



## Tenant Access to Advocacy

Policy Category	1. Tenancy	Policy Number	1.25
Author	Cliff Jones – Chief Executive Officer	Board Approval Date	28 May 2020
Position Responsible	Housing Services Manager	Scheduled Review Date	May 2022

### Purpose:

This policy confirms and outlines tenants' and applicants' right to access advocacy support services. It applies to all tenancies managed by Homes Out West (HOW).

### Policy:

Tenants and applicants for housing have a right to access advocacy support whenever required in their dealings with HOW. HOW supports this right and will ensure it is upheld by providing tenant advocacy information in an appropriate format when considered appropriate/necessary.

Relevant Service Standards:	National Community Housing Standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Standard 3.1 – Tenant Rights</li> </ul> Legislation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residential Tenancies Act 2010 (NSW)</li> <li>Residential Tenancies Regulation 2010 (NSW)</li> <li>Housing Act 2001</li> <li>Community Housing Providers (Adoption of National Law) Act 2012 (NSW)</li> </ul> National Regulatory System for Community Housing (NRSCH) Performance Outcome and Performance Requirement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performance Outcome 1: Tenant and Housing Services</li> </ul>
Related HOW Policies:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complaints and Appeals Policy</li> <li>Tenants Access to Support policy</li> <li>Tenant Rights Policy</li> </ul>
Related HOW Forms & Internal Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tenant advocate brochures and flyers</li> </ul>

### Procedure and Guidelines:

HOW tenants and applicants have access to a number of tenant advocacy services including:

- VERTO South West Tenants Advice Services – 1300 483 786
- Murra Mia NSW Aboriginal Tenants Advice Service – 1800 672 185

HOW client services staff will provide information on available tenant advocacy services in the form of brochures and flyers that include contact information, when considered appropriate/necessary but specifically in the following instances:

- When signing up new tenancies HOW staff will explain all documentation including advocacy service information
- When issuing any breach letters
- When making an application to NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT)
- When tenants or applicants seek information/advice regarding a specific issue that may require more specialist advocacy support

HOW has access to the National Translating and Interpreter Service to assist in interpreting advocacy and other information when required for tenants and applicants from a non-English speaking background.

HOW will seek support from the appropriate services to assist in providing advocacy and other information when required for tenants and applicants who are vision or hearing impaired.

HOW staff will provide an explanation of any advocacy or other information when required for tenants and applicants who have limited literacy skills.

HOW will also maintain open communication with tenant advocacy services, and if required facilitate an introduction for the tenant or applicant, in order to foster positive relationships and to provide tenants and applicants with the best possible service. HOW may also proactively invite an advocacy service to participate in any discussions/meetings with tenants with their permission.