



South Eastern Aboriginal Regional Management Services (SEARMS) Aboriginal Corporation

Policy Document

Location	General Manager
Policy	Complaints Policy
Version	Version 0.2
Issue Date	26 August 2016
PARS Performance Outcome	1.1 Fair and Transparent Processes

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Our ability to identify, manage and promptly resolve complaints, received from parties' external to SEARMS Housing, including applicants and tenants, is a key part of our Corporate Governance Program. To manage complaints, we have established a Complaints Handling framework in line with the Australian and International Standard for Complaints Handling (AS ISO 10002-2006).
- 1.2 It is important to note that this program is not designed to manage internal employment related matters. These are handled through our Internal Grievance Resolution Policies and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) And Harassment Policy.

2. Background and Scope

- 2.1 As an Aboriginal Community Housing Provider (ACHP) we must comply with the NSW Housing Act, NSW Residential Tenancy (RTA) Act, NSW Aboriginal Housing Office (AHO) Act, National Housing Regulations (National Regulatory Code), NSW Disability Inclusion Act as well as the Evidence Guidelines issued by the NSW Registrar of

Community Housing. Under the Evidence Guidelines all classes of Community Housing Providers are required to implement policies and procedures which provide mechanisms for applicant and resident complaints and appeals.

- 2.2 As an AHCP we are the first point of contact with respect to any individual tenancy, applicant or access related complaint.
- 2.3 Tenants and other stakeholders will not be penalised for lodging a complaint and can be assured SEARMS will treat your complaint with confidentiality
- 2.4 SEARMS will assess your complaint objectively
- 2.5 SEARMS will commit to improvements where our systems and approach let our customers down
- 2.6 The complainant can give authority for a nominated representative to act on their behalf

3. What is a Complaint?

- 3.1 If you are dissatisfied or have concerns about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by SEARMS or its staff.

4. How to lodge a complaint

4.1 Lodgement

In the first instance a complaint must be lodged by email, letter or phone, or by completing a complaint form. This form is available by contacting our office on 02 4472 2644.

4.2 Response

A complaint will be acknowledged in writing within 7 business days of receipt. The process of investigating and complaint review will be completed within 20 business days.

4.4 Review

Complaints will be reviewed by the General Manager in the first instance and where appropriate the General Manager may refer the complaint to the SEARMS Board for resolution.

4.5 Record of Complaint

The complaint will be entered into SEARMS complaints register. Any correspondence in relation to the complaint will be filed in the Tenant /Stakeholders file or if a staff member is implicated during the complaint review it will be also filed as confidential on their employment file.

4.6 Corruption

If the complaint involves allegation of corruption or corrupt conduct by a SEARMS Staff Member it will be handed over to the General Manager, or if there is allegation of corrupt conduct against the General Manager it will be referred directly to the Board of Directors.

4.7 Other Options if an outcome can't be resolved with SEARMS

There are other options to lodge complaints in relation to tenancy management related issues with SEARMS;

- Murra Mia Tenancy Advocacy Service, Batemans Bay
- The Aboriginal Housing Office, Sydney
- NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT), Wollongong
- Tenancy Ombudsman, NSW

5. Related Documents/Policies

- Complaints & Appeals form – Appendix "A"
- Complaints register (copy) – Appendix "B"
- Appeals Policy – Refer to Policy

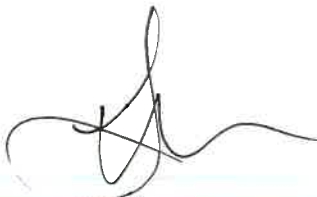
6. Policy Review

This Policy will be reviewed 26 August 2017.

7. Policy Adoption

This policy was adopted 26 August 2016.

8. Issuing Authority



Jesse White
General Manager



Tom Slookee
Co-Chairperson





**South Eastern Aboriginal Regional Management Services (SEARMS)
Aboriginal Corporation
Complaints & Appeals Form**

Are you lodging a Complaint OR are you lodging an Appeal?

Complaint (*go to Section 2*)

Appeal (*go to Section 1*)

(Tick whichever is applicable)

Section 1 – Appeal

What are you appealing? (*Please include copies of any correspondence*)

Section 2 – Complaint

Will you have a representative acting on your behalf? (*If so please provide their details*)

Who is the person that made the decision you are dissatisfied with?

What is their title & where do they work?

What outcomes are you seeking?

How would you like us to respond to this matter?

In writing & phone call

In writing only

(Tick whichever is applicable)

Please note if you have identified a representative, the advice will be provided to them also.



SEARMS Aboriginal Corporation Complaints Register

Document Control Version No.: DRAFT
0.1

Status: Initial DRAFT

Aim: Establish complaints register

Date	Person Making Complaint	Contact Details	Complaint Method Phone/Written/In Person	Complaint Description	Responsible Person	Response Sent/Method	Outcome	Other Comments

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