Tenant Rights and Participation

Coodjingburra H.O.M.E
Helping Our Mob Everywhere

1. Purpose

This policy aims to ensure that tenants can actively engage in decisions related to both the management of the property and their tenancy.

Coodjingburra HOME supports the rights of tenants to be involved in and will seek the views of its tenants on matters that affect them.

2. Scope

Social Housing Program

3. Guidelines

3.1 Tenant Rights

All tenants have the right to fair and non-discriminatory treatment and to be treated with respect.

- All tenants will be provided with appropriate information about the activities of the company at the commencement of, and throughout their tenancy.
- All tenants will have the right to participate in the activities of the company, as well as the right to decline to participate.
- We will always abide by the terms and conditions of the Residential Tenancy Act and any other national relevant legislation designed to protect the rights of tenants.
- Tenants will have security of tenure within the guidelines of their Residential Tenancy Agreement, our policies and procedures.

3.2 Information about Rights

Where there is legislative or policy changes that may affect tenants' rights, tenants will be informed through our website or emails.

Tenants will be kept well informed of the operations and policies of the Coodjingburra HOME by:

- Maintaining current information on our website
- Provision of accessible policies, procedures and factsheets
- Allowing tenants the right to make reasonable decisions about the management of their dwelling,
- Formal feedback through satisfaction surveys, evaluations, suggestion boxes, etc.
- Encouraging informal feedback from tenants providing opportunities for input into formal consultations.

3.3 Resourcing

Coodjingburra HOME will:

- Meet the costs of the Tenant meetings, e.g. mail outs, meeting costs & training.
- Provide administrative support, e.g. minutes and agenda typing, record keeping, mailing, preparation of newsletters, etc.
- Provide background papers and other documents.
- Provide information and assistance about meeting procedures, planning, priority setting, roles of office bearers, member responsibilities, etc. as required.
- Ensure staff attendance at meetings.

- Assist with the development of suitable training opportunities for individual members where appropriate.

3.4 Strategies to Involve Tenants

- Where feasible, there will be at least one event each year where tenants will be invited to meet the staff and Director/s.
- Our website will include e-mail addresses for tenants to contact The Director directly, with guidelines on the appropriate process
- Annual Tenant Survey
- Property inspections and audits
- HOME Ownership program promotion.

3.5 Communications

We will ensure that:

- All written policies and procedures will be available on to any person upon request.
- Housing and Asset Management policies and factsheets available on the website
- Included in correspondence to tenants with English as a second language, an advisory sheet “This is an important document” will be enclosed.
- Key tenant information will be translated into appropriate community languages.
- Access to publications/information.

We do not have the resources to have all our publicly available information translated into community languages where necessary. However, where tenants have been identified with special communication needs (e.g. inability to read English or illiteracy) arrangements will be made to ensure that any information is understood. Such arrangements may include:

- Liaison with welfare/referral services
- Availability of the documentation in community languages if possible
- Use of interpreters (e.g. telephone interpreter service)
- To improve the access of people where English is a second language, professional interpreter services will be used wherever appropriate and possible
- Clients are welcome to bring friends, family or advocates of their choice to any meeting with Coodjingburra HOME, but it is the preference of Coodjingburra HOME, wherever possible, to use a professional interpreting community mentor

Where our tenants insist on the use of a non-professional interpreter known to the tenant, we may engage an independent interpreter to assist.

3.6 Confidentiality and Privacy

We will abide by all relevant state and federal privacy legislation and, except where specific consent is given for the release of information to other parties, we will maintain the confidentiality and privacy of tenants in all matters relating to their tenancy. The only persons who will have access to tenant files or tenant information will be:

- Staff
- The tenant (where appropriate).
- The full Director/s of Directors in limited circumstances (e.g. disputes/ serious breaches of policy that may lead to termination of the tenancy)

- External support agencies or individuals where the tenant has consented to the provision of information being given to that agency; and
- Department of Communities and Justice through the completion of the Consent to exchange information between support workers/service providers DH0145

Tenants may request access to their records at any time by giving reasonable notice. Copies of any information held on their files shall be provided to tenants unless the provision of information may compromise the confidentiality of third parties – in such circumstances, staff will rely on the principles of The NSW Freedom of Information, and any other national relevant legislation to determine access.

Tenants will be provided with a written statement about privacy when they sign up to become a tenant and will be asked to sign a form agreeing that they have sighted the statement and understand their rights and responsibilities with regards to privacy.

3.7 Exclusions to Policy

The only time that we shall disclose information about a tenant without their explicit consent is when we are legally obliged to do so (e.g. to Centrelink following formal request or as directed by a Court Order) or in circumstances whereby we have a duty of care to do so.

We will ensure we adhere to the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW), the Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW), the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW) and the Housing Act 2001 (NSW).

These Acts govern:

- what information we can collect and how we collect it
- how we must store and protect your personal and health information
- how we can use and disclose your information including special protection for health and other sensitive information.

3.8 Director/s Access to Information

The Director shall only be given access to a tenant's information where this is acceptable under the Privacy legislation or where a tenant has consented to the release of information. Generally, the only circumstances where information about tenants will be released to the Director/s of Directors are:

- At a disputes and appeals resolution meeting where the tenant has consented to the release of information.
- Where required under law or where there are reasonable grounds (e.g. duty of care) for information to be disclosed.

3.9 Volunteers

Coodjingburra HOME welcomes tenants who volunteer their services. Volunteering can provide an opportunity for tenants to develop skills and confidence. We recognise our obligation to provide volunteers with meaningful work that involves clearly defined tasks, appropriate training, and ongoing evaluation.

External volunteers (that is non tenants) will not be used at Coodjingburra HOME.

Student and work experience placements will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Operations Manager.

We encourage the involvement of tenants in the planning, delivery, evaluation and review of our services. Coodjingburra HOME will ensure that tenants can participate in decisions concerning the management of Coodjingburra HOME and its tenancies.

3.10 Approval/Audit

The strategies outlined in this policy will be assessed annually by the Operations Manager.

4. Relevant Legislation, Regulations and Guidelines

Aboriginal Community Housing Provider Resource Guide – Community Housing Industry Association NSW

CLICK TO VIEW

Performance Outcome 1: Tenant and Housing Services - Community Housing Industry Association NSW

CLICK TO VIEW

Creating Sustainable Tenancies for Tenants with Complex Needs – a Toolkit to Support Community Housing Providers Strengthen Practice in NSW & QLD | The Deck

CLICK TO VIEW

NOTE: We have inserted the exact links as of June 2026. Links can change from time to time. To clarify, or if you encounter any challenges, please contact Operations Manager Sharyn Logan: **sharyn.logan@coodjingburrahome.com** or **0431 633 002**