

Purpose

This policy outlines how Pacific Link Housing (PLH) provides information and access to our services, and how our wellbeing approach is applied to support our tenants to meet their tenancy obligations. It also explains how we will identify and respond to tenants and/or their household members who require additional support to sustain their tenancy.

Information for Residents

PLH is committed to providing high quality and equitable access to services including information on housing and support services.

PLH provides information on housing & tenancy related matters, government policy, PLH policies, and support services through:

- our Tenant Handbook that is provided for all new tenants on signing a lease.
- PLH website: www.pacificlink.org.au.
- quarterly Tenant Newsletter.
- information and brochures available for tenants in the office reception area.
- Social media platforms.
- email and letter communications directly to tenants.
- via interpreters, if needed.

Information on community engagement activities and PLH programs is distributed through newsletters, emails, SMS messaging and social media platforms. Tenants have the right to independent advice and support in their dealings with PLH and to support this, PLH provides tenants with information on advocacy services, as appropriate to the situation and tenant specific needs. PLH can provide an interpreter service at no charge from a local agency.

PLH commits to service delivery standards in our Customer Service and Expectations Charter, which also sets out expectations for client behaviour.

Access to Services

PLH has an office conveniently located in the Gosford central business district close to public transport connections. A second office is available at Belmont for meetings by appointment. Meeting rooms are provided to conduct applicant and tenant interviews in a secure and private environment. Computers and telephones are available to allow reasonable access to make online enquiries and phone calls relevant to housing needs.

Office CCTV

As part of our workplace health and safety obligations, closed circuit television (CCTV) cameras are installed at PLH's offices. The cameras are installed in the reception, the entry corridor and meeting room and notices advising of the cameras are clearly displayed. The purpose of the cameras is to:

- act as a deterrent for potential offenders,
- provide safety for employees, tenants and visitors, and
- provide evidence that identifies offenders and events.

The CCTV footage may be used or disclosed as outlined in PLH's Privacy & Confidentiality Policy, for example to assist with police investigations or as part of our mandatory reporting obligations under child protection legislation.

Out of Business Hours Contact

PLH provides an out of business hours service. A recorded message gives information and mobile telephone contacts for clients requiring out of hours or emergency contact for maintenance and other services.

Culturally appropriate services

PLH treats all tenants and applicants with respect and will work with tenants to ensure interactions with PLH to support tenancies is undertaken in a culturally sensitive manner. PLH has zero tolerance for discrimination.

Resident Wellbeing Support Services

Our approach seeks to empower tenants to sustain their tenancies, and improve health outcomes, social and community connections, and economic independence. We acknowledge there are many individual, societal and environmental factors and circumstances that can affect wellbeing. Some situations may be temporary or linked to a specific life event; for example, job loss or relationship breakdown. Other situations may require ongoing support, such as managing a long-term disability or mental health issue, living on a low income or minimising the impact of social isolation and loneliness.

We recognise there are numerous protective factors that enhance and lead to positive wellbeing outcomes for tenants over the short, medium and long term. These include, engaging with family, friends and social networks; participating in community and social activities; access to meaningful education and employment opportunities; volunteering; feeling safe in their homes; and being empowered to make positive life changes. We want to ensure our tenants can access services necessary to maintain their tenancy and enhance their wellbeing, whatever their needs.

Our wellbeing approach to tenancy management is based on our staff understanding, identifying and responding early to address underlying support issues of our tenants. Each of our customer service teams has a role to play in supporting tenant wellbeing:

- Our Tenancy Team, in particular our Housing Officers, who are the first point of contact for tenant relationship management and for assisting our tenants to access the support services they need
- Our Tenancy Support Coordinators are available to provide additional support to tenants and navigate multiple services when required
- Our Asset Management Team ensure that our properties are maintained at standard to maximise a healthy built environment
- Our Portfolio & Allocations Team manage the assessment and allocation of tenancies across a variety of housing products and programs. As part of this process, Housing Pathways staff are also responsible for identifying applicants' support needs and making referrals to appropriate services
- Our Community Engagement Team delivers quality tenant engagement and community development initiatives. These initiatives aim to reduce social isolation, enhance connection to local community services and programs, support neighbourhood harmony and give tenants a say in how we deliver our services

Identifying tenants who may require extra support

A tenant may be assessed as potentially requiring support at any point in their tenancy or they may approach us seeking assistance to access services. We will use the following service encounters to assess support needs:

- At allocation and sign-up.
- During a new tenancy wellbeing visit within six weeks of commencement.
- From tenant survey results.
- During wellbeing visits.
- When rental arrears are identified.
- When reports of noise and nuisance are received.
- When reports of domestic violence are received.
- When there are concerns for child welfare or protection.

- When a tenant asks for help to access a survey.
- When requested by the tenant through a formal or informal nominated advocate or support person.
- At tenant engagement events and activities.

Where additional support needs are identified, Tenancy Support Coordinators will conduct a detailed wellbeing assessment in a safe, non-judgemental and respectful way. Provided consent has been obtained from the tenant to exchange information with a support provider and other relevant agencies, this assessment will inform the development of a wellbeing plan in partnership with the tenant and support services. We will then ensure that tenancy sustainment goals are monitored and documented at regular intervals, in a way that works for the tenant and for us.

Using approaches that are strengths-based and trauma-informed

Our staff adopt a strengths-based, capacity building and trauma-informed approach to the identification and solution of individual tenant support needs. A strength-based approach to support needs means respecting the resilience and individual strengths of each tenant in the process. A Capacity Building approach means the process of changing attitudes and behaviours, imparting knowledge and developing skills while maximising the benefits of participation, knowledge exchange and ownership. Trauma informed approaches mean understanding and respecting the impact of different life experiences have on tenant wellbeing, and designing an approach that supports respect, resilience and capacity for the tenant as the active and primary participant in the support process. Our wellbeing approach is based on client consent – we aim to work with tenants to identify their service needs and assist them to access the services in a timely manner.

Improving our wellbeing approach

We are committed to the continuous improvement of our services, including our wellbeing approach, informed from the following monitoring and evaluation tools:

- using a mix of monitoring and evaluation methods, such as the annual Tenant Satisfaction Survey, and commissioning internal and independent evaluations of our key initiatives
- regularly reviewing our key strategies and policies to ensure these remain fit-for-purpose
- collecting tenant data on support requirements and outcomes to ensure tenancies are sustained and personal wellbeing outcomes are achieved
- engaging with tenants through our regular engagement processes.

Related Documents

Customer Service and Expectations Charter
 Child Protection and Mandatory Reporting Policy
 Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

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