

Policy Number: 34

Policy Name: Bullying

Version No. 02

Established: 2008

Present Version Passed: 06/11/2019

Next Scheduled Review: 2021

PURPOSE

This policy establishes the approach of Northern Geelong Rental Housing Co-op (NGRHC) to ensure that staff and tenant-members of NGRHC are aware of their responsibilities and rights with regard to issues of bullying, discrimination and harassment. In fulfilling this responsibility, all staff and tenant-members of NGRHC have a duty to maintain a working environment that is free from bullying.

NGRHC recognises the detrimental effect that bullying, harassment & discrimination can have on an individual.

RELEVANT CO-OPERATIVE OBJECTIVES

Housing Registrar Performance Standards for Registered Housing Providers.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all tenant-members, staff and contractors of NGRHC.

POLICY STATEMENT

NGRHC is committed to uphold the principles of equality, opportunity and diversity.

NGRHC recognises the right of all tenant-members and NGRHC staff to live and work in an environment free from harassment, bullying and discrimination. Any form of this behaviour is unacceptable and contrary to this policy.

Conduct that might be tolerated socially may constitute harassment within the NGRHC environment. Conduct that may be considered acceptable by one person may be offensive to another.

TYPES OF BULLYING

While the definition of bullying is broad and can occur in a variety of environments, it is usually a relationship problem and while either perceived or real requires intervention.

Types of bullying:

- Physical bullying – includes for example hitting kicking, tripping, pushing or damaging property
- Verbal bullying – includes for example name calling, intimidation, racist remarks or abuse, including threats
- Social bullying – sometimes referred to as covert bullying as this type of bullying is often harder to recognise and can be carried out behind the bullied person's back. For example, lying, spreading rumors etc.
- Cyber bullying – by using technology in a public or private setting with the intention to hurt someone by messaging, sending texts, posting on websites and other online platforms.

NGRHC is committed to:

- educating all tenant-members about acceptable behaviour;
- ensuring all tenant-members are informed of this policy;

- ensuring that complaints about harassment, bullying and unlawful discrimination are dealt with promptly, confidentially and sympathetically;
- maintaining a high standard of behaviour by those in positions of authority, such as Committee of Management members and Co-operative staff.

No NGRHC member or staff will be penalised or disadvantaged as a result of raising concerns or complaints relating to discrimination, harassment or bullying.

Guidelines

NGRHC will ensure that all tenant-members and staff have access to the bullying policy via the website or as a paper version.

NGRHC has appointed the Manager to Co-ordinate any incidents of bullying reported by either staff or tenant-members. All incidents reported to the Manager will be reviewed by the Committee of Management (CoM).

Tenant-members and staff may report incidents via the following methods:

- in person;
- communication from a representative or advocate;
- in writing (hard copy or electronic); or
- by telephone.

NGRHC will acknowledge receipt of any incidents reported within **3** working days.

If the reported situation involves staff immediate mediation will be initiated by the Manager with Acacia Connection Employee Assistance Program. Tel: 1300 364 273

If the reported situation involves tenant-members immediate mediation will be initiated by the Manager to another suitable service.

Reports from mediation services will be reviewed by the CoM pending further decisions if disciplinary action is required.

If a mediation process fails to resolve the matter satisfactorily, or is deemed inappropriate in the circumstances, the complainant may request the matter be formally investigated by an external agency such as the Australian Human Rights Commission.

<https://www.humanrights.gov.au/complaints>

Both the complainant and respondent shall be informed, in writing, of outcomes of any investigation.

The investigation should be concluded with a report provided as soon as possible after commencing the investigation process.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

NGRHC Equal Opportunity Policy
Critical Incident Policy
NGRHC Code of Conduct
NGRHC Rules

LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (previously Discrimination Act 1975)

<https://www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au/the-law/equal-opportunity-act>

Racial and religious tolerance Act 2001

<https://www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au/the-law/racial-and-religious-tolerance-act>

Racial and Religious Tolerance Amendment Bill 2019

http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/domino/Web_Notes/LDMS/PubPDocs.nsf/ee665e366dcb6cb0ca256da400837f6b/5427bc7c551a2a6aca258463001eb278/%24FILE/591PM60bi1.pdf

Sex Discrimination Act 1984

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2014C00002>

Disability Discrimination Act 1992

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2018C00125>

Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

[http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/Domino/Web_Notes/LDMS/PubStatbook.nsf/f932b66241ecf1b7ca256e92000e23be/54D73763EF9DCA36CA2571B6002428B0/\\$FILE/06-043a.pdf](http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/Domino/Web_Notes/LDMS/PubStatbook.nsf/f932b66241ecf1b7ca256e92000e23be/54D73763EF9DCA36CA2571B6002428B0/$FILE/06-043a.pdf)

Housing Registrars Regulatory Framework

[file:///C:/Users/Owner/AppData/Local/Packages/Microsoft.MicrosoftEdge_8wekyb3d8bbwe/TempState/Downloads/Regulatory-framework-series-whole-updated-on-2.07.2019%20\(1\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/Owner/AppData/Local/Packages/Microsoft.MicrosoftEdge_8wekyb3d8bbwe/TempState/Downloads/Regulatory-framework-series-whole-updated-on-2.07.2019%20(1).pdf)

