

## COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS POLICY

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a process whereby residents, applicants and others (such as neighbours and referring agencies) can make a complaint or appeal a decision about St Kilda Community Housing's (SCH) services.

### Scope

This policy is aimed at SCH residents, applicants and other stakeholders of SCH. It does not include:

- Disputes or grievances from employees or management (these are covered by the **SCH Enterprise Agreement** and the **Organisational Grievance Procedure**).
- Neighbourhood disputes and disputes between residents. See **Good Neighbour Policy**.
- Disputes that are covered by other legislation, for example, the **Residential Tenancies Act 1997** (Vic).
- Complaints that are beyond the control of SCH.

### Policy Statement

SCH is committed to providing residents with every opportunity to contribute to the way services are delivered. SCH believes that feedback from residents is critical in continuous service improvement.

SCH will:

- Provide clear information about how to make a complaint or lodge an appeal. See the SCH brochure **How to Make a Complaint**.
- Support residents and applicants, where required, to make a complaint
- Deal with all complaints in a timely and fair manner and in accordance with our regulatory and legislative requirements
- Respect the privacy of those making a complaint.
- Regularly review complaints and identify improvements required.

### Making a Complaint

Any complaints by residents should first be raised with their Housing Manager. Complaints can be made verbally, in writing or by telephone. Complaints by applicants and other stakeholders should be made directly to the SCH office or via email to [admin@stkch.org.au](mailto:admin@stkch.org.au) All complaints will be acknowledged within 2 working days of receiving the complaint. SCH will work to resolve these complaints within 5 working days.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the response they have received they can proceed to make a formal complaint or appeal. A formal complaint or appeal can be made in person, by telephone, letter or email or by completing SCH's **Complaints and Appeals Form**.

It would assist SCH if the complainant outlines:

- Any action taken to address the issue
- The responses they have received from SCH
- The outcome they are seeking

### **Responding to Complaints and Appeals**

If SCH is unable to resolve the complaint within 30 days the resident or prospective resident may take their complaint to the Victorian Housing Registrar.

The Victorian Housing Registrar can deal with complaints that are:

- Made by a resident or prospective resident of a registered agency about a rental housing matter
- Not referable to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) under the Residential Tenancies Act 1997
- Not resolved after 30 days of being formally lodged with a registered agency
- Received from third parties (including members of the public) that may evidence compliance failings by a registered agency with the Housing Act or Performance Standards.

### **Complaints to the Victorian Housing Registrar can be made by:**

- email: [housingregistrarcomplaints@dtf.vic.gov.au](mailto:housingregistrarcomplaints@dtf.vic.gov.au)
- post: Housing Registrar, GPO Box 4379, Melbourne, Victoria 3001
- phone: [+61 3 7005 8984](tel:+61370058984)

### **Privacy and Confidentiality**

SCH respects the right to privacy and confidentiality of anyone making a complaint. File records of complaints are kept in a secure location and complaints entered on the Complaints Register are de-identified. SCH will not share a complainant's identity with other residents or stakeholders unless formal consent has been given.



**Related Policies and Documents**

- Complaints and Appeals Form
- Good Neighbour Policy
- How to make a Complaint
- Organisational Grievance Policy
- SCH Enterprise Agreement

**Legislation and Standards**

- Housing Act 1983 (Vic)
- Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic)
- Victorian Housing Registrar Performance Standards for Registered Housing Agencies

**Version control**

Version No	3.0	Review frequency	3 years
Date	July 2021	Next review	July 2024