



# Community Housing Regulatory Framework

## Complaints Handling Fact Sheet

### Information for Community Housing Tenants

This fact sheet provides guidance on how to make a complaint about a Community Housing Provider (provider) registered under the Community Housing Regulatory Framework (Framework).

#### What is a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more individuals or organisations with any action, decision or service, provided by a provider.

#### Obligations of Registered Community Housing Providers

Providers must have a mechanism in place for dealing with tenant complaints as well as providing tenants with information and guidance on how to raise complaints with them. The Framework requires that providers be 'fair, transparent and responsive' in 'managing and addressing complaints and appeals' relating to the provision of housing services.

#### How do I make a complaint?

1. In the first instance, you should raise your concern directly with your provider. Generally, complaints will be addressed by the provider without the involvement of the Community Housing Registration Office. It is important when making a complaint to keep written evidence of your concern and any ongoing developments, in case the matter is not resolved.
2. If you are a tenant, or authorised to act on behalf of a tenant, and have raised your concerns informally with the providers but are not satisfied the result, you need to make a formal complaint to the providers via the provider's formal complaint handling processes and policies.
3. The provider will then progress the matter in accordance with those policies.
4. If, after you have received a response to your complaint, you believe your concerns have not been addressed by the provider, or that the provider has not followed its policies and procedures, you may wish to explore other avenues, such as:
  - Finding out about the provider's appeal's policy, procedure and lodging an appeal with the provider; or
  - Seeking the support and advice of a tenancy advocacy service; or
  - Lodging a claim with your local Residential Tenancy Tribunal for matters relating to tenancy, rent or maintenance issues which cannot be settled amicably between the provider and the tenant; or



- Contacting the Community Housing Registration Office in those instances where you believe the provider has breached the requirements of the Framework.

If you believe a complaint to be of such a serious or sensitive nature that it needs direct involvement of the Community Housing Registration Office (or other regulatory body) without prior notification to the provider, then you should contact the Community Housing Registration Office directly.

The Community Housing Registration Office will then decide the best way to progress any complaint.

### **Evidence based approach and confidentiality**

Whenever possible, complaints and allegations should be supported by evidence and / or supporting statements from witnesses. The Community Housing Registration Office recognises that this is not always possible and that sometimes complainants may wish to remain anonymous.

While complaints can still be progressed with little supporting evidence, the nature of the complaints and the evidence that supports it will influence how a complaint or allegation is progressed.

### **How does the Community Housing Registration Office respond to complaints?**

The Community Housing Registration Office can only investigate complaints about the compliance of providers with the requirements of the Framework.

The Community Housing Registration Office has no direct role in mediating or resolving complaints, disputes or in matters which fall outside of the Framework.

The Registrar will assess complaints and prioritise them according to their urgency and seriousness including assessing them to determine:

- whether or not they fit within the Community Housing Registration Office's scope;
- the severity in nature of the complaint, and
- the necessity for the Community Housing Registration Office's involvement, or a more appropriate body.

The Community Housing Registration Office or its delegates will attempt to advise complainants of the outcome of these considerations, or any investigations that have been undertaken, within 30 days of receipt of the original complaint, or earlier if the matter is deemed to be urgent.

### **Investigation of complaints**

The purpose of an investigation is to gather evidence to determine compliance or non-compliance with the Framework.

In some instances, we may need to put an investigation on hold while we wait for another body to deal with all or part of the complaint so that the outcome can be taken into account.



Once the evidence obtained during the investigation process has been considered, the matter will be closed with one of the following outcomes:

1. No further action – if the provider demonstrates it is complying with the Framework, or if the provider provides evidence of an effective response to the allegation of non-compliance;
2. Review on scheduled compliance assessment - if there is an indication of non-compliance by the provider and appropriate time frame for review is at the next scheduled compliance assessment of the provider;
3. Compliance assessment – if there is an indication of non-compliance that warrants immediate regulatory engagement with the provider.

### **Additional information and contacts**

Additional information on the Framework can be found at:  
[www.housing.wa.gov.au/communityhousingregulation](http://www.housing.wa.gov.au/communityhousingregulation)

For additional information on how different types of complaints might be dealt with, as well as a broad overview of the role of various regulatory and review bodies' roles and functions, refer to the following fact sheets:

- Complaint Handling - Information for Community Housing Providers.
- Complaint Handling - Information for neighbours and related parties.

To contact the Community Housing Registration Office, please call (08) 6217 6222 or email [registrar@communities.wa.gov.au](mailto:registrar@communities.wa.gov.au)