest and are required to disclose any conflict in advance, or as soon as reasonably practical in the circumstances. Directors and employees must ensure that their interests and actions do not conflict or appear to conflict with their obligations to the Company.

Directors and employees must disclose to the Company any situation which has, or is likely to arise, from a director or employee having a family, personal or commercial relationship with another party in relation to dealings with the Company, especially where the director or employee is likely to have direct or indirect decision-making input in relation to any dealings involving that party.

For further information and guidance refer to the Company's Conflict of Interest Policy.

### **10. Use of Company Equipment and Resources**

Directors and employees must not abuse, waste or destroy Company equipment and resources. Reasonable use of Company equipment and resources for personal use is acceptable, however this must not impact on the operations of the business or the ability of the director or employee to complete work or impact the Company financially through time or resource wastage.

Company equipment must not be used for pornographic, racist or any unlawful purposes and its use must not put the reputation of Pacific Community Housing at risk. Equipment and resources should be treated with care and secured against theft.

### **11. Procuring Goods and Services**

In procuring goods and services for the Company, directors and employees are required to be responsible with the Company's money, including by ensuring value for money. Directors and employees must follow the Board Delegations Policy and comply with the Company's procurement policies when purchasing or entering into agreements for or on behalf of the Company.

### **12. Privacy and Confidentiality**

Directors and employees have a responsibility to maintain the confidentiality, integrity, security and safe storage of Company, employee and resident information and comply with Pacific Community Housing's obligations under the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth), the Australian Privacy Principles and any relevant state or territory privacy legislation.

Company information which has not been released to the public (for example, via the Company's website or media releases) is to be considered to be confidential.

### **13. Other Business Employment**

Outside work must not be undertaken by an employee where it may cause a conflict of interest with Pacific Community Housing duties. An employee who is already involved in or considering outside employment or contract work that relates to the business of Pacific Community Housing or that might conflict with their role or duties must notify their direct report who will consult with, and seek approval from, the Chief Executive Officer.

The outside employment or business will not be given approval if it:

- Conflicts with the employee's role within Pacific Community Housing
- Involves using confidential information or Pacific Community Housing resources
- Disadvantages Pacific Community Housing in any way or discredits or negatively affects the reputation of Pacific Community Housing or has the potential to do so.

#### **14. Company Reputation**

Directors and employees are expected to:

- Promote the interests of Pacific Community Housing wherever possible in their professional dealings with others.
- Refrain from engaging in any activity that may compromise the Company's reputation.

Directors and employees, other than the Chair of the Board and the CEO, must not represent or make public comment on behalf of Pacific Community Housing in any form unless formally delegated to do so.

#### **15. Compliance and Breaches**

All directors and employees must comply with this Code and where they are aware or suspect a breach of this Code, they must immediately report the breach for further action.

A breach of the Code may lead to disciplinary action, including termination of employment where appropriate.

#### **16. End of Employment**

Upon employment or term as a director ending, an employee or director is required to return all Pacific Community Housing documentation, equipment and resources. After employment or term as a director ends the employee or director should continue to keep Pacific Community Housing's confidential information confidential and not use it for personal or financial gain.

#### **17. Legislative Framework and Related Policies**

- Equal Employment Opportunity & Anti-Discrimination - Policy
- Bullying - Policy
- Gifts and Benefits - Policy
- Conflict of Interest – Policy
- Pacific Community Housing - Business Plan 2020-2021
- Pacific Community Housing - Company Constitution

# Conflict of Interest Policy

Policy Number 501 | Edited May 2020

## 1. Purpose

To ensure Pacific Community Housing effectively identifies, discloses and manages any potential, actual, or perceived conflicts of interest in relation to the business decisions, operations, programs, services and dealings of the Company.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all Pacific Community Housing directors, employees (including staff engaged as contractors) and volunteers.

## 3. Definition of Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest occurs when a person's personal interests' conflict with their responsibility to act in the best interests of the Company.

Personal interests include direct interests as well as those of family, friends or other organisations a person may be involved with, or in which the person has an interest.

A conflict of interest may be potential, actual, or perceived, and may be financial or non-financial.

A conflict of interest between personal interest and official duty (whether potential or actual) may arise, for example, from:

Other directorships or employment.

