

4.2 Charter of Rights & Responsibilities



Preamble

Women's Housing Company (WHC) is a community housing association as part of the social housing system in NSW. WHC provides long term housing for single women and medium term housing through support partnerships.

Women's Housing Company believes that applicants / tenants and their rights are the critical and crucial aspect to the provision of our services. We acknowledge that applicants / tenants have a role in the decision making process around issues that affect the management of their housing.

Women's Housing Company commits to the following RIGHTS.

Applicants and Tenants will:

1. Be provided with services that meet all legislative responsibility, funding guidelines, program principles and tenancy law requirements.
2. Be assessed for access to services based on their needs and the capacity of the service to meet that need without discrimination.
3. Be actively involved in assessments, negotiations about any assistance they want to receive from this service, decisions about referrals to other agencies.
4. Receive responsive and flexible support and assistance, which respects their cultural background, personal beliefs and their physical, social and emotional needs.
5. Given access to translators if this is necessary to assess and meet their needs.
6. Receive timely and relevant assistance, high quality and up to date information and relevant referrals to other services.
7. Be encouraged towards self-determination. Workers are there to assist and will not pressure tenants / applicants to go in a particular direction: they will be encouraged to make their own decisions about their life and their decisions will be respected.
8. Be encouraged to appeal any decisions made by WHC that they are not happy with, they will be provided with information to appeal internally and externally.
9. Be treated in a respectful, friendly, professional and appropriate manner when dealing with this service and interacting with workers.
10. Retain primary control over information concerning them and to have their privacy and the need for confidentiality protected.
11. Retain primary control over their possessions.

12. Be free from physical, sexual, emotional and verbal abuse and racist and sexist attitudes and behaviour from staff, whilst receiving any service and/or participating in any activities provided by WHC.
13. Be guaranteed that if this service cannot meet their needs or they no longer meet eligibility criteria for WHC, workers will make every effort to refer them to a service, which can, and where necessary (with their approval) will advocate with the tenant / applicant to ensure they receive appropriate assistance and support.
14. Be encouraged to complain if they feel they have been treated badly. Their complaint will be heard and dealt with fairly and without retribution. The problem solving procedure (complaints policy) will be made available to them. They will be provided with details for external agencies to deal with their complaint if they wish to take it further.
15. Be encouraged to participate in the evaluation of our services to develop best practice and meet tenant need. To provide feedback on service delivery including all aspects of housing management activities provided.
16. Be informed that if they become an applicant / tenant of our services, a file will be established to keep together relevant information and the various forms they will need to complete. They can arrange access to view relevant file contents with a worker.
17. Be guaranteed safe and secure housing that is long term as long as they meet eligibility criteria. Supported housing projects may not be long term but will be safe and secure.
18. Be provided with regular information about the organisation.
19. Tenants have the right for responsive repairs to be done as quickly and efficiently as organisationally possible.

Date developed: 1985

Date/s policy was ratified and/or changed by Board: 31/1/05; 28/8/07

Note: Procedures are designed to guide the implementation of a policy and will be updated on a regular basis as part of ongoing best practice service improvement.

When receiving a service from Women's Housing Company tenants / applicants are expected to respect and adhere to the following **RESPONSIBILITIES**.

They will:

1. Respect, as individual, everyone involved in the service.
2. Respect the rights of others, including their rights to confidentiality and privacy.
3. Respect the personal property of others.
4. Follow the expectation of WHC as outlined in their tenancy agreement.
5. Adhere to the procedures and contribute to the safety and security of WHC premises, including residential accommodation.
6. Protect WHC property and adhere to the procedures of property maintenance as outlined in the tenancy agreement.
7. Refrain from physical, emotional, sexual, and financial abuse of others.
8. Refrain from racial, homophobic, sexist comments and other harassment and abuse.
9. Contribute to the identification of their support needs as best as possible if they are requesting support.
10. Articulate and lodge appeals and complaints about the services they receive, or not receive if they are unhappy about a process and/or decision.
11. Commit to the finding of a fair solution to any conflicts or complaints that may arise.
12. Contribute to the improvement of the services through participation in evaluations and feedback to the best of their ability.

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