

# Tenancy Feedback and Complaints Procedure

## 1. Purpose

Uniting Housing Victoria subcontracts its housing services to Uniting Vic.Tas (Uniting) via a Service Level Agreement.

Under the Agreement, Uniting has agreed to comply with Uniting Housing policies, the Performance Standards for Registered Housing Agencies, and the Victorian Government’s Service Standards for Funded Agencies. Uniting is responsible for managing tenancy feedback and complaints on behalf of Uniting Housing.

Uniting is committed to providing high quality and safe services and recognises that feedback, complaints, and compliments provide valuable information to help us improve the services we provide.

## 2. Scope

This procedure describes the scope and management of complaints about tenancy services provided by Uniting Housing.

The procedure applies to renters with Uniting Housing under the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic)* or people who are applicants for rental housing managed by Uniting Housing (potential renters).

This procedure operates alongside the **Uniting Feedback, Compliments and Complaints procedure**.

This complaints procedure does not cover:

- Service requests, e.g., request for maintenance
- Disputes or grievances between renters or their advocates about another person who is not a Uniting renter
- A nuisance complaint from a neighbour or other external party about an alleged negative behaviour by a Uniting renter
- Disputes about the renter or the rental provider that come under the jurisdiction of *the Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic)*
- Disputes of grievances from employees, contractors, or management

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Document Number: <i>UPD-UH-001</i>	Policy Area: <i>Quality, Risk &amp; Compliance</i>	
Version Number: <i>1.0</i>	Document Owner: <i>General Manager, Housing &amp; Property</i>	
Publication date: <i>22/09/2022</i>	Endorsed by: <i>General Manager, Housing &amp; Property</i>	Page <b>1</b> of <b>7</b>

These matters which are out of scope of this procedure will be noted on local records as appropriate, and we will respond to the matter raised. For example, a nuisance complaint against a Uniting Housing renter will be recorded on the tenancy record on the Chintaro tenancy management system.

Matters between Uniting renters and neighbours will be addressed as neighbour disputes (see below) and will also be recorded on the tenancy record on the Chintaro tenancy management system.

### 3. Procedure

#### 3.1 Tenancy complaints

A tenancy complaint is defined as:

*an expression of concern, dissatisfaction, unmet expectation, or frustration by or on behalf of a renter or potential renter regarding any aspect of the quality or delivery of tenancy services, policies, procedures or conduct or any other element of the way we do our business, regardless of how it is made, provided to Uniting renters or rental applicants.*

The complaint may come from the person affected or an advocate or representative. Renter and applicants can get help from an advocate or support person if required when making a complaint.

Feedback can be received in either written form (letter, survey, [consumerfeedback@vt.uniting.org](mailto:consumerfeedback@vt.uniting.org) email, submission of the feedback form on the Uniting website or the Uniting Housing website, and social media via the Uniting Facebook page) or verbal form (phone, in person, phone recording or via a web-based platform).

#### 3.2 Neighbour disputes and anti-social behaviour

Renters have an obligation to abide by the terms of their Residential Rental Agreement. This includes the requirement that renters must not cause a nuisance or do anything to stop their neighbours from enjoying the peace, comfort, and privacy of their homes.

Under the Rental Agreement, renters are responsible for their own conduct, as well as being responsible for the behaviour of other occupants in their home and any visitors.

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Uniting will encourage Uniting renters to try to resolve any disputes with neighbours themselves, for example through discussion with their neighbour or with the assistance of mediation services. Uniting can only investigate a neighbour dispute if the matter involves a possible breach of a Residential Rental Agreement by a Uniting renter, and only after an attempt has been made to resolve the problem through discussion or mediation.

Uniting will take action if the dispute involves a possible breach of a Residential Rental Agreement by a Uniting renter.

### 3.3 Provision of information

All Uniting renters and other Uniting consumers are provided with a Consumer Handbook when services commence, which sets out ways for providing feedback, including complaints. All feedback will be acknowledged.

When received, Uniting staff will determine whether feedback received relates to provision of tenancy services or another category of feedback or service request.

If the matter is not related to service provision, Uniting staff will advise the complainant if the matter is one that Uniting can investigate and take action on.

#### Examples

- A renter makes contact about a faulty tap or oven – this is treated as a maintenance service request
- A renter makes contact that they have reported a faulty oven but have not heard when the item will be repaired – this is a service complaint and within scope of this procedure. It will be record as a service complaint.
- A neighbour complains about noise from the premises of a Uniting renter – this is a neighbour complaint about potential anti-social behaviour. Uniting representatives will respond by making contact with both parties, but it is not treated as a service complaint covered by this procedure

Service complaints are recorded on the tenancy record and in the Riskman incident and feedback management system of Uniting.

### 3.4 Formal complaints

If a renter, applicant, or stakeholder has raised an issue of concern with Uniting and they are not satisfied with the response they have received, they may escalate the matter by raising it as a formal complaint.

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The complaint should set out in writing or be recorded by a Uniting member of staff the following:

- The issue of concern
- Response received from Uniting to the issue
- Action or outcome that is sought to resolve the complaint

A formal complaint can be submitted to [consumerfeedback@vt.uniting.org](mailto:consumerfeedback@vt.uniting.org) or [info@unitinghousing.org.au](mailto:info@unitinghousing.org.au) or through the feedback page on the Uniting website or the contact page on the Uniting Housing website:

[www.unitingvictas.org.au/feedback/](http://www.unitingvictas.org.au/feedback/)  
[www.unitinghousing.org.au/contact-us/](http://www.unitinghousing.org.au/contact-us/)

Service complaints are recorded on the tenancy record and in the Riskman incident and feedback management system of Uniting [RiskMan \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

### 3.5 Investigation of complaints

When a service complaint is received by the relevant manager, they must determine those which require investigation and/or a response provided to the consumer.