- Professional and business interests and associations.
- Financial interests in a matter the Company deals with or having friends or relatives with such interests. These could include real estate, shares, debts, gifts, business interests and investments.
- Personal relationships with people with whom the Company is dealing that go beyond the level of a professional working relationship.
- These situations present the risk that the person may make a decision based on, or affected by, these influences, rather than in the best interests of the Company.

## 4. Policy

It is the policy of Pacific Community Housing that conflicts of interest are to be avoided where possible, and that any such conflicts where they do arise, will be managed through a conflict of interest management framework which aims to:

- Avoid conflicts of interest where possible.
- Identify and disclose any conflicts of interest.
- Carefully manage any conflicts of interest.
- Respond to any breaches.

The conflict of interest management framework comprises of:

- This policy.
- The Director's Conflict of Interest Register.
- The Employee's Conflict of Interest Register.

## 5. Identification and Disclosure

To assist in identifying and managing conflicts of interest, directors and employees are required to:

- At the time of appointment – disclose in writing all relevant duties or interests which may give rise to any potential, actual or perceived conflict of interest by completing the Conflict of Interest (Directors) form which includes a Probity Check for directors or completing the Conflict of Interest (Employees) form for employees.
- On an ongoing basis – advise any change to previously made disclosures as soon as the director becomes aware of changes to relevant duties or interests which may give rise to a potential, actual or perceived conflict of interest by completing a new Conflict of Interest (Directors) form for directors or Conflict of Interest (Employees) form for employees.

Pacific Community Housing will actively monitor any changes to previously made disclosures, including by requesting confirmation at least annually from directors and employees that there have been no changes to previously made disclosures.

Directors are also to ensure that conflicts of interest are a standing item at every Board and Board committee meeting, and are to:

- State any conflicts of interest prior to the commencement of a meeting where they are known; and
- Where a director becomes aware of a conflict of interest, or potential conflict of interest during a Board meeting, immediately bring that conflict of interest to the attention of the Chair of the Board.

## 6. Managing Conflicts of Interest

Where a director or employee has declared a relevant interest or relevant duty that may give rise to a potential, actual or perceived conflict of interest:

- Where the disclosure is made prior to or during a Board or Board committee meeting the Board or the Board committee will consider whether the conflict can be managed in a manner that does not impact on the performance of the director's duties. – Where for example, the potential for a conflict of interest is perceived but not real, is minimal, or can be eliminated by full and proper disclosure, the Board may authorise the director to continue his or her duties.
- Where the conflict of interest can be managed by the director not taking part in Board or committee discussions or decisions involving the conflicted subject matter, the Board may require the director to absent himself or herself from the meeting room when any discussion or vote is taking place. Such occurrences will be recorded in the Board and Board committee meeting minutes.
- In some situations, the conflict of interest may require the director to consider whether it is appropriate for him or her to continue in his or her Board role, and whether he or she should resign from the Board or Board committee.
- Where the disclosure is made by an employee, he or she will not take part in any management decision making process relating to the interest or issue. The employee should consider divesting himself or herself of the relevant interest or duty or take such other action as is considered appropriate under the circumstances – in consultation with the Company Secretary.

## 7. Record Keeping

Appropriate records and registers of interest are to be maintained by the Company. For example:

- The minutes of all Board, Board Committee and other relevant Company meetings are to include details of each conflict of interest identified and the action taken to avoid or manage the conflict of interest.
- Conflicts of interest declared by an employee during the course of their work, for example regarding a particular business decision, operation or transaction, together with the action/s taken are also required to be recorded, for example in minutes of a meeting.

## 8. Registers

A Directors' Conflict of Interest Register will be maintained to record conflicts of interest involving directors.

An Employee's Conflict of Interest Register will be maintained to record conflicts of interest involving employees.

Both registers will be managed by the Secretary of Pacific Community Housing and are to include records of actions taken to ensure that the conflicts of interest are appropriately managed.

## 9. Reporting

Updates to the Directors' Conflict of Interest Register will be reported quarterly to the Board and as required in accordance with any related 3rd party transactions.

The Company Secretary will report any necessary updates of the Employee's Conflict of Interest Register to the CEO as required.

## 10. Compliance with this Policy

If the Board has reason to believe that a person subject to this policy has failed to comply with it, the Board, or their delegate, will investigate the circumstances.

