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## Tenant Compliments, Complaints and Appeals Procedure

Referring Policy: Privacy and Confidentiality Policy (Governance System)  
Supportive Housing Policy  
Sustaining Tenancies Policy  
Tenant Compliments, Complaints and Appeals Policy  
Tenant Service Charter (Governance System)

### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 To describe how tenants of Common Ground Queensland (CGQ) properties can pay a compliment, make a complaint or appeal a decision made by CGQ that directly affects them.

### 2. Procedure

- 2.1 Definitions  
Refer to the *Tenant Compliments, Complaints and Appeals Policy* for definitions of a compliment, informal complaint, formal complaint, appeal, feedback and incident.
- 2.2 Inform tenants
- 2.2.1 Tenants are informed of the *Tenant Compliments, Complaints and Appeals Policy, Procedure and Fact Sheet* during sign-up and throughout their tenancy (as required).
- 2.2.2 The *Tenant Compliments, Complaints and Appeals Policy, Procedure and Fact Sheet* are available on the CGQ website: [www.commongroundqld.org.au](http://www.commongroundqld.org.au). Hard copies of these documents can be provided on request.
- 2.2.3 Tenants are advised that making a complaint or lodging an appeal will not result in any form of retaliation or discrimination, including any complaint raised about quality of service or a staff member.
- 2.2.4 *Tenant Issue Forms* can be accessed online through the BCG App, in person from the CGQ Office or downloaded and printed from the CGQ website.
- 2.3 Inform Support Provider
- 2.3.1 The Support Provider (Micah Projects) is provided with a full understanding of the *Tenant Compliments, Complaints and Appeals Policy, Procedure and Fact Sheet* by CGQ and may offer assistance to any tenant who may want to pay a compliment, make a complaint, or appeal a decision made by CGQ that directly affects them.
- 2.4 Tenant rights
- 2.4.1 A tenant has the right to:
- Have their complaint dealt with confidentially and objectively;
  - Ask for help in lodging a formal complaint from Micah Projects or an external advocate. In this case, that organisation can contact CGQ on behalf of the tenant;
  - Request a support person to accompany them in any meetings;
  - Use interpreting and translating services;

- Be given information on tenant advice and advocacy services;
  - Lodge an appeal if they are not satisfied with the outcome (**refer 2.10**); and
  - Be informed of the outcomes of their formal complaints in a timely manner (**refer Section 2.11**).
- 2.5 Paying a compliment
- 2.5.1 Compliments can be registered in person, by telephone, by email or in writing. CGQ appreciates positive affirmation on any aspect of service delivery or staff performance.
- 2.5.2 It is preferable for tenants to record the compliment on a *Tenant Issues Form*, though this is not essential. A Micah Projects' or CGQ staff member can assist tenants to complete this form if they require assistance.
- 2.6 Responding to tenant compliments
- 2.6.1 Compliments are registered in the *Tenant Formal Communication and Incidents Register* by the Property and Tenancy Officer. The register allows CGQ to measure performance and to contribute to continuous improvement processes.
- 2.7 Lodging a complaint
- 2.7.1 Complaints can be raised in person, by telephone, by email or in writing.
- 2.7.2 All written complaints will be deemed formal complaints.
- 2.7.3 If a complaint is raised in person or by telephone, the attending staff member will confirm with the tenant if they wish to lodge a formal complaint.
- 2.7.4 It is preferable for tenants to record formal complaints on a *Tenant Issues Form*, though this is not essential. A Micah Projects' or CGQ staff member can assist tenants to complete this form if they require assistance.
- 2.8 Responding to informal complaints
- 2.8.1 CGQ and Micah Projects will endeavour to assist tenants to work through appropriate processes to resolve informal complaints that are raised. Informal complaints are not recorded in the *Tenant Formal Communication and Incidents Register*.
- 2.9 Responding to formal complaints
- 2.9.1 All formal complaints received will be recorded in the *Tenant Formal Communication and Incidents Register* by the Property and Tenancy Officer. The register allows CGQ to measure performance in relation to formal complaints and to contribute to continuous improvement processes.
- 2.9.2 If the formal complaint is received in writing the Property and Tenancy Officer will scan the *Tenant Issues Form* or other correspondence (i.e. letter, email, etc.), into the Tenancy Database under the relevant tenant file.
- 2.9.3 All formal complaints are initially reviewed and investigated by the Tenancy Manager.
- i. If the formal complaint implicates a CGQ staff member or a Director, the Tenancy Manager refers it to the CEO for review and investigation. If the formal complaint implicates a Director, the CEO will refer it to the Chairperson of the CGQ Board for review and investigation.

