

106 Complaints and Feedback Policy

1. Customer Statement

At Link Wentworth our customers and communities are at the centre of what we do. We are committed to:

- treating our customers with compassion and respect
- communicating clearly so that our customers can make informed choices
- providing fair service by following the right process
- working openly with customers to find shared solutions
- following all relevant laws and regulations

2. Purpose

This policy sets out Link Wentworth's approach to managing complaints and feedback. It explains how our clients make a complaint or provide feedback and how we will manage this. This policy ensures consistency in managing and monitoring complaints received and serves to highlight the importance of complaints management.

3. Scope

This policy applies to complaints and feedback received from applicants, tenants and stakeholders of Link Wentworth. The scope of this policy does not include appeals. Appeals are managed under our Appeals Policy.

4. Policy

Link Wentworth respects the rights of clients to complain, provide compliments, suggestions about the service they receive or general feedback. We are committed to handling complaints and feedback in a respectful, confidential, and timely manner.

What is a complaint?

A complaint is when an applicant, tenant or stakeholder notifies Link Wentworth that they are unhappy with the standard or type of service they have received and are seeking a formal response. A complaint is different to an appeal. An appeal is when an applicant or tenant notifies Link Wentworth that they are unhappy with a decision regarding the provision of a service and are seeking a formal review of the decision (include link). An appeal can have specific timeframes for when it can be lodged.

What is feedback?

Feedback can be a compliment about our staff or service provision, a suggestion on how we could improve or change a process or service. All feedback will be logged in the register and forwarded to the relevant manager for consideration.

Principles

Link Wentworth will adopt the following principles in complaints and feedback management:

- Welcome complaints, appeals, compliments and all other feedback about our services. We value feedback as it is a tool to monitor our performance to ensure we are continually delivering a high standard of service.
- Be fair and transparent when dealing with complaints, appeals and feedback
- Applicants, tenants, and stakeholders have the right to complain and provide feedback and will not be disadvantaged for doing so
- Maintain a record of the complaints and feedback we receive and the responses provided
- Provide a written response within the timeframe stated in this policy

- Keep clients informed if there are any delays

How to make a complaint or give feedback

- Fill out our online feedback form at www.linkwentworth.org.au
- Email feedback@linkwentworth.org.au
- Post to PO Box 5124, Chatswood West NSW 2067
- Phone (02) 9412 5111 / (02) 4777 8000, or direct lines or mobile numbers
- In person, using the feedback form at one of our offices
- At an off-site location (e.g. event or tenant home)

Complaint process

The complaint will be:

- Logged in the electronic complaints register by the Customer Feedback Representative
- Acknowledged in writing within two (2) business days, advising the timeline of the response and who will be overseeing the investigation of the complaint
- Investigated and considered by the appropriate manager for that business unit
- The investigation will be completed and a written response provided within 15 business days. If the matter is complex or requires further investigation, the complainant will be notified within 15 business days if an extension of time is required.
- The response will include details of what to do next if the complainant is still unhappy.
- After the complaint process is complete, we may ask the complainant to provide feedback on the resolution and their experience. Any feedback received will be used to improve our service.



Escalation process

If the complainant is unhappy with the outcome of their complaint, they can request for their complaint to be escalated. Outcomes of escalated complaints will be logged, reviewed and responded to within 15 business days.

5. Unreasonable conduct by a complainant

The majority of people who are dissatisfied with a service or an outcome interact with us reasonably and responsibly, even when they are experiencing high levels of distress, frustration or anger about their complaint. However, if complainants behave unreasonably, such as making excessive demands on Link Wentworth resources, are abusive, aggressive or threatening, a staff member may refer the matter to a supervisor for further management.

Link Wentworth may respond to unreasonable conduct by limiting or adapting the ways that we interact with and/or deliver services to the complainant by restricting:

- **Who they have contact with** – by limiting a complainant to a sole contact person/staff member in Link Wentworth
- **What they can discuss** – by applying boundaries to what can and can't be discussed with Link Wentworth staff
- **When they can make contact** – by restricting a complainant's contact with Link Wentworth staff to a particular time, day, duration or frequency of contact with Link Wentworth
- **How they can make contact** – by limiting or modifying how the complainant can contact us. This may include regulating telephone and written communications, prohibiting access to our premises, and/or limiting contact through a support representative only.

If you would like further information, please refer to the NSW Registrar of Community Housing Guidelines for Managing Unreasonable Complainant Conduct at <https://www.rch.nsw.gov.au/>

6. Other Services, advocacy and support

The Tenants Advice and Advocacy Service (TAAS) provides free, independent information, advice and advocacy to tenants throughout NSW. TAAS can assist tenants in navigating the resolution pathways with tenancy issues and complaints. For Northern Sydney Area Tenants' Service (NSATS) go to <https://www.tenants.org.au/taas/nsats> or call (02) 9559 2899. For Western Sydney Tenants' Service (WESTS) go to <https://www.tenants.org.au/taas/wests> or call (02) 8833 0933. For Blue Mountains Tenants' Advice and Advocacy Service (BMTAAS) go to <https://www.tenants.org.au/taas/bmtaas> or call (02) 4704 0201.

The NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) www.ncat.nsw.gov.au deals with tenancy issues relating to the conditions of a rental agreement or obligations under the Residential Tenancies Act NSW 2010.

NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission <https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/> is an independent agency established to improve the quality and safety of NDIS supports and services who can help resolve problems and identify areas for improvement.

The Registrar of Community Housing <https://www.rch.nsw.gov.au/> ensures that registered community housing providers meet their responsibilities set out in the National Law and National Regulatory Code.

7. Responsibility

Customer Feedback Representatives are responsible for performing their duties in accordance with this policy and related procedures.

Housing Managers/Client Service Officers are responsible for performing their duties in accordance with this policy and related procedures.

Team Leaders and Area Managers are responsible for proactively overseeing compliance with this policy and addressing any non-compliance by their direct reports in a timely manner,

Senior and Executive Leaders are responsible for ensuring the policy is well designed to address the purpose it is necessary for, that it is clearly drafted in a way to make it implementable, and that it is kept current and approved by the ultimate approving body in accordance with the required review cycle.

8. Definitions

Complaint – is when you have notified Link Wentworth that you are unhappy with a service or product that you have received.

Feedback – is information provided from you to us about a program, product or service we did or did not deliver or a suggestion for improvement.

Compliment – is letting us know when we as an organisation, or an individual staff member has performed well or delivered successful programs and events.

Appeal – is when you think a decision made by Link Wentworth was unfair or incorrect.

Business days – refers to weekdays (i.e. Monday to Friday). and doesn't include weekends and public holidays

9. Legislative framework

- *Community Housing Providers (Adoption of National Law Act 2012 (NSW))*
- *Residential Tenancies Act 2010*
- *National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013*

10. Related Policies

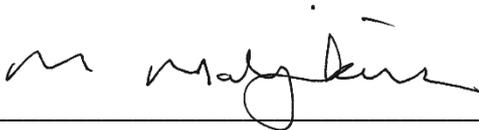
- Appeals Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Privacy Policy

11. Privacy and Confidentiality

Link Wentworth has obligations and responsibilities under its Privacy Policy. Before releasing any information relating to the subject matter of this Policy, first refer to the Link Wentworth Privacy Policy and/or seek guidance from a member of the Executive Leadership Team or Head of Legal.

12. Approval & Policy Owner

Policy type:	Management Level
ELT owner:	Chief Customer Officer
Business owner:	Customer Relationship Manager
Ultimate Approval body:	ELT-member
Review Frequency:	Annual or more frequently if circumstances warrant.



Approved by – Chief Customer Officer