

<b>Policy #29</b>	<b>ORG - POL - Feedback and Complaints</b>
-------------------	--

<b>Applies to:</b> Whole of Organisation
<b>Specific responsibility:</b> Chief Executive Officer
<b>Definitions:</b> Refer to Schedule of Definitions <i>complaints, stakeholders, procedures, volunteers</i>

<b>Version: 5</b>
<b>Last Date approved:</b> 13/08/2020
<b>Next review date:</b> 30/09/2021

Source	Definition
AS/NZS 10002:2014 (AS/NZS Complaint Management Standard)	Expression of dissatisfaction made to or about an organisation, related to its products, services, staff or the handling of a complaint, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required.

## POLICY STATEMENT

Social Futures is committed to fostering a service culture that encourages open and honest communication. We acknowledge that any information received creates an opportunity to improve and develop and actively holds us accountable to our community and staff.

Feedback includes concerns, complaints, compliments, and suggestions and will be recorded, collated and utilised to:

:

- monitor service quality and effectiveness and promote a culture of continuous improvement,
- inform organisational reviews, service planning, new services and activities, and
- drive new initiatives.

All staff and volunteers working with people who use our services and other stakeholders are responsible for ensuring they are familiar with complaints and feedback procedures and for accepting and reporting feedback and complaints via Social Futures Quality Management System.

To support feedback processes, we will actively:

- foster a service culture that encourages and invites open and honest communication
- inform people who use our service about the various ways to provide feedback, make suggestions or lodge complaints
- protect the right of people who use our services and other stakeholders when they provide

- feedback and make complaints about all aspects of our work
- ensure our systems make it easy and safe for people to provide feedback in a range of ways including anonymously
  - provide complaints information in easy to read simple text, pictorial formats and languages other than English
  - ensure our systems and processes are accessible to all people: ATSI, CALD and people living with a disability are supported and empowered to provide feedback and make complaints
  - ensure our complaints and feedback culture focuses on the rights, safety and wellbeing of children and young people
  - record, analyse and report information arising from feedback and use it to improve services.

## APPEALS

We are committed to ensuring that any person using our services or affected by our work, their families, carers or advocates have the right to lodge a complaint or to appeal a decision. They have a right to expect that their concerns are addressed with equity, accountability and transparency. We will report complaints to the Board and funding bodies in accordance with our internal systems and the provisions of relevant funding agreements.

We will provide support to individuals who make a complaint or raise concerns where required, and take proactive measures to prevent repercussion or disadvantage. We provide options for review or appeal including information on external appeal bodies.

Tenants placed in Social or Affordable Housing may appeal decisions made by Social Futures, if unhappy with the outcome they may lodge a 2<sup>nd</sup> tier appeal with the Housing Appeals Committee. All tenants will be provided a copy of the Housing Appeals Committees factsheet on Scope of Appealable Decisions when they begin tenancies with us and again if they lodge a complaint and are unhappy with the outcome. Appealable decisions are defined in Attachment 1 of this policy.

<b>Policy context:</b> This policy relates to	
<b>Standards or other external requirements</b>	Australian Service Excellence Standards C.8.1, C.8.2 Family Relationships Services Standards 11 National Home Care Standards 1.4, 3.3 NSW Disability Services Standards 4 NSW Good Practice Guidelines 3.1
<b>Legislation or other requirements</b>	<i>Refer to Table 1 (Legislation)</i> Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) Company Act 2009 (NSW) Community Services (Complaints, Reviews and Monitoring) Act 1993 (NSW) Ombudsman Act 1974 (NSW) National Office for Child Safety – Complaint Handling Guide: Upholding the rights of children and young people

Reviewing and approving this policy		
Frequency	Person responsible	Approval
Two years	Chief Executive Officer	Board

Policy review and version tracking			
Review	Date Approved	Approved by	Next Review Due
1	31/07/2014	Board	26/11/2015
2	26/11/2015	Board	27/04/2017
3	27/04/2017	Board	23/08/2018
4	11/12/2018	Board	31/03/2020
5	13/08/2020	Board	30/09/2021

## DOCUMENTATION

Documents related to this policy	
Related policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Values, Vision and Purpose</li> <li>Strategic Planning</li> <li>Program and Project Planning</li> <li>Privacy and Confidentiality</li> <li>Information and Knowledge Management</li> <li>Risk Management</li> <li>Communication</li> <li>Collaboration</li> <li>Continuous Quality Improvement</li> <li>Responsive Service Delivery</li> <li>Monitoring Performance</li> </ul>
Related procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practice Framework</li> <li>Refer Policy and Procedure List</li> </ul>