- ii. If the formal complaint implicates the CEO, the Tenancy Manager refers it to the Administration Manager who will forward to the CGQ Chairperson for review and investigation.
  - iii. If the formal complaint implicates the Micah Projects, the Tenancy Manager will forward it to Micah Projects' Feedback and Complaints Officer for review, investigation and action. The Micah Projects will advise the Tenancy Manager when the matter has been closed and a response to the complainant has been issued. This advice will be recorded in the *Tenant Formal Communication and Incidents Register* by the Tenancy Manager (or delegate).
- 2.9.4 Planned actions to respond to formal complaints are recorded in the *Tenant Formal Communication and Incidents Register* by the relevant CGQ staff member. Actions are then implemented.
- 2.9.5 Following appropriate action, the formal complaint will be closed by the relevant CGQ staff member (refer **Section 2.11**). This is recorded in the *Tenant Formal Communication and Incidents Register*.
- 2.10 Review of a decision (Appeal)
- 2.10.1 When a tenant is not satisfied with a decision made by CGQ, they may appeal the decision in writing. The appeal may be lodged using a *Tenant Issues Form*, though this is not essential.
- 2.10.2 In this case, the Property and Tenancy Officer will note that the concern is an objection to a decision in the *Tenant Formal Communication and Incidents Register*.
- 2.10.3 A review of a decision is always managed by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), except in instances where the initial formal complaint or appeal is about the CEO or a Director, in which case it will be managed by the Chairperson of the CGQ Board (refer **Section 2.10.6**).
- 2.10.4 Following appropriate investigation and action, the appeal will be closed by the CEO. When this occurs the tenant making the appeal is informed in writing. This is recorded on the *Tenant Formal Communication and Incidents Register*.
- 2.10.5 When a tenant is not satisfied with an appeal decision made by the CEO, they can contact the CGQ Board in writing.
- 2.10.6 The CGQ Board will discuss the appeal at their next meeting. Following appropriate investigation and action, the tenant making the appeal is informed of the determination in writing. The CGQ Board's decision is final. The decision will be recorded by the Chair's delegate in the *Tenant Formal Communication and Incidents Register* and the appeal will be closed.
- 2.10.7 Alternatively a tenant can contact the Residential Tenancies Authority's (RTA) free and impartial dispute resolution service for assistance or QSTARS at any time. If the matter remains unresolved, it may be taken to the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT). In such instances, the CEO (or delegate) will ensure the process and outcomes are recorded in the *Tenant Formal Communication and Incidents Register*.

- 2.10.8 Tenants can also make a formal complaint to the Queensland Registrar of the National Regulatory System for Community Housing (NRSCH). The Registrar investigates formal complaints about community housing providers that have been registered under the *Housing Act 2003*. Formal complaints can be lodged about a community housing provider's performance against the Regulatory Code.
- 2.11 Response Timeframes and Communication
- 2.11.1 Written acknowledgement of receipt of a formal complaint from a tenant occurs within 2 business days of receiving notification of the formal complaint.
- 2.11.2 The target is to have a formal response issued to the tenant within 14 business days of receiving notification of the formal complaint.
- 2.11.3 Where resolution or outcome exceeds 14 business days, the tenant will be advised in writing of the progress to date, the anticipated date or resolution and any reasons for delay. The target is to have all formal complaints 'closed' within 28 business days of receiving notification of the formal complaint. There may be instances where outcomes of planned actions may not be fully known for longer time periods after their implementation.
- 2.11.4 The same timeframes apply to appeals.
- 2.12 Continuous Improvement and Compliance
- 2.12.1 The *Tenant Formal Communication and Incidents Register* is reviewed monthly. The review aims to identify trends and recurrent issues and inform service quality improvements and practise.
- 2.12.2 CGQ will provide information on its complaints and appeals to comply with the reporting requirements of the National Regulatory System for Community Housing (NRSCH).

### 3. Referenced Documents

*Housing Act 2003*

Tenant Compliments, Complaints and Appeals Fact Sheet

Tenant Compliments, Complaints and Appeals Policy

Tenant Formal Communication and Incidents Register

Tenant Issues Form