

Neighbourhood Complaints

Purpose

This policy outlines how Bridge Housing manages neighbourhood complaints. It also explains how we support positive relationships in our communities.

Scope

This policy applies to tenants, approved household occupants, visitors, and former tenants of Bridge Housing Limited and all its related entities (we, our, us). It also applies to neighbours, property owners and stakeholders who have complaints regarding the behaviour of tenants, occupants, and visitors of our housing portfolio.

Policy Overview

Under the [NSW Residential Tenancies Act \(2010\)](#), all tenants have the right to peaceful enjoyment of their property and to live in peace and harmony with their neighbours. We will take all reasonable steps as a social housing landlord to ensure this.

We also support positive relationships and provide opportunities for neighbours to resolve issues or problems when they arise. We do this through our community engagement programs and a proactive approach to tenancy management. This includes holding [Block Meetings](#) and regular check-ins with tenants in their homes and neighbourhoods.

Promoting Positive Relationships

Building Bridges is our tenant and community engagement strategy. It outlines how tenants can have a say in how we deliver our services and participate in social activities in their neighbourhoods and communities. Some of the ways tenants can get involved include joining a local Tenant Advisory Group meeting or attending local activities. For more information, go to <https://bridgehousing.org.au/our-community/>.

Action When Disputes Arise

We encourage tenants and neighbours to resolve issues through discussion in the first instance. Many neighbourhood disputes can be resolved this way, without our involvement.

Where issues cannot be resolved through discussion, we will manage the dispute using a three-step process:

1. Listen – we will listen to your story, record the details, and confirm whether there will be any further action. If we proceed, we will provide your neighbour with the opportunity to respond and write to you to confirm this action.
2. Manage – we will review evidence to determine if there has been a breach of tenancy. We will refer, mediate and act to ensure breaches of tenancy are addressed and wherever possible conflict is managed.
3. Advise – we will let you know the outcome of our investigation in writing and our actions. We aim to complete the investigation within 21 days.

Managing complaints involving a breach of tenancy

Where a breach of a person's Residential Tenancy Agreement is confirmed, we will take action based on the type and seriousness of the breach. This can range from a written warning to an application to the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

Evidence

To take action, we require evidence to support the complaint. Evidence must be factual and verified by independent sources.

Evidence may include a diary of events, witness statements, police reports, and/or statements or diaries from other neighbours. For ongoing issues, we encourage the complainant to keep a diary detailing any disturbances or incidents. The diary must be factual and objective, and record dates, times, and details of each incident.

Caution must be exercised when using photographs, recordings, or video footage as evidence. This must be done in a way that respects privacy and does not cause harassment, intimidation, or increased hostility. Individuals must be advised in advance that they are being filmed or audio recorded.

We do not permit the installation of cameras or recording equipment in common areas of our properties.

Minor Breaches

In line with the principles of natural justice, for instances of minor breaches including noise, rubbish dumping or use of common areas, tenants will be given the opportunity to change and address their behaviour.

The tenant or household occupant will be reminded in writing of their rights and responsibilities under the NSW Residential Tenancies Act, the nature of the complaint made against them, the evidence of the complaint made against them and action that may be taken if issues continue.

Serious Breaches

If a tenant's behaviour seriously or persistently breaches their Residential Tenancy Agreement, we will take action through the [NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal](#). This includes instances of proven violence, assault, or other criminal activity.

Our action can range from seeking a Specific Performance Order to cease an action which is a breach of tenancy, through to terminating a tenancy in extreme circumstances.

The NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal may decline our request for a termination of tenancy, or a specific performance order based on the evidence provided or their interpretation of tenancy law. This is outside of our control however we will continue to seek a suitable resolution where we can.

Illegal Activity

We will investigate all alleged breaches of the Residential Tenancy Agreement but cannot investigate criminal matters, such as alleged drug dealing, assault, harassment, or theft. These matters must be referred to the NSW Police.

We can seek confirmation of any illegal activity or complaints made by tenants to the NSW Police through an application under the NSW Record of Understanding. This information can be submitted as evidence at the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal, and may result in action being taken against the tenancy in question.

Banning Notices

On the advice of NSW Police, we may issue a Banning Notice under the [NSW Inclosed Lands Protection Act 1901](#). A Banning Notice limits the right of a person to access a Bridge Housing property. Banning Notices can be issued to anyone who is not authorised to be at a Bridge Housing property.

If a person is issued with a Banning Notice and they then return to the property, they can be removed by Police and/or by issued with a fine. Banning Notices will be used for individuals who are proven to be causing an ongoing nuisance or disturbance that impacts the peaceful enjoyment of our tenants.

Complaints about Service Delivery

If a person is dissatisfied with the services we provide, they may lodge a complaint, which will be investigated in accordance with our [Compliments, Complaints and Appeals Policy](#).

Related Documents and Resources

Type	Title
Legislation	Residential Tenancies Act 2010
Legislation	Inclosed Lands Protection Act 1901 (NSW)
Policy	Block Meetings
Policy	Compliments, Complaints and Appeals Policy
Resource	Bridge Housing Communities Page

This document was previously known as Good Neighbour policy

If you need help with interpreting or translation because English is not your first language, call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 131 450. They can phone our Customer Care Hub on 8324 0800 and interpret for you for free. If you are hearing impaired, please contact the TTY Service on 1800 628 310.