

FEEDBACK, COMPLAINTS & APPEALS POLICY

For stakeholders to have confidence in our complaints management system and to enable continuous improvement by listening and effectively managing and learning from feedback and complaints.

1. Why we need this policy

- 1.1 Launch Housing welcomes feedback and complaints. Stakeholders have a right to provide feedback or complain about Launch Housing services when dissatisfied with those services.
- 1.2 Launch Housing has a regulatory and legislative responsibility to ensure we are delivering safe and quality services, and feedback and complaints are an essential source of information used to continuously improve our services.
- 1.3 We know that sometimes we don't get things right, and sometimes people feel dissatisfied. When this happens, we want to hear about it and be able to undertake any corrective action needed as a result of the feedback or complaint.

2. Who and what this policy applies to

This Policy applies to all renters, applicants, clients and stakeholders wishing to provide feedback on areas which can be improved, are working well, make a complaint or appeal decisions.

This policy applies to all Launch Housing services and HomeGround Real Estate, including everyone in any capacity, who through their role, has reason to receive and manage feedback and complaints.

The Policy does not apply to:

- i. Feedback or complaints expressed by Launch Housing employees, contractors or whistleblowers. These are managed through the Workplace Issues and Dispute Resolution Policy and Whistleblower Policy.
- ii. Disputes or grievances between renters or between renters and people outside of the organisation, for example, disputes between neighbours. These are managed through our Neighbourhood Dispute Policy.
- iii. Reports of antisocial behaviour are managed through the Anti Social Behaviour Policy.
- iv. Feedback or complaints which are not related to Launch Housing.
- v. Criminal matters which must be reported to Victoria Police.

3. Definitions

In this policy, the following words have the following meanings:

Term	Definition
Antisocial behaviour	Antisocial behaviour is behaviour that is disruptive to you, the people around you or the surrounding community. This requires different approaches to manage antisocial behaviour effectively and consistently with the appropriate legislative requirements. (Note that reports of anti-social behaviour are not considered a complaint unless they also meet the specific definition of a complaint provided below).
Appeal	A request made to someone in authority to review or change a previous decision.
Complainant	The person, organisation or their representative (including clients, renters, prospective renters, advocates, neighbours, community members, partners, and other stakeholders) making a complaint.
Complaint	An expression of dissatisfaction about Launch Housing, its services, programs, staff, property condition, a delay or failure to provide a service, or the handling of a complaint where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required.
Feedback	Any advice, suggestion, concern, criticism, compliments or information about Launch Housing, our services and staff shared for the purpose of improvement.

Neighbourhood dispute	When a disagreement or grievance arises between two or more individuals that are not Launch Housing employees relating to the behaviours occurring at a property managed by Launch Housing. (Note that neighbourhood disputes are not considered a complaint unless they also meet the specific definition of a complaint provided above).
Stakeholder	A person or an entity with an interest in, and who can either affect or be affected by, the business operations of Launch Housing. This includes clients, renters, applicants and members of the community.
Unreasonable conduct by a complainant	Any behaviour by a person which because of its nature or frequency, raises substantial health, safety, resource or equity issues for the people involved in the complaint process.
Vulnerability	A state of being especially susceptible to detriment due to circumstances including disability, age, literacy levels, gender, ethnicity or cultural background, trauma, poor health and stress.

4. What this policy includes

Launch Housing encourages a positive approach to feedback and complaints management. Stakeholders have the right to complain about our services and we recognise feedback and complaints as a valuable source of client and community voice and an opportunity for learning and continuous improvement.

This policy outlines the right to provide feedback or make a complaint, how complainants should expect to be treated when making a complaint and how Launch Housing will manage a complaint when received.

4.1 Policy Principles

What can you expect from Launch Housing when providing feedback or making a complaint?

Launch Housing will;

- Listen to your feedback and/or complaint.
- Always treat you with dignity and respect and manage your complaint in a confidential manner.
- If feedback or complaints involve a child safety concern, we will inform you about our processes for raising these concerns and our external reporting requirements.
- Support any cultural, linguistic, physical or intellectual needs of the person making the complaint or their advocate.
- Ensure there is no detrimental action taken against a complainant for making a complaint.
- Ensure complaints are handled in a fair and impartial way and follow the principles of natural justice.
- Maintain strict confidentiality about any discussions, content and processes relating to a complaint, and comply with the Australian Privacy Principles. Information relating to complaints is securely stored. We expect that all parties involved have their rights respected.

4.2 Practice Principles

Launch Housing will:

- Strive to make it as easy as possible for stakeholders to provide feedback or make a complaint by providing multiple avenues, including via our website, email, social media, in person, and in writing. We will not treat feedback differently because of how it is received.
- Address your complaint promptly and in a fair, respectful, dignified and proportional manner.
- Ensure no person providing feedback or making a complaint will be penalised or disadvantaged because of providing feedback or raising complaints relating to behaviour covered by this Policy.
- Ensure that all feedback and complaint processes are culturally safe and accessible for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people, for people from multifaith and multicultural communities and those who are LGBTIQ+.
- Learn from the feedback and complaints we receive to make our services better.

5. Providing feedback and making a complaint

5.1 How to provide feedback or make a complaint

Launch Housing provides a number of ways that someone can provide feedback or make a complaint.

Feedback and complaints can be made by:

- Speaking with your support or tenancy worker. This is often the best and fastest way to have a complaint resolved.
- Speaking with any Launch Housing staff member who can help you fill in a Feedback Form and lodge it on your behalf.
- Completing the Feedback Form on our website at: <https://www.launchhousing.org.au/feedback>.
- Emailing feedback@launchhousing.org.au. When using this email providing your name, preferred contact method, a summary of the complaint and the outcome you are seeking will help us to address it promptly.
- Through the post, addressed to Launch Housing, Level 7, 54 Wellington St, Collingwood, 3066.

