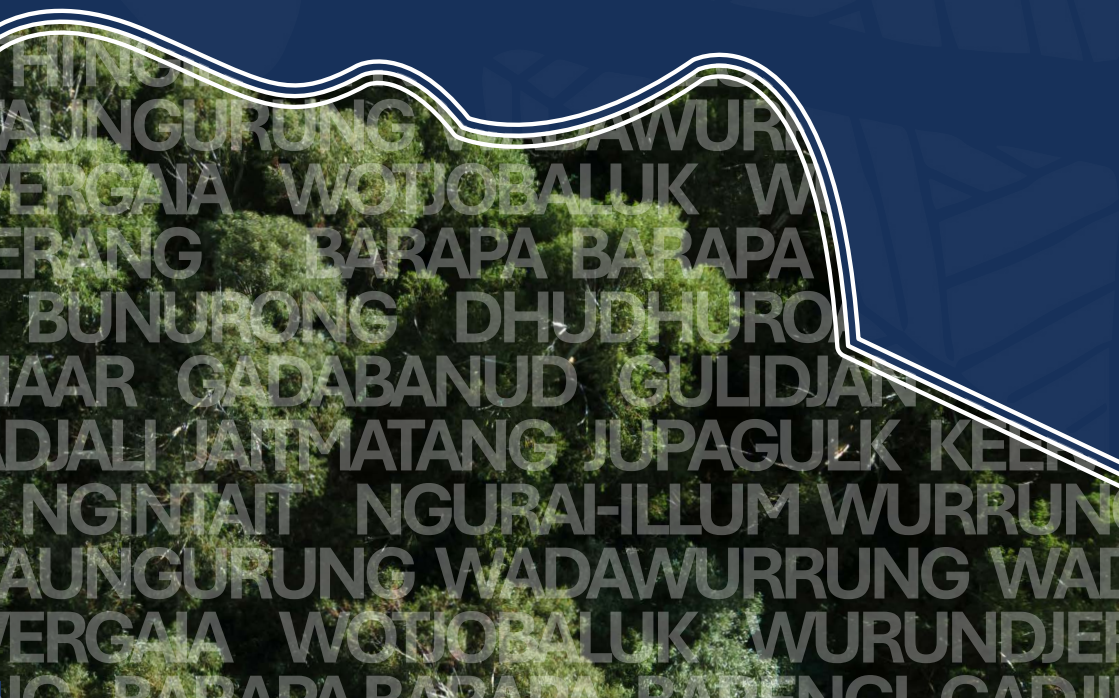




Aboriginal Housing Victoria

Renter Guide: *Our Shared Commitments*



Our Shared Commitments

Aboriginal Housing Victoria is an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation responsible for managing over 1800 rental properties for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in Victoria.

AHV's vision is that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Victorians secure appropriate, affordable housing as a pathway to better lives and stronger communities.

The **AHV Renter Guide** outlines our shared commitments for the standard of service you can expect from AHV, and what we need from you to be able to deliver this standard of service, including your responsibilities as a renter. These shared commitments also let you know the ways in which you can give feedback on service you receive from AHV.

The information in this booklet is provided to help renters understand their rights, responsibilities and the services available to them. It is a guide only and does not replace the terms of your rental agreement or the law.

Our Principles & Values

CULTURAL SAFETY & SELF-DETERMINATION

We are committed to Aboriginal self-determination and the provision of culturally safe services.

RESPECTFUL SERVICES

Kindness, respect and dignity underpin our services and guide the work and attitude of AHV staff and contractors working on behalf of the organisation.

QUALITY & TIMELINE MAINTENANCE

We use qualified contractors to maintain your property to a safe and healthy standard and within the required timeframes.

COMMUNICATION, ENGAGEMENT & FEEDBACK

We are committed to clear and professional conversations with you. We listen to your feedback to continuously improve our services.

Cultural Safety & Self Determination

You always have the right to culturally safe services.

What you can expect from us...

We will:

- Ensure that AHV contractors commit to employing culturally aware staff and providing ongoing cultural awareness training.
- Maintain culturally safe services through our policies, partnerships with Aboriginal Organisations, and by keeping culture at the heart of what we do.
- Ensure your voice is heard within our services and facilitate cultural, social and community participation.

Respectful Services

You have the right to be treated with respect and dignity.

What you can expect from us...

We will:

- Provide a service to you that is supportive, fair and sensitive to your needs.
- Listen carefully, be helpful and respectful.
- Communicate with you in polite and accessible language.
- Provide information to help you make informed housing decisions.
- Conduct your housing business in a safe, non-threatening environment.
- Respect your privacy and keep your personal information confidential.
- Only release your information to external bodies as required by law, or with your agreement.
- Respond to your queries as quickly as possible as per Our Service Commitments.
- Refer you to other agencies if we cannot assist.

Our staff have the right to be treated with respect and dignity.

What we expect from you...

