



National Affordable Housing Consortium Victoria

Good Neighbour policy

Policy Statement

NAHCV is committed to sustaining tenancies and maintaining harmonious communities. Under the Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic) all tenants have a right to quiet enjoyment of their premises. NAHCV will respond to issues that could interfere with the reasonable peace, comfort or privacy of tenants and neighbours.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide information on how National Affordable Housing Consortium – Victoria (NAHCV) works to support positive relationships between neighbours. It also sets out how NAHCV will respond to antisocial behaviour.

Scope

This policy applies to all tenants residing in long-term Targeted and Non-Targeted Social Housing properties owned or managed by NAHCV.

Human Rights Considerations

In deciding what action to take, NAHCV employees must give proper consideration to the relevant human rights in accordance with the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 s38(1) (the Charter). This consideration should include the potential impact the proposed action they are undertaking through this policy may have on the person's (and their household's) rights under the Charter.

Expectations of NAHCV Tenants

The behaviour expected of tenants in being "good neighbours", demonstrated primarily through:

- Respecting people's rights and privacy and quiet enjoyment of their tenancy
- Being responsible for their actions and those of their family and visitors
- Respecting communal areas
- Being considerate and tolerant of others
- Ensuring the rented property is not used for illegal purposes

What NAHCV will do

NAHCV will provide opportunities to promote a positive relationship between neighbours and the ability to resolve issues or problems if they arise. We do this through:

- Prevention
- Response
- Resolution

Prevention

NAHCV is committed to preventing instances of antisocial behaviour and promoting harmonious communities by:

- Designing, building and maintaining housing to a high quality
- Considering history of antisocial behaviour reports when deciding to allocate tenants to vacancies
- Committing to managing housing locally, with offices located in reasonable proximity to where tenants live
- Addressing barriers to social inclusion and participation through tenant and community engagement strategies
- Conducting regular property visits and inspections
- Working closely with support agencies to assist tenants to maintain tenancies
- Working collaboratively with neighbours to address safety issues that affect communities

Response



NAHCV takes appropriate action following any reports of antisocial behaviour or interference with quiet enjoyment, including contacting the police if appropriate and/or interviewing the person who reported the incident. NAHCV also:

Category	Response Time	Type of Behaviour
One (1)	Within 24 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Violence or threatened violence towards a person• Destruction of property• Where there is the potential for real harm to a person or property (for example the storage of explosive or toxic material)
Two (2)	Within 5 working days	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Any other issue not covered above such as noise nuisance, pet nuisance, or criminal behaviour

If the incident is Category One (1), NAHCV encourages witnesses to notify police in the first instance and keep a record of the incident and any reports to police.

NAHCV may receive reports about tenant behaviour from other tenants, staff, body corporate representatives and members of the public, including neighbours who are not NAHCV tenants. If a criminal activity has occurred, NAHCV encourages the witness to contact the police in the first instance.

Examples of issues that could interfere with the reasonable peace, comfort or privacy of tenants and neighbours include:

- Physical assaults and acts of violence
- Verbal abuse or other threatening behaviour
- Using, causing or permitting the property to be used for any illegal purpose, such as distributing or selling illicit drugs
- Damaging or vandalising property
- Excessive and persistent noise
- Retaliatory disputes between households
- Loud and unruly behaviour

Not keeping pets under control, including dogs barking, or defecating in shared areas

Resolution

NAHCV resolves reports of antisocial behaviour tenancy issues in the following ways:

- Encourage and support neighbours to resolve issues in the first instance, where safe and practical
- Interview tenants, neighbours and other potential witnesses to gain an understanding of the issue
- Act within the Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic) if there is evidence that a tenant has breached their Residential Tenancy Agreement
- Work with tenants to understand any underlying health or wellbeing issues and refer the tenant to support services or independent mediation services with consent and where appropriate
- Liaise with the police when there is antisocial or alleged illegal activity occurring in a NAHCV property. NAHCV will not carry out criminal investigations, but will assist police to access properties if there is a warrant



- Keep all parties informed of progress made

Transparency and Accessibility

This procedure will be available on the NAHCV website www.nahc.org.au/NAHCV

NAHCV may from time to time implement changes to this policy. The revised policy will apply to all tenancies on and from the date of the change. All tenants will be advised in writing of the changes and if/how it will affect their tenancy.

Relevant Legislation

- Housing Act 1983 (Vic)
- Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic)
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006 (Vic)
- Victorian Housing Registrar Performance Standard 1 (Tenant and housing services)
- Guidelines for Registered Housing Agencies published by DHHS

Related Policies and Procedures

- NAHCV Allocations Policy
- NAHCV Ending Tenancies Policies
- NAHCV Complaints and Appeals Policy

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Policy Approval and Review Details

Policy Creation Date & Version	6/01/2020	Version: 1.0
Policy Owner	Position: COO	Business Unit: Operations
Policy Approved by	Chief Operating Officer (COO)lhuis	
Date Approved	14 September 2021	
Policy Reference Number	VIC-NAHCV018	Policy Review Date: Sept 2024