If it is found that the person has failed to disclose a conflict of interest, appropriate action may be taken against that person, including seeking to terminate the relationship with the Pacific Community Housing.

## 11. Legislative Framework and Related Policies

- Pacific Community Housing - Business Plan 2020-2021
- Pacific Community Housing - Company Constitution
- NSW Affordable Housing Ministerial Guidelines 2019-2020

# Protected Disclosures Statement - Whistle-Blower

Document Number 502 | Edited May 2020

## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide a framework for Pacific Community Housing in dealing with protected disclosures.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all Pacific Community Housing directors, employees (including staff engaged as contractors) and volunteers.

## 3. Policy

Pacific Community Housing expects all staff and Board members to act:

- Ethically, honestly, responsibly and diligently.
- In full compliance with the letter and spirit of the law.
- In the best interests of Pacific Community Housing, its applicants and tenants.

Pacific Community Housing is committed to:

- Encouraging individuals to report their concerns preferably openly but if necessary, anonymously.
- Ensuring that in reporting their concerns individuals are afforded respect and confidentiality.
- Ensuring that the matter is properly investigated with a view to establishing the truth and correcting any wrongdoing.
- Ensuring that the individual is advised of the outcome and any action taken; and
- Ensuring that the individual is not victimised or adversely affected because of their actions.

## 4. Responsibilities

An employee, Board member, member of the public or contractor wishing to make a protected disclosure should contact either the CEO or the Chair of the Board who are designated appropriate Officers.

Where it is not appropriate to contact the above officers, individuals are encouraged to contact the Registrar of Community Housing ([www.nrsch.gov.au](http://www.nrsch.gov.au)).

Upon receipt of a protected disclosure the CEO or Chair will:

- Ensure the matter is appropriately investigated in a timely manner.
- Ensure that confidentiality is maintained at all times.
- Where appropriate seek external consultancy or legal advice to ensure efficacy of the investigation and confidentiality for all parties.
- Ensure a written report is prepared for the Board.
- Ensure appropriate action is taken to correct any wrongdoing.
- Ensure that the individual is advised of the outcome and any action taken, and
- Ensure that the individual is not victimised or suffer any detrimental action in reprisal as a result of their disclosure.

## 5. Legislative Framework and Related Policies

- Code of Conduct - Policy
- Complaints and Appeals – Policy
- National Regulatory System
- NSW Affordable Housing Ministerial Guidelines 2019-2020
- National Community Housing Standards 2010

# Gifts and Benefits

Policy Number 503 | Edited March 2019

## 1. Purpose

The aim of this policy is to ensure all business-related gifts and benefits given and received by Pacific Community Housing and its staff are properly managed and disclosed. It is essential that all staff not place themselves in situations which could lead to or be seen to give rise to a conflict of interest.

This policy is based on and complies with the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) managing gifts & benefits in the workplace toolkit and the AS 3806 Compliance Standard.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees working for Pacific Community Housing, whether employed directly or indirectly, such as via a recruitment agency or through a work placement.

## 3. Definitions

- **Employee** – any person employed by, or engaged to represent, Pacific Community Housing
- **Workplace** – the office or any alternative location where an employee is representing the company
- **Gift** – an item of value. For example; a gift voucher, entertainment, hospitality, travel, commodity, property etc. which one person or organisation presents to another
- **Gift of Influence** – a gift that is intended to generally ingratiate the giver with the recipient for favourable treatment in the future
- **Gift of Gratitude** – a gift that is offered to an individual or an organisation in appreciation of performing specific tasks or for exemplary performance of duties
- **Bribe** – a gift or benefit offered to or solicited to influence that person to act in a particular way and to induce the recipient to act in a way that is contrary to the known rules of honesty and integrity
- **Benefit** – similar to a gift in that it is of value to the recipient, but less tangible. For example meals, seats at sporting events, access to corporate boxes at sporting venues, upgrades on flights, or access to confidential information
- **Gifts and Benefits Register** – an official organisation record that details gifts and benefits received or given by Pacific Community Housing employees
- **Nominal Value** – the monetary limit of acceptable gifts. By accepting the gift, there would be no obligation, perception or expectation for reciprocation or providing preferential treatment. For Pacific Community Housing, all items received should be declared, including token gifts from tenants e.g. biscuits, chocolates, homemade items. Any benefits/gifts with a value limit greater than \$100 must not be accepted at all.

