

Community Wellbeing Policy

1. Purpose and Objectives

Homes North has a low tolerance of any action that has a negative impact on community wellbeing and a resident's peaceful enjoyment of their property. Homes North cares about our resident's and the community's wellbeing. We recognise the need to embrace a holistic approach to enhancing community wellbeing through resident participation, partnering with support services and addressing issues that interfere with resident's peaceful enjoyment of their property.

This policy explains the mechanisms that Homes North will use to address and manage community wellbeing through:

- **Prevention** of behaviours which negatively impact on community wellbeing and resident's peaceful enjoyment of their property
- **Early recognition and action** regarding circumstances leading to a negative impact on community wellbeing and resident's peaceful enjoyment of their property
- **Support** from internal staff and external support agencies and
- **Enforcement** – through a notice of termination or Homes North's three strikes procedures.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Homes North residents and staff.

3. Policy Statement

Homes North will address and manage community wellbeing through mechanisms of prevention, early recognition and action, and support to ensure resident's peaceful enjoyment of their property.

Enforcement processes will be used should the preventative measures not be effective.

4. Definitions

- **Applicant** – the person who makes the formal application for housing assistance
- **Tenant** – the person who signs the Residential Tenancy Agreement with Homes North
- **Spouse** – a husband or wife considered in relation to their partner
- **Resident/ Household members** – all people living in the property on a permanent basis regardless of age or relationship
- **Anti-social behaviour** – is the behaviour by any person, including tenants, members of their household, or their visitors (invited or uninvited), or pet which cause, or is capable of causing, annoyance, nuisance or a disturbance of the peace, comfort or privacy of other tenants, neighbours or the surrounding community.

What is regarded as acceptable behaviour may vary according to local culture and practice, and the degree of tolerance of difference in various locations across our region.

- **Categories of Anti-social behaviour**

Homes North categorises antisocial behaviour in the following three categories:

- **Severe illegal behaviour** is behaviour which poses a risk to the safety or security of residents, neighbours, Homes North staff or property and may result in criminal charges and/or conviction; or significant damage to a Homes North property.

Examples of severe illegal behaviour may include but are not limited to:

- Committing injury to a neighbour or visitor which constitutes grievous bodily harm;
 - The use of the premises for the manufacture, sale, cultivation or supply of any prohibited drug;
 - The use of the premises for storing unlicensed firearms;
 - The use of the premises for a show cause offence within the meaning of the Bail Act 2013;
 - Intentional or reckless damage to a Homes North property making it uninhabitable;
 - The use of the premises as an illegal brothel;
 - The use of the premises for the production or distribution of child abuse material;
 - The use of the premises to facilitate organised car or boat rebirthing.
- **Serious and persistent antisocial behaviour** involves activities that severely disturb neighbours; place the safety or security of a tenant, other household members, neighbours or Homes North staff at risk; or cause damage to a Homes North property. These behaviours may also be illegal and may include, but are not limited to:
 - Threats, abuse, intimidation or harassment towards neighbours, visitors, Homes North staff or contractors;
 - Victimisation and intimidation towards neighbours or visitors;

- Provoking pets to attack neighbours or visitors;
 - Hate and threatening behaviour that targets members of identified groups because of their perceived differences (e.g. race and ethnicity, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, mental health or disability);
 - Negligent and extensive damage to a Homes North property.
- **Other significant and persistent antisocial behaviour** involves activities which disturb the peace, comfort or privacy of other tenants or neighbours. Such behaviour may include but is not limited to:
 - Obscene language towards neighbours and visitors;
 - Bullying and harassment towards neighbours and visitors;
 - Noise causing nuisance e.g. loud and uncontrolled parties, excessive shouting/screaming or excessive noise from music or television;
 - Environmental and common area issues e.g. vandalism, graffiti, abandoning vehicles in the front yard and refusing to remove them, carrying out noisy vehicle repairs in communal areas;
 - Leaving large amounts of rubbish within the home, garden or on communal areas;
 - Behaviour which limits other tenants' access to communal facilities, such as preventing other tenants from accessing communal gardens or laundry facilities, and
 - Damaging any Homes North property including individual tenant's properties and common areas.

5. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of:

Chief Executive Officer to ensure this policy and associated procedures are applied and committed to by the Senior Management Team.

Housing Managers, Asset Manager to ensure familiarity with this policy and related procedures, to commit to following them accordingly and where relevant, promote the policy to their teams.

Employees to ensure they comply with this policy, be responsible for their own behaviour and if required, attend relevant training as provided by the company from time to time.

6. Where to get more information

Contact Homes North on 67725133 or armidale@homesnorth.org.au

If a client believes Homes North has made a wrong decision they should ask for a formal review of the decision. To do this, the client needs to complete an [Appeals Form](#) stating why they disagree with the decision. Homes North have an [Appeals Policy](#), [Appeals Factsheet](#) and an online Appeals Form.

If the client is dissatisfied with the outcome of the internal appeal process they can proceed to make an appeal to the independent [Housing Appeals Committee \(HAC\)](#).

Homes North will advise the client how to lodge an appeal with HAC. Alternatively, they may access the HAC website or free call on 1800 629 794. The HAC is an independent appeals agency for all NSW community housing clients.

National Community Housing Standards

Legislation or other requirements Standard 1.2 – Establishing and Maintaining Tenancies

Residential Tenancy Act 2010

Documents related to this policy

- Appeals Policy
- Community Wellbeing Policy

Forms or other organisational documents

- Antisocial Behaviour Management Factsheet
- Appeals Factsheet
- Residential Tenancies Act 2010 (NSW)

Policy Information

Policy number: 1.2.1\2 Version: V2.0

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