

# Complaint Policy

Location	CEO Office
Policy Type	Organisational Policy
Version	9.0
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National Regulatory Code	Performance Outcome 1- Client and housing services

## 1. Objective

1.1 This policy outlines how Argyle Community Housing (Argyle Housing) will deal with complaints from applicants, Clients, and stakeholders about our service delivery.

## 2. Background & Scope

- 2.1 All Argyle Housing Policies will promote and respect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of persons with a disability and will support a service to Clients and applicants in line with the principles of the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014, Disability ACT and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)
- 2.2 All Argyle Housing Policies will support and encourage a culturally sensitive and person-centred approach to service delivery
- 2.3 All Argyle Housing Policies will promote and respect the rights and freedoms of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- 2.4 Argyle Housing will adopt a transparent and objective approach to receiving, investigating and responding to complaints
- 2.5 Argyle Housing welcomes complaints and will use outcomes and learnings from complaints in its continuous improvement approach to service delivery
- 2.6 Applicants and Clients are encouraged to involve an advocate or support person at any point in the complaint process
- 2.7 A person lodging a complaint will be provided the opportunity to nominate a key contact person at Argyle Housing to manage the complaint process

## 3. Definitions

Appeal	Occurs when a client/applicant asks for a decision made by Argyle Housing to be formally reviewed
Complaint	Occurs when a person or organisation informs Argyle Housing they are dissatisfied with our service, standards, practices or policies

## 4. Policy Details

### 4.1 What is a complaint?

Argyle Housing defines a complaint as an expression of dissatisfaction with a specific aspect of its services where the complainant is unhappy with the standard or type of service and requests a changed outcome. Examples of complaints include:

- Failing to provide a service or an aspect of a service such as not completing a repair, not conducting Client visits, or not providing rent statements
- Rude or inappropriate staff behaviour such as not returning calls
- Poor administration of a service such as not recording changes in circumstances or sending out appropriate forms
- Providing an inconsistent or inaccurate service or not responding to complaints about anti-social behaviour

### 4.2 How to lodge a complaint

Argyle Housing welcomes complaints and is focused on continually improving its service delivery.

If an applicant, Client, or stakeholder is dissatisfied with a response to, or quality of a service delivery, they should lodge a complaint as soon as possible.

A complaint can be lodged by:

- Email to [complaints@argylehousing.com.au](mailto:complaints@argylehousing.com.au)
- Letter to the Complaints Officer, PO Box 1026, Bowral, NSW 2576
- Phone (1300 274 953)
- By completing a complaint form which is available on our website at [www.argylehousing.com.au](http://www.argylehousing.com.au) or from any Argyle Housing office:
- Through the Client Portal

Making a complaint will not result in any form of retaliation or discrimination, including any change in attitude or quality of service received from Argyle Housing staff.

### 4.3 Argyle Housing standards in responding to complaints

Complaints will be formally acknowledged within two working days of receipt at Argyle Housing. The process of investigating and reviewing a complaint will take no longer than 28 days from the date of receipt. If a delay is likely to occur, Argyle Housing will notify the complainant of the expected timeframe and the reasons for this. If the matter falls within the jurisdiction of the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) or ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal (ACAT) or equivalent, the person will be informed immediately of any time limits that apply in making an application to have the matter heard.

### 4.4 Investigating complaints

A senior member of staff with the appropriate subject matter knowledge will investigate all complaints. The complaint will be reviewed independently and will consider all information available at the time of the complaint.

#### **4.5 Responding to complaints**

Once the investigation is completed, the complainant will be formally advised of the outcome. The response will explain the reason(s) for any decision.

#### **4.6 Records of complaints**

The file record of the complaint will be confidential and will only be discussed with employees as required for investigating the complaint. The complaint will be kept with the Client / applicant's file, except for the complaints about Argyle Housing employees, which will be kept in the employee's personal file.

#### **4.7 Complaints register**

Argyle Housing managers will record decisions on complaints in the Electronic Complaints Register (CompliSpace Assurance) with limited access. Complaints being handled by the Board of Directors will be monitored via Board meetings.

#### **4.8 Corruption**

If a complaint concerns corrupt conduct, the matter will be referred to the CEO, a Services Manager or the Chair of the Board of Directors. All such information will be treated in a confidential manner.

#### **4.9 Other Avenues**

A formal complaint to Argyle Housing does not deny a person their right to follow any other avenues for complaint. These may include;

- Seeking support from their local Member of Parliament
- Contacting their nearest Clients Advice and Advocacy Service or Community Legal Centre for information, advice and advocacy
- Lodging a complaint with the funding and regulatory body in the relevant State or Territory
- Lodging a complaint with the Registrar of Community Housing in the relevant state or territory. The Registrar investigates complaints about community housing providers that have been registered under the Community Housing Providers (Adoption of National Law) Act 2012. Complaints can be lodged about community housing provider's performance against the Regulatory code

#### **4.10 National Disability Insurance Scheme (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rule 2018**

It is a guiding principle of the National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 (NDIS Act) that people with disability have the same right as other members of Australian society to pursue any grievance.

To ask for a reconsideration of a decision about a complaint or grievance NDIS Participants can contact the NDIS Commission using the following contact details: email: [contactcentre@ndiscommission.gov.au](mailto:contactcentre@ndiscommission.gov.au). Phone: 1800 035 544.

#### 4.11 External bodies that can provide assistance for service users include:

- Local Clients' Advice and Advocacy Services listed on [www.tenants.org.au](http://www.tenants.org.au)
- Community Legal Centre contactable through [www.clcnsw.org.au](http://www.clcnsw.org.au)
- The NSW Fair Trading Information Centre who can be contacted on 133 220 and at [www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au](http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au)
- Registrar of Community Housing NSW - Phone: 1800 330 940  
Email: [registrar@facs.nsw.gov.au](mailto:registrar@facs.nsw.gov.au)
- Registrar of Community Housing ACT - Phone: (02) 6207 5474  
Email: [quality@act.gov.au](mailto:quality@act.gov.au)

#### 4.12 Information on the Argyle Housing Complaint Management System

Information on the Argyle Housing Complaint Management System is available online and from any Argyle Housing office. Other sources of information include:

- The Argyle Housing website at <https://argylehousing.com.au/contact/complaints-appeals/>
- The Client Handbook in the Client Welcome Pack or online at <https://argylehousing.com.au/about-us/tenant-handbook>
- The complaint brochure supplied in the Client Welcome Pack
- In Argyle Housing's Client Newsletters
- Speaking with a Client Service Specialist or any member of Argyle Housing's staff

#### 4.13 Related Policies and Documents

- Delegation of Authority Schedule
- Argyle Housing Policy Definitions Policy
- Your Rights at Argyle Housing Policy
- Appeals Policy
- Property-specific Complaints Policies, Procedures and Tools
- National Community Housing Standards Reference
- I Want to Make a Complaint form
- National Disability Insurance Scheme (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018
- Community Housing Providers (Adoption of National Law) Act 2012

## Version Control

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