## 4. Policy

This policy states the organisation's requirements regarding the management of gifts and benefits, which protects staff members, their reputation and that of the company and minimises potential negative consequences for you and the organisation.

Pacific Community Housing is committed to be a professional and ethical workplace. This can only be achieved and maintained if the community is confident that staff are not influenced by gifts, benefits and bribery.

For employees, there are many real and perceived risks associated with being offered or accepting gifts or benefits. Gifts may be offered/received as an expression of gratitude, rather than influence, with no obligation to repay in kind, or given to create a feeling of obligation. In the business context, gifts can have different meanings and purposes.



The purpose of the gift, to a certain extent, affects how it should be managed. Employees should exercise judgement in determining whether receipt of a gift could be seen by others as an inducement which could place that staff member under an obligation to the donor or associated parties.

Any benefits/gifts with a value limit greater than \$100 must not be accepted at all.

If an employee is ever unsure about whether or not to accept/give a gift/benefit, clarification can be sought from their relevant Line Manager or the Governance Senior Manager.

If an employee believes that s/he has been offered a bribe they should notify their most senior manager within the department/function and the Governance Senior Manager. Where necessary, ICAC and the NSW Police will be notified immediately.

All employees must provide an email notification to the Governance Senior Manager within 10 days of receiving/being offered/giving any gifts or benefits. The following details must be included in the email notification:

- Date the gift/benefit was received;
- Person(s) or organisation(s) involved in giving/receiving the gift;
- A description of the gift/benefit
- Reason the gift/benefit has been given/received
- The estimate of the value of the gift/benefit – this must be provided even with token gifts.

This will then be added to the Gifts & Benefits register.

A quarterly review of the register enables the Finance Risk & Audit Committee to identify and manage any emerging risks. This register is also submitted to the Registrar of Community Housing on an annual basis as a part of registration requirements.

This policy applies at all times including Christmas and other cultural and religious occasions which involve the giving of gifts.

## 5. Compliance & Breaches

Pacific Community Housing may commence applicable disciplinary procedures if an employee is found to be deliberately not reporting received/given gifts and benefits. An incident report will also be lodged with the Finance Risk & Audit Committee (FRAC).

This policy is subject to change from time to time at the discretion of Pacific Community Housing. Where an individual is observed to not be working within the scope of this policy, the breach will be addressed by a team leader.

## 6. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the:

- **Chief Executive Officer** to ensure this policy and associated procedures are applied and committed to by the Business Leadership Team.
- **Team Leaders** to ensure familiarity with this policy and related procedures, to commit to following them accordingly and where relevant, promote the policy to their team.
- **Employees** to ensure they comply with this policy, be responsible for their own behaviour and if required, attend relevant training as provided by the company from time to time.

## 7. Legislative Framework and Related Policies

- Code of Conduct - Policy
- Complaints and Appeals – Policy
- National Regulatory System
- NSW Affordable Housing Ministerial Guidelines 2019-2020
- National Community Housing Standards 2010

# Equal Employment Opportunity & Anti-Discrimination

Policy Number 504 | Edited June 2020

## 1. Purpose

This policy outlines the equal employment opportunities and anti-discrimination guidelines.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies universally to all Pacific Community Housing Workers. This policy also applies in the context of members of the public, particularly those seeking to enrol or apply for employment with Pacific Community Housing.

## 3. Principals

Guided by Pacific Community Housing's vision, mission and values to be a fair, equitable, transparent and quality provider of affordable housing, Pacific Community Housing will:

- Give equal opportunity employment to all people
- Provide a culture where all employees and stakeholders are, and feel, valued
- Nurture an environment of zero tolerance for any form of discrimination in the workplace
- Comply with all state and federal laws

## 4. Equal Opportunity and Discrimination

Pacific Community Housing supports the principles of equal opportunity in all aspects of the relationship between Pacific Community Housing and its Workers. This is consistent with Pacific Community Housing's philosophy and concern for social justice and equity. By designing this policy, Pacific Community Housing supports the principle that Workers are selected or promoted according to merit, irrespective of race, sex, marital status, age, physical, intellectual impairment or other grounds as listed in this policy.

