

LIVING IN A COMMUNITY



As a tenant, you have responsibilities to uphold within your tenancy agreement which includes how to live within your community and be a good neighbour.

As a youth housing organisation, it's important that we educate our tenants on what this means as we want you to have the best opportunities moving forward in life to securing future long-term tenancies – within the community of your choice!

So how can you be community minded, a good neighbour and a good tenant?

Keep your garden maintained.

Contributing to your community aesthetically sends a message that you care and that you are independent and

responsible. Please keep on top of your space (poor property care can also put you in breach of your tenancy).

Place your bins out on time and keep the bin area free from overflowing rubbish.

Use your bins appropriately and don't let unsightly rubbish build up (don't miss your bin days and *always bring them in when emptied!*). Not only is this unsightly for your community (especially when residing in communities like units, villas and townhouses) but it can also cause vermin issues that could impact upon your neighbours. A lot of councils have Apps these days that can remind you of your bin days so it pays to check out your Council's website to

understand their details regarding rubbish collection (including bulk collection options).

Be aware of your Council's noise regulations.

When you signed your tenancy agreement, you made a commitment not disrupt the peace and comfort of your neighbours.

If you are not familiar with the laws regarding noise, it pays to check out your Council's website to look into these laws. Did you know that Police or Council can issue Noise Abatement Orders? You'll find that certain noises, such as loud power tools or musical and sound equipment are only permitted during certain hours of the day. Keep this in mind as you go about your daily life and try to avoid

being disruptive or offensive.

Be aware if you have by-laws to consider.

Complexes with multiple residencies are often managed by a strata scheme. By-laws are rules that all residents living within that strata scheme must follow. The by-laws cover things like parking, noise, use of common area (like shared driveways or washing lines) and even smoking. You would have received a copy of these by-laws with your lease when you started your tenancy so be aware of what these rules are so you don't incur an unnecessary breach and/or fine.

Be respectful and considerate of the community that surrounds you.

Are you living in a unit, townhouse or villa? How does the sound travel? Do you live next to somebody frail and elderly, are there families with babies or young children, or a shift worker who sleeps during the day? We all live in a community so it's important

to act accordingly and respectfully (for example loud arguments and swearing, constant loud music particularly with heavy bass at any time of day, loud movies all night long with adjoining walls, coming and going and constant revving of car engines all could be seen as disrupting the peace and comfort of your neighbours).

Be respectful and if you feel safe and confident, greet your neighbour.

Sometimes it's good to make an effort to greet and acknowledge your neighbour(s). Introduce yourself if you've never met before. Even just a "hello" as you walk by can go a long way. If you have a neighbour who has just moved in, let them know the bin day as a friendly gesture. If you are having a few friends over and you are not sure how the sound travels and you want to check in with your neighbours – then do so as more often than not they will respect this.

Boundaries are also important to have with neighbours as you don't want to jeopardise your

home by having a relationship turn sour. You certainly don't have to let your neighbours know your family history or life story or handout your phone number or social media account! Being respectful and friendly is all that is required from you to live happily in a community.

Understand you are also responsible for your visitor(s).

When you signed your tenancy agreement, you also agreed that as a tenant, you are responsible for you and your visitors so ensure the people you invite into your home respect you and your space. The more people there are in your home, the more people and interactions you have to manage so don't jeopardise YOUR home, YOUR space with the unknown or people you can't trust – even if these people are your friends or family.

If you are having troubles managing visitors, talk to your support worker or your Youth Housing Manager before a problem arises. We are there to help and support!

If confronted by a neighbour, always remain calm and respectful (even if you think you are not being treated that way).

Even if you don't think there is an issue, always remain calm and take into consideration all factors – including what you know about your neighbours. For example, if their children's bedroom is next to your outdoor gathering space, adjust or move your noise accordingly. Avoid getting into any heated arguments and ensure you are the one addressing your neighbour and never your visitors.

What if my Youth Housing Manager receives a complaint about me?

We will always want to discuss the complaint with you first and will make contact to arrange a meeting (face to face will always be our first preference).

A complaint could result in a breach of your tenancy and consequently this could also go against you in future rental reference requests (most online reference requests will ask us if you

have ever had a breach against your tenancy).

A serious complaint or multiple complaints could result in your tenancy being ended. For more information if this were to occur, you have the right to seek further advice from a Tenants Advice and Advocacy Service on:

1800 251 101

or by contacting NSW Fair Trading on **13 32 20**.

Important Contact Numbers

**Emergency Services
000**

**Police Assistance Line
(non-urgent)
131 444**

**Crime Stoppers
1800 333 000**

**Child Protection
Hotline
13 21 11**

**Community Justice
Centres
1800 990 777**

**Domestic Violence
NSW
1800 737 732**

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE HAVING ISSUES WITH YOUR NEIGHBOUR

Talk to your support worker as to how you should best handle the situation and what you may need to report to your Youth Housing Manager.

If you feel safe and confident, approach your neighbour or person causing the issue and chat to them. You may find they are unaware that their activities are impacting you and will be happy to amend their behaviour without the need to report the issue.

You may have concerns with violence or illegal activity around your home where your and/or others' safety is comprised. This could be a serious matter, and we ask that you don't get involved but please contact the Police on 000 and follow up with your support worker or Youth Housing Manager.

If you wish to formalise a complaint with your Youth Housing Manager;

- Record the date and the time the issue occurred.
- Who you are complaining about (which neighbour)?
- What happened (were there any other witnesses or people involved)?
- How did it impact you?
- Do you feel safe in complaining (would you prefer to remain anonymous)?

You may also be asked to contact any relevant authorities and provide details of this contact.