

H03 Neighbours and Community

1. Purpose

YWCA National Housing and YWCA Housing (YWCA) works in partnership with others to change community attitudes and government policy to ensure the provision of safe affordable housing for women. This policy outlines how YWCA fosters and builds relationships with neighbours and local communities, understanding the impact these positive relationships have to achieve and sustain quality outcomes for YWCA tenants/renters and the broader community.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, renters/tenants, contractors, volunteers and students of YWCA (employees).

3. Policy Aim

This policy seeks to provide guidelines and principles for the delivery of YWCA services, work practices and community relationship building with the aim to achieving positive housing outcomes and experiences for our renters/tenants in the communities in which we work

4. Policy Statement

YWCA commits to building respectful, positive and constructive relationships with neighbours and, where the opportunity exists for neighbours to learn about our work, to contribute to an improved understanding of the issues that affect our renters/tenants and of homelessness in their communities more generally.

YWCA believes that active participation and support of the aspirations of the communities we work in will lead to a broader understanding of the issues relating to homelessness and housing stress, social injustice and disadvantage experienced within our diverse communities.

This will reduce the discrimination experienced by our renters/tenants and help us achieve our long-term aim of preventing homelessness.

5. Definitions

Community	means a group of people which are connected through services provided by YWCA and/or within an area in which YWCA works and/or manages/owns properties
Discrimination	means unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, especially on the grounds of race, age, sex, class, or disability.
Neighbour	means anyone who lives in close proximity to properties managed/owned by YWCA
Partnership	means an agreement, formal or informal, between YWCA and others to work together to achieve a positive outcome/result
Renter/tenant	means a person who is a signatory to the lease/rental agreement with YWCA for the home they live in
Temporary absence	means a short term period of time when a renter/tenant will be housed in alternative supported accommodation that is for their health and wellbeing or when they are in police custody or a corrective services institution for no more than 13 weeks

6. Communication

YWCA will communicate openly and honestly with neighbours and community members and encourage community members of where are our properties are located to do the same.

YWCA will foster relationships by supporting staff to initiate, establish and maintain open and positive relationships with neighbours and local communities. YWCA will support the involvement of staff in community initiatives, groups and networks and believes collaborative and positive community partnerships enable YWCA to provide better quality housing solutions and outcomes.

7. Complaints, Feedback and Appeal of decisions

YWCA has an effective and appropriate response in place to deal with complaints and ensures that accurate information and records of investigations are maintained. YWCA will ensure that privacy principles are followed at all times and tenant confidentiality is maintained throughout the incident management process.

YWCA welcomes anyone to query any decisions we make and/or ask questions about our work practices. If a customer wishes to provide feedback to YWCA and/or believes a decision made by us is incorrect, they can register their feedback and/or lodge an appeal using the YWCA Feedback and Appeals Policy.

Document Control Data	
Policy Framework	
Responsible Body	Chief Executive Officer
Accountable Officer	General Manager, Community Housing

Transparency and Accessibility	This policy will be available on the website https://www.ywcahousing.org.au/policies/
Supersedes	All previous local policies
Associated documents	YWCA Housing Policies and Procedures YWCA Feedback and Appeals Policy and Procedures YWCA Privacy Policies and Procedures YWCA Customer Service Charter
Legislation, Frameworks, Standards, Codes and Agreements	Housing Assistance Act 1996 (COM) Housing Act 1983 (VIC) Housing Act 2003 (QLD) Housing Regulations 2015 (QLD) Housing Act 1982 (NT) Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (VIC) Residential tenancies & Rooming Accommodation Act 2008 (QLD) Residential Tenancies Act 1999 (NT) National Affordable Housing Agreement Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 Queensland Human Rights Act 2019 National Community Housing Standards Department of Human Services Standards (VIC) Consumer Charter for Community Managed Housing and Homelessness Services (VIC) National Community Housing Regulatory Code Victorian Community Housing Regulatory Code State based agreements between YWCA and statutory bodies

Approval and Amendment History			
Review period – 2 years			
Approval Date	Version	Amendments	Next Review
April 2022	2.0	Superseded Neighbours and Community	2024