Discrimination occurs when a person, or group of people, is treated less favourably than another due to a particular attribute or personal characteristic. At Pacific Community Housing, directors, board members, employees, volunteers and managers must not treat job applicants and employees unfairly or harass/discriminate against them because of their:

- Age
- Criminal Record
- Gender
- Race, colour, nationality, national extraction
- Impairment, mental, intellectual, psychiatric and physical disability
- Marital status
- Medical Record
- Family or carers responsibilities
- Pregnancy
- Religion
- Sexual orientation
- Political opinion
- Social origin (elements a person adopts from surrounding culture)

Examples of discrimination may include:

- Offensive jokes, comments or gestures which refer to a person's characteristics.
- Display or circulation of material which can be considered offensive.
- Expressing negative stereotypes of a particular group.
- Sending offensive material by email.
- Using stereotypes or assumptions to guide decisions.
- Making derogatory comments.
- Undermining another person's position due to a dislike of their personal characteristics.
- Discrimination can be either direct or indirect:

Direct discrimination occurs when a person is dealt with unfairly on the basis of one of the grounds listed under Discrimination (noted above);

Indirect discrimination is often less obvious. Sometimes, a policy, rule or practice seems fair because it applies to everyone equally, but, upon closer inspection, some people are actually being treated unfairly as a result. This is because some people, or groups of people, are unable (or less able) to comply with a given rule or policy and are inherently disadvantaged because of it. If this policy or practice is not reasonable, it may be a form of indirect discrimination.

Examples of indirect discrimination may include:

- an employer having a policy of not letting any employee work part-time. (People with children or family responsibilities could be disadvantaged), or
- a public building, while fitted with lifts, has a set of six steps at the front entrance. Entry for those needing to use the lift is through the back entrance near the industrial bins (Those using a wheelchair cannot get into the building from the front entrance).

Pacific Community Housing does not tolerate any form of discrimination in the Workplace. All reports will be treated seriously and investigated promptly, confidentially and impartially. State and federal laws make discrimination illegal on many grounds.

Pacific Community Housing employees are required to comply with this policy at all times. If a Worker is found to be in breach of this policy, they will be managed accordingly. He or she may be subject to disciplinary action, which in some cases may include termination of employment. In certain cases, Pacific Community Housing may have to report the matter to a relevant authority.

## 5. Action to be Taken

If someone feels this policy has been breached in any way, it should not be ignored. It is recommended to make a written note about the behaviour including details of the date and time of the incident, what happened and any witnesses.

The following steps may be taken:

- If you feel comfortable doing so, you may wish to address the issue with the person concerned and request that he or she stops engaging in the harassment or bullying;
- If you do not feel comfortable confronting the person directly, or if you confront the person and the behaviour continues, then you should go to your Supervisor. If you feel unable to speak with your Supervisor (or more specifically if your supervisor is the person in question), contact the Operations Manager for advice.
- A formal complaint can be made which is to be addressed to the Pacific Community Housing board.

## 6. Supervising Management

Supervisors and managers have a responsibility to ensure that allegations of discrimination are considered seriously, dealt with fairly, promptly, and thoroughly.

All supervisors are responsible for ensuring their staff and volunteers are aware of this policy and its application. They must seek to prevent or stop discrimination and must handle all complaints as serious and investigate all complaints.

## 7. Legislative Framework and Related Policies

- Fair Work Acts 2009
- Racial Discrimination Acts 1975
- Sex Discrimination Acts 1984
- Disability Discrimination Acts 1992
- Age Discrimination Acts 2004
- Australian Human Rights Commission Acts 1986

PERMORMANCE OUTCOME 6

# Management

# Management

Policy Number 600 | Edited June 2020

## 1. Purpose

The aim of this policy is to outline how all properties will be effectively managed by Pacific Community Housing

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all Pacific Community Housing employees including the Directors, Board Members, Executive Team, Staff and Volunteers.

## 3. Principles

Pacific Community Housing is dedicated to its principles to operate as a well-governed, effectively managed organisation, with a dynamic Board and Executive Team, and a workforce committed to providing the best possible service as an Affordable Housing Provider.

## 4. Management

Pacific Community Housing is:

- Governed by its guiding principles as outlined in the Constitution. All personnel and members must uphold the Constitution at all times.
- Led by the Board of Directors who are elected by the members of the Company and is responsible for the organisation. The Board employs staff to conduct the day-to-day operations of Pacific Community Housing. Our focus remains on retaining a well-balanced skills-based Board with diversity a key objective.
- Proud to have an Executive Team representing a wide range of expertise.

