



NAHC

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Home Equity and
Rental Services Ltd

Appeals policy

SP_TRP006

This document is controlled.

Introduction

This policy applies to appeals received from applicants, tenants and stakeholders of National Affordable Housing Consortium Ltd and subsidiaries ('NAHC Group'). This policy relates to the Complaints and Suggestions policy and will be made available with that Policy.

Purpose / Scope

This policy outlines what decisions can be appealed and how NAHC Group handles appeals from applicants, tenants and stakeholders.

General Principles

- A.** Applicants and tenants have the right to appeal decisions and will not be disadvantaged by lodging an appeal.
- B.** NAHC Group will adopt a transparent and objective approach to receiving, investigating and responding to appeals.
- C.** NAHC Group welcomes appeals and will use the outcomes and learnings from appeals in our continuous improvement approach to service delivery.

Milton Office

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Definitions

- Appeal:** an appeal is a request to have a decision reviewed. An appeal involves a fresh look at the appellant's case or issue to see if the outcome should be changed in full or in part. The appeal will address the merits of the case and examine what the fairest outcome should be in line with relevant policies and procedures. An appeal is different to a complaint.
- Appellant:** an Appellant is the stakeholder appealing a decision.
- Complaint:** a complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with, or concern about, the standard of service provided by NAHC Group or the conduct or performance of NAHC Group personnel whether justified or not, together with a request/demand for a different outcome in service delivery or treatment.
- Person/People:** in this policy, the terms person or people may also refer to businesses, organisations or other stakeholder groups.
- Working Days:** working days means business days excluding weekends and public holidays.

Related Documents / Templates

- Appeals Procedure SP_TRP006-01
- Complaints and Suggestions Policy and Procedure SP_TRP004 / SP_TRP004 -01
- Feedback, Complaints and Appeals Form
- 'Lodging a Complaint / Appeal' Factsheet
- General Response to Complaint / Appeal Letter Template
- Report Form for Board and Department
- Closing a Complaint / Appeal Letter Template
- Complaints and Appeals Flowchart
- Complaint Register Template

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years, but may be reviewed at any time if a need for review is identified by the Board or Management (for example, to respond to material changes in relevant legislation or to governance or operational considerations).

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Appeals procedure

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1. Publicising the Appeals Policy and Procedure

NAHC Group will ensure that all stakeholders have access to the Appeals Policy and Procedure, including information about how to make an appeal by:

- Providing a Complaints, Suggestions and Appeals fact sheet in the tenant sign-up pack;
- Publishing this Policy and Procedure on the organisation's website; and
- Providing copies of the Complaints, Appeals and Suggestions Factsheet and lodgment forms in the reception area.

2. The Appeals Process

An appeal process will involve looking at all relevant information on file, submitted by the individual, and any new information that was not available to the original decision maker. The purpose of the appeal is to look at the appellant's circumstances and to see what decision should be made within the relevant policy.

3. People Who Can Lodge an Appeal

Only the person/s affected by the decision can lodge an appeal. This includes a third party authorized to act on behalf of the person affected.

4. How to Lodge an Appeal

NAHC Group welcomes appeals and is focused on continually improving our service delivery.

If a stakeholder is dissatisfied with a decision made by NAHC Group, it is in their best interests to appeal as soon as possible after the original decision was made. Generally, the right to appeal is limited to three months from the date of the appellant being advised of the decision. However, NAHC Group has the discretion to consider matters outside this time frame where this is considered the most appropriate means of resolving an issue.

An appeal can be lodged by email, letter and phone or by completing an Appeal form. This form can be located on our website or by contacting our office.

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5. Standards in Responding to Appeals

Appeals will be formally acknowledged within 3 working days of receipt.

The process of assessing and completing the appeal will take no longer than 20 working days from the date of receipt. If a delay is likely to occur, NAHC Group will notify the appellant of the expected time-frame and the reasons for this.

6. Assessing the Appeal

Appeals will be directed to the Legal Affairs and Quality Assurance Manager who will formally lodge the appeal and coordinate or manage the appeals process.

The assessment of the appeal will consider all information available at the time of the appeal. This may include interviewing the appellant as part of this process.

7. Completing the Appeal

Once the appeal assessment is completed, the appellant will be formally advised of the outcome. The appeal outcome letter will explain the reason(s) for the decision.

8. Records of Appeals

Appeals will only be discussed with staff as required for the purpose of investigating the appeal.

Appeals will be recorded in the Appeals Register, with limited access. If the appellant is an applicant or tenant, the appeal will be noted on the person's electronic record.

9. Feedback

Once the appeals process is complete, appellants may be asked to provide feedback on their experience of the appeals process. Any feedback received will be confidential and used to guide service improvement.

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10. Independent Appeals

If the appellant is still not satisfied with NAHC Group's decision they have the option of referring the matter to external parties, which may include:

- Seeking support from their local Member of Parliament.
- Contacting a tenant's advice service or community legal centre for advice and assistance in the applicable jurisdiction.
- Making an application to an external complaint resolution body in the applicable jurisdiction:

New South Wales

- A.** Housing Appeals Committee (HAC) (www.hac.nsw.gov.au)
- B.** NSW Civil & Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) (www.ncat.nsw.gov.au)

Queensland

- A.** Housing Appeals and Reviews Unit (www.hpw.qld.gov.au)
- B.** Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT) (www.qcat.qld.gov.au)

Victoria

- A.** Victoria Legal Aid 1300 792 387
- B.** Housing Vic (<https://www.housing.vic.gov.au/appeal-decision>)
- C.** Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) (www.vcat.vic.gov.au)

11. Related Documents / Templates

- Complaints and Suggestions Policy and Procedure
- Complaints and Appeals Form
- 'Lodging a Complaint / Appeal' Factsheet
- General Response to Complaint / Appeal Letter Template
- Report Form for Board and Department
- Closing a Complaint / Appeal Letter Template
- Complaints and Appeals Flowchart
- Complaint Register Template
- Whistleblower Policy and Procedure CG_COM001-0105 / 0106

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