

Customer Feedback and Complaints (Policy)

Version 7.0

This policy has been adopted by:

Name of Company	Adoption Date
Community Housing Ltd (CHL)	6 January 2025
Community Housing (Vic.) Ltd (CHVL)	6 January 2025
Community Housing (TAS) Ltd (CHTL)	6 January 2025
Community Housing (QLD) Ltd (CHQL)	6 January 2025
Community Housing (Homes for Regions) Limited	6 January 2025
Community Housing (Subi East) Limited	6 January 2025

And any other entities within CHL which adopt this policy.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Community Housing Limited Group of Companies (CHL) aims to provide a high standard of service in all areas of our operations. We recognise however that there will be occasions when customers and others receiving services from us, providing services to us or significantly affected by CHL's operations may wish to compliment, comment on or complain about an aspect of our service. CHL appreciates any feedback that our customers and communities choose to provide and aim to resolve any complaints in a timely manner.

- A complaint is a registered expression of dissatisfaction with a service, lodged by a complainant or their representative. It must relate to a specific occurrence or episode, including the non-delivery of service, which has an impact in the individual complainant. It may be lodged verbally, in writing via post, email or by completing a form available from our office, or online by visiting the website, or over the telephone, or in person.

This policy describes our overall arrangements for responding to comments and complaints. It is supported by detailed operational procedures. The policy and procedure applies to any person[s] who receives, requests or provides a service from or to us, or is significantly affected by CHL service delivery operations.

2. AIM

The aim of the policy is to ensure that:

- All comments on the standards of services are considered and where appropriate acted upon, with a response provided to the person providing the feedback.
- All complaints are dealt with in a timely manner within the prescribed timeframes, and where possible to the satisfaction of both the complainant and ourselves.
- Any improvements to our policies and procedures identified as a result of a comment or complaint are implemented.
- We perceive comments and complaints as an opportunity for positive action.

3. PRINCIPLES OF CHL CUSTOMER FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINTS POLICY

3.1. General

CHL is committed to the efficient, equitable and fair resolution of all comments and complaints lodged.

The management of complaints will meet all legislative requirements, industry standards and guidelines and comply with any specific program requirements.

3.2. Visibility

Information on how to provide feedback and/or make a complaint will be available in the form of brochures located at all CHL offices, in the renter/tenant handbook received at sign-up of new tenancies, promoted via the CHL Customer Promise, from any CHL operational staff member and on the CHL website at www.chl.org.au.

The CHL Customer Feedback and Complaints Policy will be published on the organisation website and can be requested to be viewed by a customer at any time. This will include information on external bodies that customers can contact to assist in resolving the complaint.

3.3. Responsiveness

All complaints will be dealt with courteously. We will aim to respond within specified timeframes which are detailed in the Complaints Indicative Timeframes document and in the CHL Customer Promise.

3.4. Confidentiality

CHL staff members shall respect the privacy of complainants and treat all documentation as confidential. A customer's personal information will not be given to another person unless there is lawful reason to do so and/ or with consent. Wherever possible, we will respect the confidentiality of complainants and those being complained about. Where it is necessary to reveal the name, we will only do so with the individual's consent.

3.5. Objectivity

CHL seeks to provide customers with the opportunity to have their feedback received by CHL and any complaint to be reviewed and investigated in a fair and equitable way, and to encourage continual improvement in the operational policies and practices of CHL.

3.6. Accountability

The complaint handling procedure must follow due process and be just to all parties. All complaints will be dealt with fairly and professionally, without consequence to the customer or to their status as a CHL customer.

3.7. Accessibility

We will, where necessary, assist those wishing to make a comment or complaint by arranging translation facilities or providing help for those with hearing or sight impairment. An advocate can assist a customer during the complaints procedure.

The person making the complaint may advise CHL in writing if they wish to authorise a particular person to act on their behalf. The authority will include the advocate's name, contact number and relationship to the customer.

Staff acknowledge that some complainants may only wish to make a verbal complaint and in those instances, they will be treated no differently to complaints lodged in writing via post, email or by completing a form available from our office, or online by visiting the website or over the telephone.

3.8. Appeal

A person making a complaint has the right to pursue a formal Appeal Process if they are dissatisfied with the CHL Customer Feedback Process and subsequent outcome. Any complaint received from a customer that fails to be resolved within the CHL Customer Feedback Process will be referred to the internal appeal process with the permission of the customer.

Should the customer still not be satisfied with the outcome of this process, they will be referred to an appropriate external Appeal Body for their State and requirements in which CHL has operational presence. A list of agencies that may assist in resolving the complaint is detailed in the External Avenues of Appeal document.