## Social and Affordable Housing Appeal Categories:

<p><b>Social Housing Provider Eligibility</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Eligibility for social housing</li><li>• Removal from the social housing register</li><li>• Reactivation of a closed application</li><li>• Eligibility of people classified as unsatisfactory or ineligible former tenants</li></ul>
<p><b>Housing Entitlement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Type and size of dwelling</li><li>• Modifications or special features of dwelling needed for medical needs</li></ul> <p><i>Assessment of bedroom entitlements when a Vacant Bedroom Charge is applied. Clients cannot appeal the decision to apply the vacant bedroom charge. (Public Housing only)</i></p>
<p><b>Priority Housing Eligibility</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Eligibility for priority housing</li><li>• Locational need</li></ul>
<p><b>Eligibility for Emergency Temporary Accommodation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Eligibility for assistance (Public Housing only)</li></ul>
<p><b>Private Rental Subsidy Assistance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ending or tapering Private Rental Subsidy assistance following an individual or scheduled review</li><li>• Ending assistance due to refusal of an offer</li><li>• Review of whether the offer was a reasonable rejection and the subsidy should be reinstated.</li></ul>
<p><b>Succession of Tenancy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Eligibility to be granted succession of tenancy</li></ul>
<p><b>Recognition as a tenant</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Eligibility for Recognition as a tenant</li><li>• Eligibility for a provisional lease</li></ul>
<p><b>Minors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Eligibility for a minor to be listed on the FACS Housing Services register</li></ul>
<p><b>Housing Assistance for Elderly</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Eligibility for housing assistance to an elderly client</li><li>• Eligibility for special consideration as an Aboriginal elderly client</li></ul>
<p><b>Matching and Offering a Property</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Whether an offer is considered 'reasonable' (eg. type, location, size)</li><li>• Removal of the applicant from the housing register for refusal of offers</li><li>• Reasonableness of offers made when a Vacant Bedroom Charge is applied</li></ul>

**Rentstart Bond Loans**

- Eligibility for Rentstart assistance, including Temporary Accommodation, Tenancy Assistance, Rentstart Move, Advance Rent and Rentstart Bond Loan
- The amount of assistance provided under Rentstart Bond Loan. For example, the amount of bond assistance and/or Advance Rent provided.
- Decision to decline a client applying for their third Bond Loan.
- Decisions to suspend a client's access to further Rentstart assistance
- Decision to decline an application when a client reapplies and they are suspended from further assistance.
- Decision to decline a payment variation request
- Decision to decline a payment deferral request

**Transfer**

- Eligibility for transfer
- Eligibility for priority transfer / Category of transfer approval granted
- Transfer - locational need
- Eligibility for tenancy reinstatement

**Relocating Tenants for Management Purposes**

- Notice of Intent under Section 149 of the Residential Tenancies Act 2010 that the social housing provider intends to issue a Notice of Termination where a tenant has been offered alternative social housing premises

**Charging rent**

- Calculation of rent subsidies
- Cancellation of rent subsidies
- Eligibility for a rent subsidy

**Modification to property**

- Need for modifications for disability/medical reasons only

**Mutual Exchange**

- Eligibility for Mutual Exchange

**Absence from Dwelling**

- Request for absence from dwelling
- Decisions in relation to rent calculated during absence from dwelling

**Length of Lease**

- Type and length of lease offered when entering public housing
- Type and length of lease offered after a lease extension
- Notice under Section 145 of the Residential Tenancies Act 2010 that a tenant is no longer eligible to reside in public housing
- Eligibility for an extension of a lease as a result of a change of circumstances following a lease review

**Tenant Charges**

- Charges at vacation of dwelling where not covered by the [NCAT orders](#)

**Offers of a Property - transfer**

- Whether 'reasonable' offers are made and an offer counted for purpose of offers policy
- Offers made to tenants under relocation of a tenant for management purposes.

**Joint Tenancies**

- Eligibility for joint tenancy

**Aboriginality**

- Confirmation of Aboriginality

**Categorising a tenancy**

- Former tenant category
- Eligibility for Statement of Satisfactory Tenancy

**Antisocial Behaviour (ASB)**

- ASB 1st and 2nd strike notices

**Water Charges**

- Grant of a water usage allowance as per policy
- Method of calculation of water charges