

NEIGHBOURS POLICY

POLICY DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Policy Name:	NEIGHBOURS POLICY:
Committee Responsible	Member Engagement C'tee & Tenancy & Property Management C'tee
Policy Number	
Date Approved by the Board	12/8/2019 and replaces all Neighbours Policies previously in effect
Effective Implementation Date:	12/8/2019
Scheduled Review Date:	1/9/2020
Scope of Policy	This Policy applies to all NRHC Tenant-Members and all residents, friends and other guests in their home.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to set out NRHC's approach to encouraging positive relationships between NRHC Tenant-Members / residents with neighbours and local communities in alignment with the Co-op's vision to be:

"An innovative rental housing co-operative, providing and promoting the model of long term, quality, affordable housing choices in response to the needs of its members and the community."

POLICY STATEMENT

Approach to Neighbours – Guiding Principles

To support the achievement of NRHC's Vision this Policy aims to be consistent with and a balance between the NRHC values of:

- **Safe and Secure Home**

Whilst NRHC believes that all people have a right to safe and secure homes and the right to peaceful enjoyment in that home.

- **Transparency**

By ensuring this Policy is accessible to all Members and their residents.

This Policy is also available on the request of neighbours who raise concerns or complaints about NRHC Members.

- **Co-operation**

This Policy seeks to balance the rights NRHC Members with the rights of their neighbours.

As per NRHC's Complaints Policy, NRHC seeks to:

- Respond to complaints promptly, fairly and transparently;
- Take all reasonable steps to resolve a complaint within 30 days after receiving the complaint;
- Keep records of complaints made; and
- Review the outcome of complaints to any identify systemic issues to improve NRHC operations.

NRHC will not accept anonymous complaints.

Anti-social behaviour is understood as persistent behaviour that unreasonably interferes with a resident's normal use and enjoyment of their home, garden or neighbourhood.

It is also understood as a persistent behaviour that can create a nuisance or annoyance to another person directly connected with that property.

NRHC Minimum Expectations on Being a Good Neighbour

- Keep Noise to a Minimum

NRHC Tenant-Members and their resident and guests are requested to keep noise to a minimum:

- Especially at night and early in the morning;
- Includes music, human voices especially outdoors late at night, construction noise, noisy maintenance tools, lawnmowers, air conditioner & and in apartments vacuum cleaners, walking loudly with capped shoes on non-carpeted floors etc.

Resources:

The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) Victoria has a list of prohibited times for different residential noise types on their website – see:

<https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/your-environment/noise/residential-noise/prohibited-times-for-residential-noise>

And how to deal with noisy neighbours:

<https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/your-environment/noise/residential-noise/noisy-neighbours>

Plus the Darebin website also has information:

<http://www.darebin.vic.gov.au/en/Darebin-Living/Community-support/PublicHealthandSafety>

- Looking after Children and Visitors

NRHC residents are requested to ensure children and visitors don't negatively impact on their neighbours whilst maintaining children's right to play and to be safe.

- Respect other people's privacy

Residents are encouraged to develop friendly relationships/connections with neighbours, but also remind tenants and neighbours to be respectful of each other's privacy.

- Keep property clean and tidy

Residents can help to keep things clean and tidy by putting rubbish and recycling in the bins provided and reporting faults and damage.

Procedure for Dealing with Neighbour Related Issues

- If you are experiencing any problems with your neighbour, it is very important that you calmly deal with it as soon as you can.

Please remember that sometimes a dispute may occur because of a misunderstanding between you and your neighbour.

- Early action is encouraged for neighbours in dispute - your first step is to approach your neighbour to resolve the situation between yourselves.

- If you feel you cannot speak with your neighbour directly, NRHC can assist you to manage that conversation, including how to explain the problem from your point of view, the impact that it is having on you and how it could be resolved.

- NRHC suggests that you keep a 'nuisance and annoyance' diary.

You then have a record of the date, time and details of any incident that occurs.

Darebin Council for example has a 'Noise Log' to use.

If the problem relates to any type of harassment or abuse, we may refer you to specialised services that can offer you support and assistance.

We also suggest you to keep a nuisance and annoyance diary.

- If the problem relates to a breach of tenancy that is negatively affecting you, you can log a formal complaint as a ***neighbour nuisance complaint*** directly with NRHC.

Complaints to NRHC can be made via the telephone, in writing, in person or via the NRHC website.

Complaints about the way a neighbour nuisance complaint have also been managed by NRHC should also be dealt with under NRHC Complaints Policy: <http://nrhc.coop/policies/>

- NRHC seeks to build respectful, positive and constructive relationships with neighbours and, where the opportunity exists for neighbours to learn about our work, to contribute to an improved understanding of the issues that affect our Tenant-Members and rental housing co-operatives generally.
- NRHC cannot take direct action where the problem in your neighbourhood or apartment involves criminal activity.

Such activities should be reported directly to the police.

Support Workers

If the affected Tenant-Member has a Support Agreement in place NRHC may notify the support worker from that agency for the purpose of supporting NRHC's Tenant-Member.