3.9. Staff

If a complaint involves investigations into staff conduct, CHL Disciplinary Procedures may be applicable. In the case of complaints being made against the CEO the Board of Management will undertake the investigation.

3.10. Anonymous complaints

CHL acknowledges that there may be occasions when a complainant wishes to remain anonymous. In these circumstances, the feedback will be registered in the CHL Feedback Register as a comment. It will be investigated and assessed by CHL operational teams and action taken as deemed appropriate by the nature of the information received. Communication regarding the process and outcome of the complaint will not be made due to the anonymity of the complainant.

3.11. NDIS participants

NDIS recipients living in CHL accommodation may use CHL's Customer Feedback and Complaints processes, or may also contact the NDIS complaints line on 1800 800 110 or complete an online form (<https://www.ndis.gov.au/contact/feedback-and-complaints>).

They may also call the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission on 1800 035 544.

4. HOW CHL AIMS TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY PRINCIPLES

4.1. Responsibility

The Manager of each business unit is responsible for ensuring the effective implementation and compliance with this Policy within their respective units. They must ensure:

- the Customer Feedback and Complaints Procedure is adhered to,
- that all complaints received are entered into the CHL Feedback Register,
- and all complainants are promptly contacted to discuss the initial complaint and given an opportunity to provide further information.

4.2. Monitoring

CHL will:

- Record and respond to all customer feedback received and ensure it is operating effectively and responding to changing needs and circumstances.
- Monitor compliance with policy and procedure.
- Make changes to policies and procedures if this is recommended as a result of feedback received.

4.3. Staff training and development

CHL will:

- Ensure all staff understand its policies and procedures.
- Ensure all staff regularly participate in sector and internal training opportunities regarding the management of customer feedback and complaints.
- Ensure all staff are equipped with the skills to receive and respond to feedback appropriately and diligently.

5. RELATED RESOURCES

5.1. CHL Group References

CHL Customer Promise
CHL Customer Feedback and Complaints Procedure
CHL Appeals Policy and Procedure
CHL Housing and Homelessness Policies
CHL Privacy Policy and Procedures
CHL Disciplinary Action Policy and Procedure
CHL Code of Conduct

5.2. External References

National Regulatory Community Housing Standards
Victorian Community Housing Regulatory Framework
Western Australian Community Housing Regulatory Framework
Housing Assistance Act 1996 (COM)
State Housing Acts (NSW 2001, NT 1982, QLD 2003, SA 1995, TAS 2022, VIC 1983, WA 1980)
State Residential Tenancy and Rooming Acts (NSW 2010, NT 1999, QLD 2008, SA 1995, TAS 1997, VIC 1997, WA 1987)
Community Housing Providers National Law Acts 2013 (NT, NSW, QLD, SA and TAS)

The National Affordable Housing Agreement
NRSCH National Regulatory Code
Consumer Charter for Community Managed Housing and Homelessness Services (VIC)
NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Framework
National Disability and Insurance Scheme Act 2013
NDIS Code of Conduct and Rules
The Human Rights and Responsibilities Charter Act 2006 (VIC)
Human Rights Act 2019 (QLD)
Privacy Act 1988 (COM)
NSW Housing Appeals Committee Charter

6. MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy is maintained and managed by the CHL Group's Chief Operations Officer.

This document should be reviewed and revised periodically and/or as required. The period between reviews must not exceed three years. This document remains valid until such time that a new version is published

Review History

Document reference	Date Approved	Version	Reason for review	Review frequency	Owner	Approver(s)
POLHOUAUSNATCFM202407	6 January 2025	7.0	Scheduled review	Every three years	Chief Operations Officer	Executive
POLHOUAUSNATCFM202406	March 2024	6.2	Reformat	Existing	Chief Operations Officer	Executive
POLHOUAUSNATCFM202306	June 2023	6.1	NT inclusion	Existing	National Manager Operations	Managing Director National Manager Operations
POLHOUAUSNATCFM202206	August 2022	6.0	Scheduled review	Every two years	National Manager Operations	Managing Director National Manager Operations
POLHOUAUSNATCFM202005	May 2020	5.0	Scheduled review	Every two years	National Manager Operations	Managing Director National Manager Operations
POLHOUAUSNATCME201704	November 2017	4.0	Scheduled review*	Every two years	National Manager Operations	Managing Director National Manager Operations

* External Complaints policy superseded by Customer Feedback and Complaints Policy.