

Complaints

M20

Policy context: This policy relates to *National Community Housing Standard 3.6*.

POLICY STATEMENT

I. Purpose

- II. The purpose of this policy is to guide staff and complainants on the management of complaints received about Southern Cross Housing and the service we provide

III. Definitions

- A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction made by, or on behalf of, a tenant/applicant of SCH, a member of the public, or another organisation, where the complainant is unhappy with the standard or type of service provided by SCH. Internal complaints by SCH staff are covered under the SCH Grievances policy.
- Requests for review of an SCH decision seeking a different outcome are covered under the SCH Appeals policy.

IV. Coverage

This policy applies to all SCH staff and volunteers.

V. Principles

SCH encourages feedback from our customers. This feedback, including complaints from applicants, tenants, property owners, suppliers, members of the public and service partners who are not satisfied, gives SCH opportunities to better manage our services to make sure they are meeting our customers' needs.

Complaints related to an alleged breach of the Regulatory Code should be referred to the Registrar of Community Housing and complaints of alleged fraud or corruption should be referred to the Australian Securities Investment Corporation. Complaints involving abuse or neglect are covered by the SCH Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults policy. All other complaints, including complaints relating to tenancy management, access, and application management and SCH staff, are initially dealt with through this complaints policy.

Some examples of complaints are:

- Poor quality services provided by SCH staff members,
- Discrimination or harassment,
- Poor behaviour by a contractor (e.g. failing to clean up following maintenance),
- Poor administration such as a loss of documents or information,
- Faulty maintenance work (where the failure to undertake maintenance work properly is the issue).
- Lack of response by SCH when dealing with Neighbour disputes

Where possible, complaints should be put in writing addressed to the relevant service area Executive Manager/Manager or Chief Executive Officer, 69 Kinghorne St, Nowra 2541. If a complainant is unable to put their complaint in writing, SCH staff will assist them to lodge the complaint. Advice and assistance can also be obtained from the local Tenants Advice and Advocacy Service.

SCH will investigate the complaint and respond to the complainant in writing within 21 days, outlining the findings of the investigation and any further action to be taken.

If a tenant or applicant is unsatisfied with the outcome of the complaint, they may be eligible to refer the complaint to an external body, such as the Community Justice Centre, NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal, Registrar of Community Housing or NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission. SCH will advise tenants of their options when we respond to the complaint.

VI. Responsibilities

All SCH staff are responsible for providing advice to customers on SCH complaints processes and assisting customers to lodge a complaint if required.

Managers are responsible for investigating complaints and responding to complainants.

DOCUMENTATION

Documents related to this policy	
Related policies	Appeals, Neighbour Disputes, Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults policy
Other related documents	SCH Complaints and Dispute Resolution Guide