5.2 Managing and addressing complaints

Launch Housing aims to resolve complaints at the earliest possible point.

Within three business days of making a complaint Launch Housing will knowledge the feedback or concern, be provided with information on Launch Housing's complaint handling process, who is managing their complaint and information on supports available to the complainant.

When a complaint has been appropriately reviewed and considered, the person who made the complaint receives a letter or email that provides information on the steps taken to consider the complaint, details of the decision and any actions taken to address the complaint.

Launch Housing aims to address all complaints within 30 days of receiving them.

5.3 Anonymous complaints

There will be times when a person making a complaint may wish to remain anonymous. We will still investigate anonymous complaints as with any other complaint, though we will not be able to acknowledge or advise the person making the complaint of any outcome.

5.4 Supporting and managing a complaint made by a young person or child

Launch Housing is a Child Safe Organisation, our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy outlines our commitments to children and young people and to the Child Safe Standards. We prioritise the health, safety and wellbeing of children and young people, and have a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse.

Launch Housing encourages children, young people and their families to provide feedback and make complaints in any way that feels safe and comfortable for you. We treat complaints from children, young people and their families seriously, and respond in a timely and considered manner.

All children, regardless of their gender, race, religious beliefs, age, disability, sexual orientation, family background and social background, have equal rights to protection from abuse and to have their concerns responded to.

Launch Housing takes immediate action in accordance with our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy upon learning about any suspected or actual incidences of child abuse.

5.5 Appeals and review processes

If the person making a complaint is not satisfied with the response they have received a review may be requested within 28 days of receiving the complaint response.

The review will be undertaken by someone who was not the original decision maker and is a senior member of staff. If a complainant is dissatisfied with the review outcome, the matter can be pursued externally (see below).

5.6 Support to make a complaint or appeal

You can have an advocate, family member or friend help you make a complaint or be with you at any time, if that makes you feel more comfortable.

Launch Housing will offer people alternate methods of providing feedback, complaints or making an appeal, such as referral to the Homelessness Advocacy Service for concerns about our homelessness services, or the Victorian Housing Registrar about our housing services if they are dissatisfied with the response received from Launch Housing or wish to make a complaint to someone outside Launch Housing.

5.7 Expectations of behaviour of complainants

Launch Housing recognise the majority of people who are dissatisfied with a service or an outcome interact with Launch Housing reasonably and responsibly, even when they are experiencing high levels of distress, frustration or anger about their complaint.

However, should any complainant behave unreasonably Launch Housing reserves the right to restrict or discontinue contact with a complainant for a period of time in circumstances where the complainant's behaviour creates an excessively threatening or unsafe work environment for our staff.

APPENDIX: ADMINISTRATION

6. Who is responsible for this policy

Role	Responsibilities
All Launch Housing Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist people who wish to provide feedback or make a complaint access our complaints process. Ensure complaints are promptly and appropriately allocated to Launch Housing staff for management and that staff at all levels are trained and committed to fair, effective and efficient complaint handling. Prepares information on feedback and complaints for internal and external stakeholders as appropriate to meet regulatory requirements and support internal and external investigations, reviews, appeals and Ministerial requests.
People providing feedback or making a complaint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide the minimum information required to enable the fair and consistent consideration of their feedback or complaint. When providing feedback or making a complaint we expect all parties to be treated with dignity and respect and have a zero tolerance for abuse, threats or aggression.

7. Supporting documents

Document name	Description	Type
Anti-Social Behaviour Policy	Establishes Launch Housing's approach to reporting and managing antisocial behaviour.	Policy
Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy	Sets out behavioural standards for staff and volunteers to empower children and young people to have a voice, and responsibilities for staff and volunteers including information sharing and record keeping.	Policy
Feedback & Complaints Management Procedure	Outlines the steps Launch Housing will take when feedback or complaints are received in recording, delegating, investigating and responding to feedback & complaints.	Procedure
Neighbourhood Disputes	Outlines how Launch Housing will foster and support positive relationships with neighbours and local communities involved in and/or affected by services provided by Launch Housing and to balance the rights of clients and renters with the rights of neighbours.	Procedure
Privacy Policy	Makes clear that the protection of privacy, as defined in the Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth), Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic), the Health Privacy Principles in the Health Records Act 2001 (Vic) and the	Policy

Australian Privacy Principles, is a legal requirement and is relevant to all Launch Housing's dealings.

8. Regulatory / accreditation standards

This procedure meets the following regulatory and/or accreditation requirements:

Standard	Standard reference
<i>Child Safe Standards</i>	5.2, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, 10.1, 10.2, 10.3, 11.1, 11.2
<i>Housing Registrar performance Standards</i>	1.6, 1.7
<i>Social Service Standards</i>	2.4, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4

9. Amendments to this Policy

This policy may be amended, terminated or replaced at Launch Housing's discretion. This policy will be reviewed, and updated as required, on a periodic basis.

In the event any related State or Commonwealth legislation changes, the legislation/directions will prevail to the extent of any inconsistency with this policy.

Amendments			
Date last approved:	12 03 2024	Date of effect:	27 03 2024
Date last amended:	12 03 2024	Date of next review:	27 03 2026
Owner:	Manager Feedback & Renter Engagement	Approver:	Executive Director – Housing Solutions
Portfolio:	Housing Solutions		

10. Version Control

Version	Effective Date	Amended by	Approved By	Amendment
V2.0	27 03 2024	Karren Walker	Roberta Buchanan	Second Version – updated to comply with new Standards
V1.0	30 09 2020		CEO	First Version