

# PROGRAM POLICY:

## PROGRAM COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

|                    |                                |                       |               |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| Policy number      | PPOL006                        | Version               | v2.0          |
| Drafted by         | Policy Development Coordinator | Approved by Board     | 30 March 2021 |
| Responsible person | Program Director               | Scheduled review date | 30 March 2026 |

### 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that:
- Renters and prospective renters are aware of their right to make a complaint, or appeal a decision made by CEHL or a member co-op on matters relating to rental housing
  - complaints and appeals are managed in a fair and prompt manner
  - the effectiveness of the complaints and appeals system is regularly monitored and reviewed
  - complaints are used to improve the Program.

### 2. POLICY CONTEXT

Under the Housing Act 1983 (Vic), a registered housing agency must:

- establish a procedure for dealing with complaints by renters or prospective renters who are affected by decisions of the registered agency on matters relating to rental housing
- comply with the Performance Standards for Registered Housing Agencies, which include a requirement to have in place policies and procedures to ensure the effective management of complaints and appeals made by renters in relation to tenancy and housing issues.

CEHL and member co-ops share responsibility for compliance with these obligations in accordance with this policy and the Program Principles.

### 3. POLICY STATEMENT AND PRINCIPLES

#### 3.1 STATEMENT

- CEHL and rental providers will ensure that complaints or appeals made by renters and prospective renters are managed in a prompt, fair and transparent manner.
- CEHL and rental providers will make all reasonable endeavours to resolve complaints and appeals in a timely fashion.

#### 3.2 PRINCIPLES

- CEHL and rental providers will inform renters and prospective renters of their right to make a complaint or appeal and the process by which complaints and appeals are managed, including any right to refer a complaint to the Housing Registrar.
- CEHL and rental providers will have in place documented procedures for registering, investigating, resolving and recording the outcome of complaints and appeals made by renters and prospective renters. In the absence of their own procedures, member co-

ops will adopt the Program Complaints and Appeals Procedure developed by CEHL.

- c. Member co-ops will provide CEHL with the complaints and appeals procedures they have in place.
- d. CEHL and rental providers will have in place procedures to regularly monitor and review the complaints and appeals system, to ensure its continued effectiveness.
- e. CEHL and rental providers will review the outcomes of complaints and complaints data to identify systemic issues and to improve the Program.
- f. CEHL and rental providers will comply with the provisions of the Program Policy: Privacy Requirements for Co-ops with Rental Provider Responsibilities in the use, collection, retention and disclosure of personal information relating to any complaint.

## **4. SCOPE**

**4.1** This is Program Policy. It applies to CEHL and all member co-ops.

## **5. DEFINITIONS**

**5.1** A complaint is a registered expression of dissatisfaction with any service delivered, action taken, or decision made by CEHL or a member co-op. A complaint must be detailed and specific, it must relate to tenancy and housing issues and must provide sufficient information for the complaint to be investigated and resolved.

**5.2** For all other definitions relating to this policy, please refer to the Program Glossary.

## **6. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

**6.1** This policy adheres to and incorporates guidance from:

- a. [Performance Standards and evidence guidelines](#)
- b. [Housing Act 1983](#)
- c. [Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006](#)
- d. [Residential Tenancies Act 1997](#)
- e. [Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014](#)
- f. [Privacy Act 1988](#)

## **7. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

**7.1** This policy is consistent with:

- a. Program Principles:
  - Working Together
  - Member Support & Development.
- b. CCA.

## **8. RELATED PROGRAM POLICIES**

**8.1** Program Complaints and Appeals Procedure.

**8.2** Rent Arrears Program

**8.3** Ending a Residential Rental Agreement (Residential Rental Provider initiated) Program

**8.4** Ending a Residential Rental Agreement (Renter initiated) Program

**8.5** Referral to Support Agencies Program

**8.6** Privacy Requirements for Co-ops with Rental Provider Responsibilities.

## 9. AUTHORISATION

Approved by ..CEHL Board.....

Date of approval 30/03/2021

Position CEHL Chair

Heidi Lee