

Establishing and maintaining tenancies

Good neighbour policy

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Section name: Establishing and maintaining tenancies

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1 Purpose

- 1.1 To outline standards of neighbourly conduct expected of all tenants of Mission Australia Housing (MAH).
- 1.2 To outline actions MAH may take where there is a dispute or issue between tenants.

2 Related policies

- 2.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with the:
 - 2.1.1 Referrals to Agencies Policy, which details the approach taken by MAH in order to assist tenants with specific needs or tenancy management issues to connect to services that may be able to assist them.
 - 2.1.2 Anti-Social Behaviour Policy, which outlines actions that may be taken by MAH to address and prevent anti-social behaviours occurring at properties and offices.

3 Scope

- 3.1 This policy applies to staff responsible for managing tenants and properties of MAH.

4 Guiding principles

- 4.1 MAH upholds the right of all tenants to quiet enjoyment of their property.

- 4.2 MAH expects that all tenants, staff and contractors are to be treated with respect and courtesy at all times.
- 4.3 MAH informs all tenants of expected standards of conduct and of their rights and responsibilities.
- 4.4 MAH encourages tenants to discuss and resolve their issues independently wherever possible.
- 4.5 MAH works with all parties where they have been unable to resolve issues themselves.
- 4.6 MAH promotes early intervention with regard to disputes between tenants.
- 4.7 MAH takes a preventative approach to **anti-social behaviour** by promoting positive interaction between tenants through its community engagement practices.
- 4.8 Tenants are given opportunities to appeal organisational decisions in order to ensure fair and transparent outcomes.
- 4.9 Tenants are assisted to access supports which enable them to sustain their tenancy wherever requested or required.
- 4.10 MAH upholds accountability and transparency through its record keeping practices.

5 Policy

- 5.1 Tenants of MAH come from a range of backgrounds and some properties require tenants to share laundries, gardens, communal areas and parking spaces. Tenants will be advised as per the Start of Tenancy Policy that they should expect some noise and difference in lifestyle choices between them and their **neighbours**.
- 5.2 All tenants will be informed of expected standards of conduct toward other tenants, their household members and visitors on signing a lease or rooming accommodation agreement for their property as per the [Start of Tenancy Policy](#).
- 5.3 MAH respects the right of all tenants to live in peace. Harassment or discrimination directed to any tenant or group of tenants, anti-social behaviour and excessive noise will not be tolerated and staff will take action to address these matters as per the [Anti-Social Behaviour Policy](#).
- 5.4 All tenants have a right to make a complaint about another tenant, group of tenants or visitors who they feel have violated their right to live in peace and privacy as per the [Complaints Policy](#).
- 5.5 Depending on the nature of a complaint, staff may:
 - Encourage the tenant to speak with the tenant or tenants who have been causing concern; and/or

- Mediate between the tenants to reach a solution where a complaint is serious, confrontational or where communication between tenants has broken down; and/or
- Refer the tenants to a third party mediator, such as a Community Justice Centre; and/or
- Liaise with and refer tenants to support services to ensure the peace, comfort or privacy of other tenants or neighbours
- Where MAH identifies that the conduct of a tenant toward their neighbour or neighbours has been unwanted/ inappropriate, the tenant may be in breach of their lease or rooming accommodation as per the [Breach of Tenancy Policy](#).

5.6 Repeated failure to abide by the terms of a lease or rooming accommodation agreement, including failure to rectify inappropriate conduct toward neighbours, may require MAH to take further action as per the [Ending Tenancies Policy](#).

5.7 MAH will encourage tenants to contact the Police where they have been the target of anti-social behaviour perpetrated by another tenant or group of tenants. MAH will be required to refer the matter to Police if criminal activity has occurred.

5.8 Staff will inform tenants of their right to appeal organisational decisions and to complain about the services of MAH as per the [Appeals Policy](#) and [Complaints Policy](#).

5.9 Staff will store any information about neighbourhood issues and disputes between tenants in the tenancy management system.

6 Definitions

Neighbour: a person who lives nearby, either in a surrounding property or in the same complex. Under residential tenancy and rooming accommodation legislation, tenants are required to respect the right of their neighbours to live in peace and privacy.

Anti-social behaviour: behaviour that is considered to cause nuisance to others, ranging from the very minor (such as littering) to more extreme forms of criminal behaviour (such as burglary and harassment).