

The Housing Registrar and complaints by neighbours of properties managed by registered housing agencies

The Housing Registrar has no direct role in investigating complaints by neighbours of properties managed by registered housing agencies. We have prepared this information sheet to guide neighbours of properties managed by registered housing on what they can do if they have issues with an agency.

Step 1 – Is the property which is the subject of your complaint managed by a registered housing agency?

If you know the name of the agency managing the property you wish to complain about, you can check if it is a registered housing agency on this website:

<http://www.housingregistrar.vic.gov.au/Registered-Housing-Sector>

If you don't know who manages the property, but believe it is social housing, you should:

- (i) Call the local Department of Human Services office which is responsible for managing public housing properties in your area and check whether it falls under their management – contact details for their offices are at:

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/contact-us>

- (ii) Call the Housing Registrar on 9651 1402 to check whether the property is listed on its database of properties managed by registered housing agencies.

If the property is public housing, then your complaint needs to be taken up with the local DHS office responsible for managing that property, or directed to the [DHS Complaints Unit](#) on 1300 884 706 or email complaints.reception@dhs.vic.gov.au

Step 2 – Contact the registered housing agency

You should firstly raise your concern with the agency and give it time to take appropriate action.

If no action is forthcoming, or you are not happy with the action or its outcome, you can make a formal complaint to the agency. It is important that you tell the agency that you wish to use their formal complaints process. You will need to put the complaint in writing.

Registered housing agencies are required under the *Housing Act 1983* to have a formal complaints process for tenants and prospective tenants which they may apply to other complainants such as neighbours. A timeframe of 30 days is usually allowed for investigation resolution.

If your complaint is about anti-social behaviour by tenants of registered housing agencies, there may not be an easy, quick solution. The *Victorian Privacy Act 2000* limits the information too that an agency will release to you about any action it is taking.

Tenants of properties managed by registered housing agencies come under the provisions of the *Victorian Residential Tenancies Act 1997*. Any action to end tenancies outside of the tenancy agreement period generally involves a hearing at the [Victorian Civic and Administrative Tribunal](#) (VCAT). This may mean you will be asked to appear to give evidence.

Prior to any hearing being scheduled, a tenant will generally be issued with warnings by the registered housing agency that their behaviour needs to change and given a specific time to do this.

Step 3 – Contact other parties for further advice on resolving your issue

If your complaint is about another matter such as fencing, trees, property maintenance, or pets you can obtain further advice on how best to resolve your issue/s from either of the following parties:

- Victorian Legal Aid – provides information on resolving disputes between neighbours on 1300 792 387 and on its website at <http://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/find-legal-answers/disputes-with-neighbours>
- Dispute Settlement Centre – can be contacted on 1800 658 528 and provides information on a webpage at <http://www.disputes.vic.gov.au/dispute-assessment-advice>