



ABORIGINAL HOUSING VICTORIA

Cultural Statement

DOCUMENT CONTROL	
Policy	Cultural Statement
Last reviewed	June 2025
Date of Issue	30 June 2026
Version	2
Responsible Department	Governance Quality and Compliance

Contents

1. Purpose	3
2. Organisational context	3
3. Cultural statement	3
4. Values.....	4
5. Application of the cultural statement.....	5
6. Policy Log	5

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Cultural Statement is to provide a statement of principles that govern the way Aboriginal Housing Victoria (AHV) conducts business and delivers housing services to Aboriginal¹ people.

2. Organisational context

AHV is a not-for-profit registered Housing Association and the largest non-government Aboriginal housing organisation in Australia.

We are an independent Aboriginal community organisation that provides culturally safe, affordable and secure housing to over 4,000 low-income Aboriginal Victorians² in over 1800 properties across Victoria.

3. Cultural statement

The First Peoples of Australia have the oldest continuous cultures in the world. AHV celebrates and takes pride in the rich and spiritual culture, values and practices of Australia's First People. We celebrate the significant contribution made by Aboriginal people and culture to the enrichment of Victorian society, and we acknowledge and respect the special place of Victorian Traditional Owners as Victoria's First Peoples.

We recognise the inherent rights of Victoria's First Peoples that arise from the enduring political, economic and social structures and their cultures, spiritual traditions, histories and philosophies as recognised by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

This includes the principal right of all peoples to determine their political status and pursue their economic, social and cultural development as expressed by Article 1 of the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

The right to self-determination for Aboriginal Peoples is fundamental to who we are, what we do and how we operate.

We also recognise important Aboriginal cultural values and commit to the design, development and delivery of our services and practices, in accordance with these values:

- Recognition and respect for country and for Traditional Owners and their role and position.
- Recognition of traditional law and custom and the importance of caring for country.
- Recognition of, and support for, the transmission of Aboriginal language, culture and beliefs and practices.

¹Throughout this document the terms "Aboriginal" and "First Peoples" are used to refer to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

²Throughout this document the terms "Aboriginal Victorians" and "Aboriginal peoples of Victoria" are used to refer to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in the State of Victoria.

- Reciprocity and the obligation to share with and care for each other, and to be cared for on and off country.
- Respect for Aboriginal Elders and their role in communities.
- Recognition and respect for the importance of families and extended family networks in the raising of children and in maintaining strong communities.
- Recognition of the right of, and importance to, Aboriginal people to practice their traditional culture.
- Respect for and support of Aboriginal people's right to maintain their connection to country, spirituality, culture and identity and to always maintain their dignity.

As an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation, we acknowledge that our legitimacy is derived from the strong relationships we have with Victoria's Aboriginal communities and our success is through achievement of our shared vision and aspirations.

AHV's mandate originates in our connection to Victoria's Aboriginal communities and the web formed by weaving significant relationship strands together. Through the people we serve; our renters and clients, future potential clients and community members. Through our people who serve, AHV members, Directors, staff and volunteers. Through the Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and Traditional Owner Corporations that deliver important services and with whom we work collaboratively. Through the voice of Victoria's First Peoples, Gellung Warl, and their role in shaping the future of all Aboriginal Victorians through advocacy and influence with Government.

AHV is a proud agency: proud of the history and culture of the Aboriginal peoples of Victoria; proud of the Aboriginal peoples of Victoria who we serve; and proud of our unique identity and heritage.

Our vision is that **Aboriginal Victorians secure appropriate, affordable housing as a pathway to better lives and stronger communities.**

We believe that achievement of our vision is through the provision of housing services which enhance the dignity of our clients and renters and which respects and celebrates their cultural beliefs, values and practices.

4. Values

Relevant AHV values that underpin our policies include:

Respect and support for Aboriginal identity and culture and for our renters and stakeholders

Transparency and accountability in providing information, decisions and explanations for scrutiny and to take responsibility for actions and consequences as the foundation of good governance and building trust

Striving for excellence through our leadership in Aboriginal housing and best practice service delivery.

Integrity, trust and honesty in all our business activities and practices.

Collaborative relationships with our community, renters, government and stakeholders.

Kindness, compassion, courtesy and dignity in our relationships with our clients, our stakeholders and with each other.

Inclusiveness and ensuring that everyone, regardless of their background, abilities or circumstances has equal opportunities to participate, contribute and feel valued.

5. Application of the cultural statement

AHV is governed by its Board of Directors. The Board sets the strategic directions of the organisation and monitors progress towards achievement of strategic objectives. The AHV Board also has responsibility for the governance, and financial and strategic oversight of AHV's activities. The AHV Board is the authorising body for new and/or revised AHV policies.

Our policies and procedures are designed so that our practice and service delivery is in accord with this cultural statement.

Our advocacy recognises the broader vision of Victoria's Aboriginal communities that every Aboriginal person has a home. AHV alone cannot achieve the broader vision. Collective action will be required by many, including; governments and Aboriginal and mainstream housing and homelessness providers.

6. Policy Log

Version	Approval date	Approved by	Changes	Review Date
1	June 2025	AHV Board	New policy	June 2028
2	June 2026	AHV Board	Updates to reflect discussions at the AHV Board Strategic Planning Workshop in April 2026.	June 2029