The manager must also assess who is most appropriate to deal with the complaint and who needs to be notified both internally and externally. As a minimum the matter is noted on the tenancy record and, if a service complaint, recorded in the Riskman system [RiskMan \(sharepoint.com\)](#).

The manager must:

- Provide the complainant with information about the process including escalation (both internally and externally), access to a translator where applicable and support options available.
- Attempt to immediately resolve the complaint. If this is not possible, advise the person making the complaint of this, and organise a time within 10 business days to contact them to advise how the complaint is being investigated or resolved.
- Identify the format of response the complainant prefers. As a rule, written complaints should be responded to in writing, and verbal complaints by phone or face to face.
- Investigate the complaint in order to gain a better understanding and determine the appropriate action(s):

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- Identify and clarify the issue(s) for resolution, including the key concerns raised by the complainant, and any other issues that arise or are identified by employees.
- Identify the relevant parties to the complaint, i.e., key people involved with the complaint plus those involved. They may not always be a respondent to the complaint but may be key people in the provision of service under investigation

### 3.6 Further information

If a Uniting renter has lodged a service complaint and it remains unresolved after 30 days, the complainant may contact the Victorian Housing Registrar for further information.

Complaints that will be reviewed by the Housing Registrar are those where:

- The complaint is made by a renter or prospective renter (or someone authorised to act on their behalf), and is about a rental housing matter; and
- The complaint is about a service delivered or decision made by an individual registered agency about a rental housing matter; and
- The complaint has already been directed formally to the registered agency, and after 30 days the agency did not resolve the complaint to the complainant's satisfaction, and the complainant now wishes to refer it to the Registrar for resolution.

[www.vic.gov.au/making-complaint-about-community-housing](http://www.vic.gov.au/making-complaint-about-community-housing)

### 3.7 Other avenues for escalating complaints, if not resolved

- Consumer Affairs Victoria provides information about renter's rights and obligations; how to seek solutions to disputes; and in certain circumstances offer dispute services. [www.consumer.vic.gov.au/housing/renting/legal-and-dispute-support/resolving-disputes](http://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/housing/renting/legal-and-dispute-support/resolving-disputes)
- The Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal has jurisdiction over residential disputes between renters and rental providers under the RTA. [www.vcat.vic.gov.au/case-types/residential-tenancies/apply-residential-tenancies](http://www.vcat.vic.gov.au/case-types/residential-tenancies/apply-residential-tenancies)
- The Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria provides free dispute resolution services across Victoria for both community and civil disputes. The centre can discuss the dispute with a complainant, identify potential options, suggest

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negotiation strategies, and organise mediation, if required.

<https://www.disputes.vic.gov.au/about-us>

- Department of Families, Fairness and Housing investigates complaints or requests for review about applications for housing under the Victorian Housing Register. [www.housing.vic.gov.au/feedback-and-complaints](http://www.housing.vic.gov.au/feedback-and-complaints)
- The Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC) will help resolve complaints for people who have been discriminated against, sexually harassed, victimised, or vilified. [www.humanrights.vic.gov.au/dispute-resolution/what-happens-when-you-make-a-complaint/](http://www.humanrights.vic.gov.au/dispute-resolution/what-happens-when-you-make-a-complaint/)
- The Victorian Ombudsman receives and investigates complaints about the Victorian Housing Register (VHR) or concerns about how the Housing Registrar has responded to a complaint. [www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au/complaints/#politicisation-of-the-public-service-submissions](http://www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au/complaints/#politicisation-of-the-public-service-submissions)

### 3.8 Advocates

The following organisations may be able to provide help when pursuing a complaint:

- Tenants Victoria provides information, advice, and legal representation to promote and protect the rights of Victorians who rent their homes. [tenantsvic.org.au/](http://tenantsvic.org.au/)
- Victoria Legal Aid provides information, legal advice, and education with a focus on the prevention and early resolution of legal problems. [www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/](http://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/)
- Justice Connect provides pro bono legal services to people experiencing disadvantage by connecting to lawyers and barristers willing to act on a pro bono basis. [www.justiceconnect.org.au/](http://www.justiceconnect.org.au/)
- Council to Homeless Persons Homelessness Advocacy Service provides assistance for people who have a problem with a homelessness assistance or social housing service. [chp.org.au/home/homelessness-advocacy-service](http://chp.org.au/home/homelessness-advocacy-service)

## 4. Related documents

### Legislation

*National Rental Affordability Scheme 2008 (Cth)*

*National Rental Affordability Scheme Regulations (Cth)*

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*Housing Act 1983 (Vic)*  
*Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic)*  
*Residential Tenancies Regulations 2021 (Vic)*

**External**

Performance Standards for Registered Housing Agencies

**Internal**

[Diversity Statement](#)

[Child Safety Commitment Statement](#)

[RiskMan \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

Feedback, Compliments and Complaints Procedure

Consumer Handbook

Consumer Rights and Responsibilities policy

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