



Tenant Engagement

Policy Category	1. Tenancy	Policy Number	1.24
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Position Responsible	HOW Executive	Scheduled Review Date	May 2020

Purpose:

This policy outlines how Homes Out West will engage with tenants. It applies to all tenancies managed by Homes Out West.

Policy:

Homes Out West (HOW) will use a range of strategies to engage with tenants to achieve the following outcomes:

- Seek feedback from tenants
- Increase tenant engagement at all levels of the organisation
- Build rapport with tenants
- Highlight tenants' valued status as consumers of the services HOW provide

Relevant Service Standards:	<p>National Community Housing Standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard 3.2 – Tenant Participation <p>Legislation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential Tenancies Act 2010 (NSW) • Residential Tenancies Regulation 2010 (NSW) • Housing Act 2001 • Community Housing Providers (Adoption of National Law) Act 2012 (NSW) <p>National Regulatory System for Community Housing (NRSCH) Performance Outcome and Performance Requirement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Outcome 1: Tenant and Housing Services
Related HOW Policies:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaints and Appeals Policy • Tenant Access to Support Policy • Tenant Access to Advocacy Policy
Related HOW Forms & Internal Documents	Tenant Engagement Strategy

Procedure and Guidelines:

HOW will engage with tenants using the following strategies:

Tenant Satisfaction Survey:

HOW will conduct tenant satisfaction survey on an annual basis. The survey will be independently conducted by an external provider. All tenants will have an opportunity to participate. The survey results will be used to:

- Monitor tenant satisfaction
- Engage with tenants
- Seek feedback on specific areas
- Inform HOW policy and operational planning processes
- Improve service provision

Tenant Forums:

HOW will conduct tenant forums in all service locations twice per year.

There will be two main focuses for the forums:

1. A workshop style presentation and discussion that provides tenants with the opportunity to have input into the following questions:
 - a. What is HOW doing well?
 - b. What areas can HOW improve in?
 - c. What suggestions do you have for improvement?
2. Information sessions on topics of interest to tenants. This may include inviting representatives from external agencies to attend and present information.

Newsletter:

HOW will publish a newsletter on a quarterly basis. Newsletter content will include:

- Helpful tips for tenants
- Organisational updates and contact information
- Policy updates
- Human interest stories
- Sector information

The newsletter will continue to be mailed to all tenants and made available on the HOW website.

Complaints and Appeals

HOW will encourage tenants and applicants to lodge complaints and appeals if they wish to do so. Complaints are viewed as a means to engage with tenants and applicants, and effect improvement in the services we provide. Appeals are an effective way for tenants and applicants to engage with decisions that are made.

Tenant Rent Statements:

HOW will send tenants their rent statement on a quarterly basis to ensure they have a record of their rent payments and are clear on the current status of any debt.

Tenant Competitions:

HOW will hold regular tenant competitions including the popular '*Impressive Gardener of the Year*' competition. Other competitions such as colouring competitions will be held on an occasional basis.

Annual General Meeting/Annual Report:

Tenants are invited to attend the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and receive an Annual Report. The AGM is an opportunity for tenants to meet members of the HOW Board and other stakeholders. The Annual Report provides an update on the organisation's operations, strategic directions and financial status at the end of the financial year.

Regular Face to Face Outreach Visits:

HOW will conduct regular outreach visits to the more remote service locations. The visits will be used to meet and conduct interviews with applicants, tenants and provide general information about our service provision. These visits will also broaden our agency connections and provide the opportunity to collect information from other service providers that may be relevant to housing provision.

Inter-Agency Liaison:

HOW will participate in communication and liaison with external agencies including service providers. This will include attendance and participation in forums and meetings, arranging *meet and greet* sessions and routine communication. HOW will ensure that particular focus is on engaging with Aboriginal organisations in locations with a high level of Aboriginal tenants and Aboriginal specific housing (such as Aboriginal Housing Office properties).

HOW will also seek approval from tenants and applicants to refer them to service providers for additional supports as required. Referrals and resulting service agreements will be recorded for reporting purposes.