

Good Neighbour Policy

Introduction

Veteran Housing Australia (VHA) supports positive relationships between tenants and their neighbours. All households have the right to reasonable peace, comfort and privacy of their home. Tenants also have an obligation to abide by the conditions of their rental agreement, this includes responsibility for their visitors.

Aim

This policy outlines how VHA will respond promptly to antisocial behaviour, disputes and difficulties between tenants with a focus on early intervention and support. VHA work collaboratively with households and communities in an inclusive and responsive way giving consideration to human rights and the impact of any proposed action under the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006.

Principles of VHA Good Neighbour Policy

ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Antisocial behaviour is when a household causes or permits (whether intentional or not) significant alarm, distress or nuisance. Examples of antisocial behaviour include:

- Physical assaults, acts of violence, verbal abuse or other threatening behaviour,
- Using, causing or permitting the property to be used for an illegal purpose,
- Damaging and vandalising property,
- Excessive and persistent noise,
- Unruly pets.

RESPONDING TO ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

VHA takes appropriate action following any reports of antisocial behaviour or interference with quiet enjoyment, including contacting the police if appropriate and/or interviewing the person who reported the incident.

Where it is safe and practical to do so, VHA encourages neighbours to speak to each other to try and resolve issues as they arise.

If antisocial behaviour is unable to be resolved by the parties involved, VHA may take the following action as appropriate to the situation:

- Speak to all involved parties,
- Conduct a property inspection or site visit (see VHA Inspections Policy),
- Gather supporting information,
- Contact the police,
- Recommend or organise formal mediation,
- Make a referral to a support service,
- Notify the household in writing of the legal implications of antisocial behaviour,

- Issue a breach of duty notice and take further action in accordance with the Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (RTA) through the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT),
- Keeping all relevant parties informed of progress made.

VHA may receive reports about renter behaviour from other renters, staff and members of the public, including neighbours who are not VHA renters.

If a criminal activity has occurred, VHA encourages the witness to contact the police in the first instance.

VHA takes all reports of antisocial behaviour seriously and will respond to all reports as per table below:

Category	Type of behaviour	Response time
One	Violence or threatened violence towards a person Destruction of property Where there is the potential for real harm to a person or property (for example the storage of explosive or toxic material)	Within 24 hours
Two	Any other issue not covered above such as noise nuisance, pet nuisance, or observed criminal behaviour	As soon as possible within 5 working days

Related legislation

EXTERNAL LEGISLATION AND FRAMEWORKS

National Community Housing Standards
National Regulatory Code
Victorian Regulatory Framework
Victoria Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006
State Residential Tenancy Acts and Regulations

VHA RELATED POLICIES AND PROCESSES

VHA Inspections Policy
VHA Evictions Policy
VHA Duty of Care