

Neighbourly Behaviour Statement

Most public housing tenants are good neighbours, but the behaviour of some tenants can make life in public housing communities less enjoyable and unsafe for others.

In March 2014, the Victorian Government released its plan for social housing - *New Directions for Social Housing: A Framework for a Strong and Sustainable Future*.

As part of the framework, the Victorian Government announced that a Neighbourly Behaviour Statement would be introduced for all public housing tenants.

This statement outlines the behaviour expected of public housing tenants. Tenants who do not meet their obligations and responsibilities risk losing their public housing tenancy.

Being a good neighbour

Local communities work best when neighbours:

- respect others' rights and privacy
- take responsibility for their actions and those of their family and visitors
- respect communal areas and others' right to appropriately use these spaces
- are considerate and tolerant of others.

Un-neighbourly behaviour

Tenants who interfere with neighbours' rights are not good neighbours. Examples of un-neighbourly behaviour include:

- vandalism and destruction of others' property or common areas
- aggressive or violent behaviour
- illegal activity
- excessive noise or disruptive behaviour
- failing to keep the rented property in a reasonably clean condition including the outdoor areas. Keeping a property reasonably clean could include such things as maintaining the garden, not undertaking repairs on automobiles, motor-bikes and bicycles in front yards or on the street, properly disposing of rubbish, not storing excessive amounts of furniture, household goods or papers which could create a fire risk.

Your tenancy agreement with us

Your tenancy agreement sets out your rights and responsibilities.

Complying with your tenancy agreement

You are expected to:

- pay your rent and related charges on time
- always provide accurate information about who is living in your property
- not sub-let any part of your property
- keep your rented property reasonably clean both inside and outside
- avoid damaging your property or common areas
- not interfere with your neighbours' rights to peace, comfort and privacy.

Consequences of breaching your tenancy agreement

The department will issue a breach of duty notice if you, a household member or visitor to the house:

- cause a nuisance or interfere with the reasonable peace, comfort or privacy of your neighbours
- damage your rented property or common areas
- fail to keep your rented property in reasonably clean condition
- install any fixtures or make any alteration, renovation or addition to the rented property without the department's consent.

Under the department's 'three strikes policy', if you breach the same duty provision three times within a 12 month period, or breach a Compliance Order, a decision may be taken to terminate your tenancy in accordance with the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997*.

The department will seek compensation for any damage to a rented property, and seek to end a tenancy where necessary to ensure the safety and wellbeing of others.

The department will take a zero tolerance approach to:

- malicious damage to a property
- endangerment of the safety of other occupiers
- use of a property for illegal purposes or drug-related conduct.

If you engage in any of these activities, you will risk eviction under the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997*.

Where to go for more advice

Your local housing office can provide more information. A list of housing offices is available on our website www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/contact-us.

Getting advice in languages other than English

This information is available in other community languages, including Arabic, Chinese, Croatian, Greek, Italian, Polish, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Turkish and Vietnamese. If you would like this information in one of these languages, please contact your housing office.

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