

# Appeals

## Appeal of Decisions

The Women's Housing Company (WHC) aims to treat customers fairly at all times. However, we understand there may be occasions when you are not happy with a decision we have made.

In these circumstances, we encourage you to lodge an appeal as this provides us with an opportunity to address your concerns and improve our decision-making processes.

## What is an Appeal?

The Women's Housing Company defines an appeal as an expression of dissatisfaction with a decision we have made regarding your housing application, your tenancy or your property.

Appeals provide us with an opportunity to review decisions and to reflect on whether all relevant information was considered when making the decision and if the decision was made in line with legislation and / or our policies.

Appeals are first reviewed internally. If the outcome of your appeal is still in dispute, the matter can then be appealed to the independent Housing Appeals Committee (HAC) by calling 1800 629 794 or visiting [www.hac.nsw.gov.au](http://www.hac.nsw.gov.au)

## How can I Lodge an Appeal?

All appeals must be lodged in writing within 60 days of being notified of our decision (except offers – appeals to be lodged within 14 days).

Email us [Contact@womenshousingcompany.org](mailto:Contact@womenshousingcompany.org)

Send a letter to our office at Suite 901, Level 9, 418A Elizabeth Street, Surry Hills, NSW 2010.

You may request a meeting to speak with us in person. You can bring a friend or an advocate. We can arrange an interpreter if required.



## Which Decisions can I Appeal?

Social housing applicants and WHC tenants can appeal the following decisions:

- Eligibility for social housing, including priority assessment
- Removal from the NSW Housing Register
- Property entitlements, such as number of bedrooms, type of property
- Locational need for 'high demand' areas
- Offers of properties and the suitability of each offer (*appeals lodged within 14 days*)
- Eligibility for transfer, including management transfers
- Need for modifications for disability / medical reasons only
- Approval for an alteration to your property
- Former tenant charges
- Calculation of water usage charges
- Calculation, change or cancellation of a rent subsidy
- Permission to be absent from a property and rent calculation during absence
- Permission to have a pet
- Relocating tenants to other social housing at the expiry of a leasehold arrangement



## Assistance to Lodge an Appeal

We can assist you to lodge an appeal against a decision if required, for example, by explaining the process, arranging an appropriate support service or an interpreter.

External bodies can also provide assistance:

- Local Tenants' Advice and Advocacy Services listed on [www.tenants.org.au](http://www.tenants.org.au)
- Community Legal Centres listed on [www.clcnsw.org.au](http://www.clcnsw.org.au)
- NSW Fair Trading Information Centre, contactable by calling 133 220 or via [www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au](http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au)

## What Happens Next?

Lodging an appeal against a WHC decision will not result in any form of retaliation or discrimination. You should feel safe and assured that you will be heard respectfully and professionally.

We will send you a letter or an email to confirm receipt of your appeal within 3 business days.

As part of our appeals review process, we may call you for clarification on the matter. We may be able to resolve your concerns by providing additional information.

## How are Appeals Managed?

Any staff member can receive an appeal and record details in our appeals review system.

Appeals are dealt with professionally and with confidentiality. The staff member who made the original decision will not manage the appeal.

Your appeal will be investigated thoroughly and impartially, with detailed notes kept on file.

We aim to resolve appeals within 15 business days of receipt. If more time is required to complete an investigation, we will advise you of the anticipated date of resolution and any reasons for the delay.

You will receive written notification of the outcome of your appeal.

## What if I Disagree with the Outcome of my Appeal?

You have the right to lodge a second tier appeal with the Housing Appeals Committee (HAC), an independent agency which deals with appeals from people who dispute decisions made by social housing providers.

The HAC will seek information from all parties and review how the original decision was made to ensure guidelines, policies and processes have been followed.

Call the HAC on 1800 629 794 or visit their website [www.hac.nsw.gov.au](http://www.hac.nsw.gov.au)

## How is Information about Appeals Used?

We regularly review information from appeals to identify issues and trends, in order to improve the way we make decisions.

Appeal numbers, types and outcomes are regularly reported to the Board.

The National Regulatory System for Community Housing (NRSCH) also requires reporting of appeals data, which we de-identify for privacy.