

Complaints & Appeals Policy		Document #: POLH-CEH 012	Tier: 2 – Operations Policy
		Prepared by: Compliance & Risk Manager - CEH	Date Prepared: 04/11/2021
Effective Date: December 2018	Revision: 3.0	Review by: GM - CEH	Date Reviewed: 04/11/2021
Compliance: This policy aligns with Standards 3.6 - National Community Housing Standards; 8.2.1 ISO 9001 Quality Management System; and 3.8 - National Standards for Group Training Organisations.		Approved by: CEO - CEH	Date Approved: 04/11/2021

1. Introduction

Centacare Evolve Housing is a Community Housing Provider (CHP) committed to delivering high quality housing services to the State of Tasmania. We welcome complaints and appeals as an opportunity to improve what we do, ensuring we meet our responsibilities as an excellent service provider. The commitment to improvement is recognised not only as intrinsic to the success of the organisation, but also in satisfying the expectations of all of Centacare Evolve Housing’s stakeholders, including the broader community.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure Centacare Evolve Housing (CEH) is committed to complying with its obligations under the National Community Housing Standards, ISO 9001 Quality Management System and the National Standards for Group Training Organisations.

3. Scope

All workers engaged by Centacare Evolve Housing are responsible for the quality of their work and have an obligation to ensure compliance with the appropriate standards applicable for our operations and a Community Housing Provider (CHP) and for the work we undertake providing additional programs such as the Build Up Tassie (BUT) Work Ready Program. Standard 3.6 (Complaints and Appeals) of the National Community Housing Standards and Standard 8.2.1 (Customer Communications) of ISO 9001 Quality Management System are directly applicable for the provision of housing services; Standard 3.8 of the National Standards for Group Training Organisations is applicable for the work CEH undertakes through the BUT program in conjunction with St Joseph Affordable Homes.

4. Definitions

Worker	Any person undertaking work activities for Centacare Evolve Housing inclusive of Employees, Board Members, Contractors and Volunteers.
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5. Policy

We will respond promptly and fairly and have a documented procedure for receiving and responding to complaints and appeals within nominated time-frames.

Information about lodging a complaint or appeal is provided to tenants/participants at lease/program sign-up, available on our website and is included in the Tenant Handbook. Tenants/participants can also seek information and forms in person by visiting or phoning our office. We also provide information on how to access advocacy organisations or individual advocates who can help to lodge a complaint or appeal. We will provide an interpreter service if necessary.

5.1. How we respond to complaints and appeals

We commit to:

- responding to your complaint courteously and respectfully;
- keeping you informed of the progress of your complaint;
- addressing each complaint in an equitable, objective manner;
- protecting personally identifiable information about the complainant, other than for the purposes of addressing the complaint within our organisation.

Where tenants complain to us about a range of issues that fall outside our jurisdiction we will respond constructively and refer tenants to the relevant body or advocacy services as appropriate. Our feedback and complaints mechanisms form part of a regular, external auditing process.

5.2. Complaints

Complaints relate to dissatisfaction with an area of our service delivery, over which we have direct control. Generally, complaints relate to the manner in which we provided the service to you, by a staff member, contractor or third party working on our behalf. Our complaints process allows a tenant or third party to formally express their dissatisfaction, have their point of view heard and obtain some form of resolution.

5.3. Appeals

Appeals relate to a tenant or service user's dissatisfaction about the outcome of a complaint made to us. Our appeal process gives an opportunity to dispute our decision and possibly have it changed.

If the internal processes have been exhausted and you wish to make a further appeal you may contact:

- The Tasmanian Ombudsman's office, an independent office that will review appeals and determine the final outcome regarding your complaint.
- Tenants Union of Tasmania, a specialist community legal centre for residential tenants.
- Your local member for parliament or
- The Minister for Housing

Contact details for the Ombudsman and Tenants Union can be found at the end of this document. A web search will find details of current Members of Parliament and Ministers.

5.4. Disputes

Disputes relate to wider neighbourhood issues such as difficulties with neighbours or accusations of antisocial behaviour. Mostly, these are areas that we do not have direct control over, which is why disputes are covered in our separate policy, *Establishing and maintaining tenancies*.

6. Associated Documents:

- Complaints & Appeals Procedure
- Establishing & Maintaining Tenancies Policy
- Tenant Handbook

7. Non-compliance with this Policy

All workers are required to comply with this policy. If a worker breaches this policy, they may be subject to disciplinary action.

This Policy is subject to change from time to time at the discretion of Centacare Evolve Housing. Any approvals required under this Policy will be granted in accordance with Centacare Evolve Housing prescribed Delegations of Authority. Further information on this Policy and other topics, is available on the Centacare Evolve Housing website www.centacareevolvehousing.com.au.

If you have any specific questions regarding this Policy, please contact Centacare Evolve Housing on 6173 0060 or email your enquiry to centacareevolve@aohtas.org.au

<p>Ombudsman Tasmania Address: Level 6/86 Collins St, Hobart TAS 7000 Phone: 1800 001 170</p>	<p>Tenants Union of Tasmania Address: 166 Macquarie St, Hobart TAS 7000 Phone: (03) 6223 2641</p>
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