Pacific Community Housing has a corporate governance framework that provides effective, sustainable, accountable operations and continuous improvement by:

Ensuring that Pacific Community services and infrastructure are provided reliably, efficiently and effectively with the appropriate quality levels of service to customers and stakeholders.

- Ensuring that Pacific Community Housing remains solvent and is complying with all its legislative, financial, ethical and contractual obligations.
- Upholding the Vision, Mission and Values of Pacific Community Housing at all times.
- Identifying the resources and operational capabilities required to ensure effective corporate governance processes that align with demonstrated best practice.
- With these robust mechanisms in place, along with a transparent approach to decision making, current and future stakeholders can be confident in the Board's ability to govern to the highest standards.

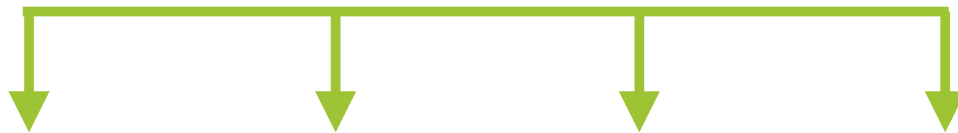
## 5. Legislative Framework and Related Policies

Pacific Community Housing - Business Plan 2020-2021

Pacific Community Housing - Company Constitution



# Pacific Community Housing



**Director**  
**Governance**



**Director**  
**Legal and**  
**Finance**



**Director**  
**Community**  
**and Social**  
**Services**



**Director**  
**Property**





PERMORMANCE OUTCOME 7

# Financial Viability

# Financial Viability

Policy Number 700 | Edited March 2019

## 1. Purpose

The aim of this policy is to outline how Pacific Community Housing will remain financially viable.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all Pacific Community Housing's activities, its Board of Directors, Executive Team and Staff.

## 3. Principles

Pacific Community Housing is dedicated to its principles to operate as a well-governed, effectively managed organisation, with a dynamic Board and Executive Team, and a workforce committed to providing the best possible and financially viable service as an Affordable Housing Provider.

## 4. Best Practice for Financial Viability

In order to achieve this, Pacific Community Housing will:

- Ensure a viable capital structure.
- Maintain appropriate financial performance.
- Manage financial risk exposure.
- Comply with all relevant legal requirements and government policies.
- Ensure appropriate expertise within the governing body of the company.
- Adhere to its financial plan projection.
- Produce and manage an annual budget.
- Audit financial statements by an independent 3<sup>rd</sup> party.

These are outlined in Pacific Community Housing's:

- Business Plan 2020-2021
- Company Constitution
- Sample Budget 10 Year Plan

## 5. Legislative Framework and Related Policies

Pacific Community Housing - Business Plan 2020-2021

Pacific Community Housing - Company Constitution

Pacific Community Housing - Sample Budget 10 Year Plan

Additional

# Policies, Documents & Forms

## ***Additional Policies, Documents & Forms***

**In addition to those already exiting**

### **The Future of Pacific Community Housing**

As Pacific Community Housing is a new company, there are some additional policies, documents and forms that will need to be created after Pacific Community Housing has been authorised as a licenced Affordable Housing Provider and a development site has been located.

These add additional policies, documents and forms may include, but are not limited to:

- Tenancy/residency information kit.
- Tenancy/residency information brochures.
- Promotional website with company and community information.
- Sample reports to the board.
- Record of tenant's/resident's engagement activities.
- Record of complaints, appeals and resident surveys.
- Record of asset management to the board.
- Repairs/maintenance information kit.
- Records of maintenance work.
- Asset reports to the board.
- Annual report and AGM minutes.
- Staff position descriptions.
- Audited financial statements.
- Other relevant policies, documents and forms as required.

## ***Existing Forms***

**Ready to use in the management of assets**

### **Pacific Community Housing Working Documents**

Pacific Community Housing has developed a number of ready to use forms, including:

- Application Form.
- Complaint Form.
- Appeal Form.
- Standard Letterhead.
- Property Inspection Report.
- Repair or Maintenance Reporting Form.
- Community Engagement Form.



# Pacific Community Housing

Promoting and providing access to safe and secure housing