You will:

- Treat staff with courtesy and respect when contacting us. Our staff are here to help you.
- Pay your rent on the due date (if you experience problems paying your rent, contact your Housing Officer).
- Take care of your home and be a good neighbour (contact us if you experience a problem with a neighbour).
- Meet your obligations under your rental agreement.
- Be honest and open about the actions or changes of your household, and visitors to your home, in instance of damages or complaints.
- Keep your contact details up to date.



Quality & Timely Maintenance

We are committed to quality and timely maintenance on your home.

What you can expect from us...

We will:

- Attend to maintenance needs as quickly as possible within Our Service Commitment timeframes.
- Provide a tracking number when you lodge a maintenance request, and confirm what will be repaired and and/or replaced and in what timeframe.
- Ensure maintenance contractors confirm a suitable arrival time and notify you if delayed.
- Ensure maintenance contractors employed or engaged by us are qualified tradespeople, and carry identification, clearly showing their name, position and that they work on behalf of AHV. If a maintenance contractor cannot produce identification upon arrival at your home, you do not have to allow access to your property.

What we expect from you...

You will:

- Provide your contact details so maintenance contractors can arrange access.
- Allow access to the home at the agreed time, ensuring safe entry for maintenance contractors by clearing hazards and securing pets.
- Contact us about unsatisfactory, unacceptable work or behaviour from any maintenance contractor representing AHV, so that we can take action to remedy the problem.
- Provide feedback on the work completed by the maintenance contractor.

Communication, Engagement & Feedback

What you can expect from our communications...

We will:

- Communicate with you in polite and accessible language.
- Publish our policies online on AHV's Website, so you know your rights and responsibilities.
- Provide multiple ways to contact and hear from us, including:
 - Visits from your Housing Officer and/or Property Compliance Officer at least once a year, that includes a property and maintenance assessment.
 - Holding regional community consultations where you can chat face to-face with staff.
 - Visiting one of AHV's offices.
 - Hosting local placemaking activities.
 - AHV's website or Renter Portal.
 - Mia Mia renter newsletter.
 - Renter satisfaction surveys every two years.
 - By phone, email and post.
- Run community events and activities such as during NAIDOC Week, and through our annual Christmas appeal for children and Elders.
- Provide information on local activities, services, organisations and networks.

What we expect from your communications...

You will:

- Allow access to your home at the agreed time or let us know in advance that you need to reschedule.
- Provide us with accurate information about your housing needs.
- Let us know if there are changes to your household income or members.
- Seek approval before making modifications to your home.
- Advise us if you change your contacts details, so we can keep in touch with you.



What you can expect from our feedback process...

We will:

- Make the complaints and appeals process simple and easy to understand.
- Register, investigate and resolve complaints and appeals within 30 days, keeping you informed along the way.
- Inform you of other options if you are not happy with our decisions such as the Housing Registrar, Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service, or VCAT.
- Ensure you feel safe to make a complaint, and that if you do make a complaint your experience will not make you feel judged, disregarded or change how you work with us.

What we expect from your feedback...

You will:

- Contact us if you're unhappy with a decision we have made, or feel we have acted unfairly.
- Treat our staff with courtesy. We understand providing feedback can be stressful, so we ask that you are respectful throughout the process.
- Be open and honest – provide us the details we need to understand and investigate your issue, including any documents or dates.
- Give us time to respond – we aim to resolve complaints quickly and fairly, but some issues may take more time than others to investigate and resolve.
- Work with us – be open to discussing the issue and possible solutions.



Our Service Commitments



SERVICE

RESPONSE TIME

Phone calls & text messages

If you leave a voicemail or text message, we will respond within 1 working day.

Emails & letters

We will acknowledge your message within 1 working day. If staff are on leave, you will receive an out-of-office response with alternative contact details and their return date. We will post or email a response within 1 week of receiving your letter or email. We will provide return envelopes when you need to reply by post.

In person

If you visit an AHV office, we will do our best to assist you immediately. If we cannot, we will connect you with the right person or service.

Appointments

If we need to cancel an appointment, we will notify you at least 1 working day prior, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Housing

All renters have a Housing Officer responsible for managing their tenancy. We will contact new renters within the first 6 weeks to check how they are settling in.

Property inspections

We will visit and inspect your home at least once a year to make sure it is safe and maintained.

Mia Mia newsletter

Published 4 times a year to provide updates and news.

Urgent Repairs (*E.g. flooding, loss of gas, water or power*).

We will complete urgent repairs within 24 hours of being reported.

Priority Repairs (*E.g. a dripping tap*).

We will complete priority repairs within 7 days of being reported.

Non-urgent repairs (*E.g. repairing minor damages*).

We will complete non-urgent repairs within 14 days of being reported.

Complaints & feedback

We will acknowledge your complaint, investigate, and provide a response within 30 days of being submitted. We value your feedback and use it to improve our services.

If you have any questions about the information provided in this Renter Guide, contact your Housing Officer, email clientservices@ahvic.org.au or free call 1800 248 842.

Aboriginal Housing Victoria acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we work and live. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures; and to Elders both past and present.

