

Williamstown Rental Housing Co-op Policy Document

Policy Number :	031
Policy Name :	Human Rights
Version Number :	1
Date Approved by Board:	19th June, 2017
Date Reviewed by Board	
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1. Introduction

Every person has a right to equal treatment in their accommodation and employment, without discrimination because of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status, or disability, and without harassment of any kind. WRHC is committed to providing a living and working environment that respects the human rights of its members and employees, and is free from any form of harassment or discrimination.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to identify the Williamstown Rental Housing Co-operative Ltd position on Human Rights in relation to its operations as a housing provider and employer.

3. Relevant Co-op Objectives

To ensure that respect for the human rights of WRHC applicants, members and employees (including advisors and volunteers) are respected in all of its operational procedures and decisions.

4. Policy

WHRC will comply with the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act (2006) by following procedures that take into account the human rights of applicants, members and employees, as outlined in the Act.

4a. Discrimination

Definition:

Discrimination is any form of behaviour, whether intentional or not, which has a negative effect on an individual or group based on their race, ancestry, place of origin, colour,

ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status, or disability.

Members and employees shall:

- Respect the dignity and rights of all applicants, members, and employees
- Invite input from all language groups represented within the staff and membership
- Hold staff and member meetings in locations that are accessible to employees and members with disabilities
- Provide interpreters if requested

4b. Harassment

Definition:

Harassment means improper comments or conduct that a person knows or ought to know would be unwelcome, offensive, embarrassing or hurtful.

Members and employees shall NOT:

- Exert or attempt to exert undue or inappropriate influence on members or employees
- Behave in a manner that may reasonably be considered intimidating or threatening.
- Influence or attempt to influence outcomes with threats, bribes or inducements
- Behave in an abusive way towards other members and employees

5. Breaches of the Human Rights Policy

When a member (including Board members) or employee has breached the Human Rights of another member or employee, the matter should be reported to the Manager in the first instance, who may request a formal letter explaining the breach and will initiate an enquiry. This will then be taken to a Directors meeting.

Where the breach is the result of a formal complaint from another person the matter will be referred directly to the Board for resolution. The Board will request a formal explanation of the alleged action from the relevant parties.

Where the action is considered a breach of the Human Rights Policy, the Directors will decide on and enact an official warning in writing in the form of a Breach Notice.

After two such warnings or in a situation in which a member has seriously breached the Human Rights Policy, a member may be expelled from the co-operative.

The member will be given a 90 day notice for “No Specific Reason” with the knowledge that this may result in VCAT action.

Any breach of the Human Rights Policy by a staff member will be dealt with according to the Disputes Resolution process and Cooperatives Act.

6. Responsibility

All members (general and board) and employees (permanent, casual, contract and volunteers) are responsible for adhering to all applicable clauses.

7. Related Policies:

Code of Conduct

8. Related Documents:

- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act (2006)
- Cooperatives Act
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010
- Information Privacy Act 2000
- Governance Manual
- Members Manual

References:

Nil

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Board Date

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Board Member’s signature Date