

# Renter and Community Engagement Policy

## 1. Policy Statement

Uniting Vic.Tas (Uniting) provides tenancy and asset management services for community housing to Uniting Housing Victoria (Uniting Housing), a Registered Housing Provider.

This policy describes Uniting’s approach to responding to renter and community engagement in the design and provision of housing services.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all Uniting Housing community housing tenancies which include, but are not limited to, tenancies in:

- Properties owned by Uniting Housing (Victoria) and Uniting Vic.Tas for use as long-term community housing
- Properties leased by Uniting Housing (Victoria) from Homes Victoria for long term community housing
- Rooming Houses
- Properties managed under the Transitional Housing Management (THM) program, the Homelessness to a Home (H2H) program and the Homes for Families program; and
- Properties managed as Affordable Housing, including properties under the National Rental Affordability Scheme.

## 3. Guiding principles

In applying this policy Uniting:

- Acknowledges the inherent value of the lived experience of Uniting renters using and experiencing Uniting services.
- Aims to share decisions and power with renters in planning and delivering services and reviewing services
- Will provide structured opportunities for renters to provide input and feedback on the design of policies and services.
- Will use system advocacy activity to raise a collective voice for people in housing need in Victoria and Tasmania and collaborates with other advocates for improved housing

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## 4. Commitment to engagement

Consumer partnerships in Uniting aim to acknowledge the inherent value of lived experiences of people who use, interact, or are eligible for Uniting’s services, including housing services.

The Uniting’s consumer partnerships framework guides the way that Uniting looks to share decisions and power with consumers at all phases of the planning cycle: service design, delivery and evaluation.

Engagement with Uniting renters has the following aims:

- Provide feedback to Uniting about the quality and effectiveness of services
- Improve the way we communicate about our services and with our consumers
- Improve opportunities for renters to receive and contribute information about how their homes are managed
- Create opportunities for renters to make connections with neighbours, community services and community opportunities and build skills
- Bring diverse voices and experiences forward to learn what is important in designing and improving our services
- Empower consumers to have control over their housing and pursue social and economic opportunities

Through an annual engagement plan, Uniting will set out opportunities and activities to achieve the inclusion of the voice of renters and the wider community in policies and service design and in advocating for improved housing.

Activities include:

- Regular renter satisfaction surveys
- Renter newsletter
- Ensuring renters receive high quality information about housing services we provide
- Providing clear and accessible information about renter's rights and responsibilities
- Providing structured opportunities for Uniting renters to review and contribute to policies and service design
- Supporting the establishment of local resident groups
- Incorporating community-building and consumer engagement structures and activities in new housing developments

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## 5. Definitions

Term	Meaning
<b>Affordable housing</b>	Rental housing where rent is charged at less than market level
<b>Community housing</b>	Rental housing owned and/or managed by a registered community housing provider
<b>Consumer partnerships</b>	Short- or long-term activity that enable consumers (Uniting service users) to influence, direct or decide what and how Uniting delivers plans and services
<b>Engagement</b>	A planned process through which an organisation and the community exchange information through different methods and take actions to solve common problems, deliver services or make decisions
<b>Lived experience</b>	Personal experience of using services, and therefore possessing firsthand knowledge as a service user of the quality and effectiveness of services. A person with lived experience provides critical knowledge and insights about the services they experience.

## 6. Transparency and accessibility

This policy will be available on the Uniting Housing and Uniting Vic. Tas websites.

If you require this policy in a language other than English, or in accessible format please contact Uniting.

This policy will be fully reviewed within 3 years of the approval date.

## 7. Legislation/Regulations

This policy implements the obligations of Uniting under:

- Housing Act 1983

## 8. Related Documents

Uniting Community Partnerships Framework  
Community and consumer engagement strategy

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