

1 Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to give our customers confidence that their comments are listened to, and their feedback is being handled effectively by:

- Identifying the ways in which our customers can provide feedback on our service delivery.
- Clearly defining response timeframes.
- Ensuring we are transparent and consistent in our management of customer feedback.
- Providing alternative avenues for complaint resolution.
- Highlighting how customer feedback informs our service improvement and policy review and practice.

2 Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all Hume customers, including applicants, support services, landlords and members of the communities in which we operate.

This policy does not cover:

- Decisions made by independent bodies or tribunals including NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) or any decision or order of any court or Government authority.
- Concerns about fraud, misconduct or illegal activity by Hume or its Board. Please refer to Hume's Fraud and Corruption Prevention Policy for more information.
- Anti-social behaviour investigations (unless the customer is unhappy with the outcome).
- Issues relating to concerns about Hume's compliance with the Regulatory Code as a registered community housing provider. The National Regulatory System for Community Housing investigates such complaints.
- Issues that fall outside of our jurisdiction such as matters concerning Centrelink, Child Protection Agency, NSW Police or third-party contractors such as internet Service providers and utility companies.

3 Definitions

3.1 Customer feedback allows us to improve our services and systems and can take the below forms:

Compliment

3.2 Hume defines a compliment as **an expression of satisfaction with one of its services or with the way the service has been delivered by our employees.** Compliments are always welcome and help us know what we are doing well and what services our customers value.

Examples of compliments include:

- Prompt handling of correspondence and phone calls.
- Efficient processes for responsive repairs.
- Approachable, culturally sensitive, inclusive, and responsive service.

Complaint

- 3.3 Hume defines a complaint as **an expression of dissatisfaction with the standard or type of service we have provided.**

Examples of complaints include:

- Failing to provide a service such as not completing a repair
- Inadequate administration of a service such as failing to provide appropriate documentation to a customer

Appeal

- 3.4 Hume defines an appeal as **an expression of dissatisfaction with a decision it has made.** The appeal process provides an opportunity for a customer to request to have an official decision reviewed if you do not agree with the outcome.

You can appeal:

- Decisions relating to eligibility for social or affordable housing
- Rent calculations or subsidies
- Property offers or entitlements
- Transfer applications
- Modification requests
- Succession of tenancy requests.

4 Feedback Mechanisms

- 4.1 Hume welcomes feedback through a range of sources including:

- In person
- Over the telephone
- By mail
- By email
- Via the internet
- Via customer surveys
- Through social media channels
- Through Customer groups or meetings
- Via scheduled strata or block meetings
- Through support services or advocates

- 4.2 If you require assistance to provide feedback about our services, then we are happy to help with the completion of forms and we will provide a translator if required.

Refer to Appendix 1 for information relating to translation and interpreting services.

- 4.3 Further assistance and advice can also be obtained from:

- Local Tenants' Advice and Advocacy Services listed on www.tenants.org.au
- Community Legal Centres contactable through www.clcsw.org.au
- NSW Fair Trading Information Centre who can be contacted on telephone 133 220 and at www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au
- NSW Ombudsmen contactable through www.ombo.nsw.gov.au
- Your local MP Representative contactable through www.parliament.nsw.gov.au.

- 4.4 Hume is committed to ensuring the process for making a complaint or appeal is fair and accessible.

- 4.5 Hume will always treat any customer involved in the complaint or appeal process with respect.

- 4.6 Making a complaint or appeal will not result in any form of retaliation or discrimination, including any change in attitude or quality of service from Hume employees.

5 Recording of Feedback

- 5.1 Any feedback on our services or procedures that requires investigation, and a response will be recorded in our system.
- 5.2 It will include the feedback provided by our customer, any actions taken to resolve complaints and the outcome.
- 5.3 We will use this information to identify ways in which we can improve our service delivery and it will be regularly reported to our Board.
- 5.4 We will also provide information on complaints and appeals to comply with the reporting requirements of the National Regulatory System for Community Housing.
- 5.5 Pursuant to Privacy Law (including the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth), any other applicable federal, state and territory privacy laws in Australia), Hume will always use information from complaints and appeals in accordance with the Australian Privacy Principles.
For further information, refer to Hume's Privacy Policy.

6 Responding to Complaints, Appeals and Stakeholder Enquiries

- 6.1 We will respond to all feedback in a fair and equitable manner and ensure that:
 - The name and contact details of the person investigating your enquiry is clearly identified
 - We are impartial and investigate any concerns in confidence where necessary
 - Our decisions and explanations are clear and concise, evidence based, and outcomes are identified
- 6.2 To maintain impartiality and fairness, Hume will ensure the person appointed to investigate a complaint or appeal is not the subject or the complaint or appeal.

7 Response Timeframes

- 7.1 Hume will always attempt to resolve verbal complaints at the time of receipt as part of our 'first fix' approach to customer service.
- 7.2 Where further investigation is required, we will:
 - Send you a written acknowledgement within 48 hours of your feedback being recorded.
 - Wherever possible, provide a formal written response within 20 working days that documents the reasons for our decision, any actions taken and timeframes for resolution.
 - If further time is required, we will contact you to provide updates or request further information.

Ministerial Representation

- 7.3 Feedback received from a government minister, or their representative will receive a written response within 10 business days unless specified otherwise.

8 Internal Reviews

- 8.1 If new evidence is presented to support a complaint, you can request an internal review be conducted. We respect the right of our customers to request that this internal review be conducted by a more Senior Manager than the initial response.

9 External Reviews

- 9.1 If you are unhappy with the outcome of your appeal, you can appeal to the independent Housing Appeals Committee (HAC). The **HAC** is an independent organisation that will review decisions made by Social Housing providers once an internal appeal has been completed.

For further information on what the HAC can or cannot review please refer to www.hac.org.au or call HAC on 1800 629 794.

10 Specialist Disability Accommodation

- 10.1 Customers who are NDIS participants living in specialist disability accommodation can make a complaint to Hume about accommodation services provided by Hume or about services and supports provided by their Supported Independent Living (SIL) provider.
- 10.2 Customers can also make a complaint to the NDIS Commission. Further information can be accessed by visiting <https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/about/making-complaint> www.ndiscommission.gov.au or telephoning 1800 035 544.

11 Responsibilities

11.1

Role or responsibility	Position or delegation level
Developing the process for this policy	Customer Solutions Manager
Ensuring policy aligns with compliance obligations	Manager, Risk and Compliance
Approving Policy	Chief Operating Officer
Implementation	All employees
Policy review	General Manager Customer Experience

Reporting

- 11.2 Regular monthly reports on volumes and trends are to be provided to the Chief Operating Officer, and for bi-monthly reporting to the Customer Experience Subcommittee.

Records management

- 11.3 Employees must maintain all records relevant to administering this policy in Freshdesk and SDM.

12 Related Legislation and Documents

- Residential Tenancies Act 2010
- Residential Tenancies Regulation 2010
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
- Hume's Compliments, Complaints and Appeals Procedure

13 Feedback and questions

- 13.1 Customers can provide feedback at any time by contacting the Customer Contact Centre on 1800 004 300.
- 13.2 Hume employees may provide feedback about this document by emailing feedback@humehousing.com.au.

14 Approval and Review Details

Approval and Review	Details
Approval Authority	Chief Operating Officer
Policy Owner	General Manager Customer Experience
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Policy History	Details
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