

101 Service Charter

1. Introduction

Uniting Housing (Victoria) Limited (Uniting Housing) is a registered Community Housing Provider and has funding contracts with government departments. Uniting Housing’s Board of Governance is independent of Uniting Church group entities and is responsible for ensuring housing services and management delivered on its behalf are compliant with the obligations within each registration and contract.

Uniting Housing has outsourced its housing services and management through a Service Level Agreement to an external entity, Uniting (Victoria and Tasmania) Limited (Uniting). Under this Agreement, Uniting has agreed to comply with its obligations by delivering services:

- a) in accordance with the Performance and Service Standards and other requirements of the Housing Registrar and the Director of Housing;
- b) in accordance with relevant Uniting Housing policy;
- c) in accordance with all applicable contracts, laws, regulations, orders and rules;
- d) in accordance with all applicable professional ethical standards; and
- e) in good faith and in the best interests of consumers and Uniting Housing.

Roles & Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board is responsible for approving this policy, any changes to it and overseeing compliance with this policy • Via the Service Level Agreement, the Uniting Housing & Property Division General Manager is responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ensuring that work practices undertaken to deliver housing services and management on behalf of Uniting Housing, comply with this policy ○ operationalising this policy with effective protocols and procedures ○ reporting annually to the Board regarding adherence to approved policies and any required improvement plans
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This policy has been established to:

- i. provide direction and guidance to Uniting in the delivery of Uniting Housing’s housing services and management through the Service Level Agreement;
- ii. demonstrate compliance with Performance and Service Standards; and applicable contracts, laws, regulations, orders and rules;
- iii. to make clear the commitments of Uniting Housing to its workers and consumers.

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2. Service Principles

This Service Charter is Uniting Housing's commitment to its consumers regarding the standard of services they can expect from us. These core principles about how we interact with our consumers are at the heart of everything we do.

2.1 Respect - Consumers have the right to be shown respect and be treated with dignity.

Uniting Housing will:

- Abide by the Victorian Charter of Human Rights
- Treat everyone with courtesy and respect
- Listen and learn from consumers' opinions, cultures, beliefs and values
- Provide training to our staff to improve how we work.

2.2 Safety – Consumers have the right to live in safe housing and receive a high-quality service.

Uniting Housing will:

- Abide by the Residential Tenancies Act 1997
- Respond promptly to safety concerns
- Undertake annual inspections of all homes
- Ensure our offices are clean, presentable and welcoming
- Provide tenants secure, affordable and appropriate housing to suit their needs and circumstances where possible.

2.3 Communication – Consumers have the right to be informed about services provided.

Uniting Housing will:

- Respond in a friendly, timely and appropriate way to a consumer enquiry
- Ensure that information about our services is accurate, available and accessible to help consumers make informed decisions
- Provide consumers free access to interpreters and translators if required
- Inform consumers about support services and provide referrals if needed.

2.4 Participation - Consumers have the right to be included in deciding how Uniting Housing operates and improves.

Uniting Housing will:

- Facilitate Tenant Advisory Groups as a forum to help improve services
- Conduct regular tenant satisfaction surveys

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- Inform tenants of how to participate in the organisation’s activities and opportunities on offer
- Ensure tenants who require support to sustain their tenancies are helped to do so.

2.5 Privacy – Consumers have the right to privacy and personal information being kept confidential.

Uniting Housing will:

- Abide by the Privacy Act 1988 which underpins our Privacy Policy
- Provide consumers with a confidential space to discuss their needs with staff in person
- Make it easy for consumers to access their information.

2.6 Complaints and appeals – Consumers have the right to comment on decisions and have their concerns addressed.

- Make the complaints and appeals process clear and accessible
- Register, investigate, resolve complaints and appeals within 30 days and keep consumers updated on the progress
- Advise consumers of avenues to pursue if they are dissatisfied with a decision.

3. Relevant legislation & other documents

- Housing Act 1983 (Vic)
- Community Housing Providers (National Law) Act 2012
- Victorian Performance Standards for Registered Housing Agencies
- NRSCH National Regulatory Code for Registered Community housing providers
- DHHS Human Services Standards (Victoria)
- DHHS Quality and Safety Standards (Tasmania)
- NDIS Practice Standards

Revision Record			
Version	Date	Document Writer	Revision Description
1.0	11/6/2020	Performance & Compliance Committee	Board endorsed