



AHL 142 Complaints Handling Policy and Procedure

Purpose

Advance Housing welcomes feedback from all members of the community and takes all complaints or concerns that may be raised seriously. This Complaints Handling Policy is designed to assist you to understand how to make a complaint.

Scope

This Policy applies to the handling of all complaints received in relation to Advance Housing's activities.

Policy Statement

Advance Housing is committed to handling complaints effectively and efficiently. To manage complaints effectively, we have established a Complaints Handling Program in line with both the international complaints handling standard (ISO 10002:2018 Quality management – Customer satisfaction – Guidelines for complaints handling in organizations), and the Australian/New Zealand complaints handling standard (AS/NZS 10002:2014 Guidelines for complaint management in organizations).

Our Complaints Handling Program includes the establishment of an online complaints management system which allows us to effectively capture, manage and report on complaints. Regular analysis of complaints received and the implementation of rectification action, where deficiencies are identified, are key to the Organisation's commitment. Our internal complaints handling process are available at no cost.

Definitions

Complaint: A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction made to Advance Housing, related to our services or operations, or the complaints handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.

Complaints Handling Program: Our complaint handling program is a defined procedural response to any complaint raised that captures, records and responds in a timely fashion. This program is managed within the CompliSpace IT system.

Principles

Visibility: Information about how and where to complain shall be well publicised.

Responsiveness: Complainants must be kept fully informed of the progress of their complaint and complaints should be resolved as quickly as possible.

Accessibility: We aim to make the complaints management process simple and accessible to all.

Complainant Focus: We aim to put ourselves in the shoes of the complainant and understand the complaint from their point of view.

Completeness: We are committed to undertaking a thorough investigation of each and every complaint talking to people from both sides to establish common ground and verify explanations.

Objectivity: Each complaint should be addressed, on its merits, in an equitable, impartial, objective and unbiased manner.

No Charge: Access to our complaints handling process is free.

Confidentiality: Personally identifiable information about complainants should only be available for the purpose of addressing the complaint and (unless the complainant consents) actively protected from disclosure.

Transparency: We aim to make the complaints handling process as transparent as possible and in responding to a complaint will, where practical, give reasons for our decision in writing, referring to applicable provisions in legislation, codes, standards or internal procedures.

Treatment of Personnel: Where a complaint specifies action of a particular individual we will apply principles of responsiveness, accessibility, completeness, objectivity, confidentiality and transparency to that individual.

Recording Information: Whenever dealing with a complaint, and in particular when recording information relating to the complaint, we take the view that this information may at some time in the future be requested by the complainant or may be made public as a result of litigation (whether related to or unrelated to the particular complaint).

Process Summary

How Do I Make a Complaint?

We ask that, where appropriate, you first raise the matter directly with the relevant staff member. If that is not appropriate or the issue was not addressed to your satisfaction, please contact our Complaints Manager on the details below.

If you have been unable to resolve a matter informally, or simply wish to make a formal complaint you can do so by any of the following means:

1. Sending an email to john@advancehousing.com.au
2. Writing a letter addressed to "The Complaints Manager", 121 Serpentine Road, Albany WA 6330
3. Telephoning Advance Housing on (08) 9845 9697 and asking to speak to the Complaints Manager.
4. Accessing the link on our company website.

All formal complaints will be logged into our online complaints management system and managed in accordance with the following procedure.

Our Internal Complaints Handling Process is summarised below:

Step 1 - All formal complaints are logged through our online complaints management system where they are screened by one of our Complaints Officers, or in the case of complaints against the CEO by the Chair of the Board.

Step 2 – All valid complaints will be acknowledged in writing, as soon as practicable, and allocated a status, priority and target resolution date. It is our policy, where possible, to resolve all disputes within 21 working days.

Step 3 – The Complaints Officer shall conduct an investigation into the issues raised, following principles of procedural fairness, and make a determination.

Step 4 - Following the determination, if appropriate, the Complaints Officer shall formulate a resolution and provide a written response to the complainant. The matter will be closed if this response is accepted.

Step 5 - If the initial response is not acceptable the matter will be reviewed internally by the CEO or the CEO's delegate, who may seek additional information or submissions from the relevant parties. The CEO or their delegate seek to resolve all disputes within 21 days from the date that the review process is initiated. The matter will be closed if the response of the CEO, or their delegate, is accepted.

Step 6 - All complaints received will be entered into our Complaints Register and, where appropriate, a corrective action request will be made to address any underlying processes which the complaints investigation revealed may require improvement.

Step 7 - If the matter remains unresolved, the complainant may pursue external resolution alternatives.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality applies with respect to both information relating to the person making the complaint, and, if relevant to a person against whom a complaint is made. Advance Housing is committed to maintaining the confidentiality of information throughout the complaints process.

Personally identifiable information about a complainant will only be made available for the purpose of addressing the complaint and (unless the complainant consents) will be actively protected from disclosure.

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of:

Employees to ensure they comply with this policy.

Employees to identify and report potential issues to Management.

Employees with related tasks to ensure they have a comprehensive understanding of this Policy, related Legislation and Documents as it relates to their roles.

Team Leaders, Management, and Board to oversee compliance, monitoring and review of this Policy.

Related Legislation and Documents

AHL 186 Chart of Delegated Authority

AHL 002 Governance Manual (including AHL Privacy Policy)

AS/NZS 10002:2014 Guidelines for complaint management in organizations

ISO 10002:2018 Quality management – Customer satisfaction – Guidelines for complaints handling in organizations

Approval and Review Details

Approval and Review	Details
Approval Authority	Board
Administrator(s) – overall responsibility for compliance, monitoring & review	CEO
Next Review Date	November 2022

Policy History

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05.11.2020	V1.0	Initial Draft (Replaces AHL 142 – Complaints and Appeals Monitoring and Review V1.0)	John Lysaught	09.11.2020