

Policy Manual

September 2018



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1. Tenancy Management Policy

Alliance Housing supports members of the community who are on a low to moderate income, and who are vulnerable to housing related poverty. To this end, Alliance provides and manages quality, secure and affordable housing.

The provision of this housing support is governed by principles in accord with relevant legislation as updated from time to time, and also in accord with Alliance's own principles, outlined below.

1. Eligibility

Alliance considers applications, which are assessed and allocates housing according to set criteria. A person seeking housing support from Alliance must demonstrate:

- Income and assets in accordance with the current policies of the Housing Authority (part of Department of Communities) (HA) relating to Community Housing Income and Assets limits Policy (or equivalent),
- Desire for permanent long term accommodation
- Ability to meet the rent and bond conditions as per the Residential Tenancies Act (RTA)(1987)
- Willingness to comply with the conditions of a Residential Tenancy Agreement.

2. Rights and responsibilities

All tenants, upon signing a new tenancy agreement, will be given a copy of the Alliance Housing Tenants Handbook and complementary publications as updated from time to time, which outline the rights and responsibilities of tenants. Such information shall continue to be available to tenants in a variety of formats.

3. Property condition reports

Alliance Housing ensures that Property Condition Reports (PCR) consistent with the RTA are completed prior to occupancy.

Alliance Housing ensures that its rental properties are kept in good order and in compliance with health, safety, and building standards prior to and during the term of the tenancy/occupancy. With this aim, Alliance Housing will issue accurate PCR reports and photos to all tenants prior to tenancy/occupancy.

4. Lease for Life

Some of the residents living in over 55's units, have a Lease for Life contract signed between the previous Owners/Management and the tenant, which Alliance Housing will continue to honour.

The Contracts are:

- For the life of the resident/s, or their residency
- Under the provisions of the Retirement Villages Act 2010 and Retirement Villages Regulations 1992.
- and the Fair Trading Act 1989
- and where applicable, the Strata Titles Act 1985

5. Tenant & Resident feedback and participation

Alliance Housing encourages its tenants and residents to become involved in the management of their housing, and provides various means and opportunities for feedback and discussion. In addition, Alliance Housing tenants and residents may become members of the association, and as such, shall:

- Enjoy full voting rights
- Participate in and enjoy the rights and opportunities which are open to members of the association

6. Changing needs of tenants

Alliance is sensitive, flexible and reasonable in responding to the changing needs of tenants and their families. The areas in which Alliance provides support and facilitation may include but are not limited to:

- Housing transfer
- Death of principal tenant or other occupants
- Injured or ill tenants
- Home modifications
- Domestic Violence and family breakdown

7. Ending Tenancies

Alliance Housing will not evict tenants without a just cause and will take reasonable steps to ensure tenants are not evicted into homelessness. Tenancies are fixed-term or periodic, and are legally secure until the end of the term of the agreement unless the

tenant is in breach. Tenants who have failed to comply with written breach notices may have their tenancy agreements terminated.

Alliance Housing will ensure that due legal process is followed in 'breach of agreement' situations leading to termination and that the RTA (1987) and the Regulations (1989) are adhered to.

In the case of Residents with Lease for Life - Residence Contracts. The Retirement Villages Act RVA (1992), the Retirement Villages Regulations (1992), the Residence Contract and Residence Rules will be complied with.

Alliance and its agents shall at all times behave in a just, fair, prompt, and humane manner in carrying out its objectives towards its tenants and residents. It shall always seek to serve the community to which the tenants, residents, their families, the public, and Alliance itself belong.

Version control history: "1. Tenancy Management Policy"

Document or version number	Modified By	Narrative	Date approved by Board	Status
AH-1TMP-1	Upland Consulting	Original version	19/09/2018	Superseded
AH-1TMP-2	CEO	Lease for Life now included	21/11/18	Approved

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2. Asset Management Policy

Housing assets are at the heart of Alliance Housing's community business. Alliance is committed to managing all assets it controls, those it owns outright, and those it manages on behalf of third-party organisations, in a strategic manner to ensure that suitable properties are and continue to be available to the community.

1. Responsive Asset Management

The Board shall oversee development of a business plan, with particular emphasis on determining and endeavouring to meet changing housing needs within the community.

The plan will include such considerations as:

- Community engagement and needs-monitoring strategies
- A development, construction and acquisitions plan
- Targets for the number of properties, their type and location
- Surveys of functional suitability and proposals to address these issues
- Setting and meeting property condition standards
- A disposals plan
- Explicit measures for compliance with all regulatory and legislative requirements.
- The plan will be subject to regular revision and adjustment in response to emerging trends and requirements.

2. Property Condition Standards

Alliance will ensure that assets under its control are maintained in a condition that is in line with regulatory and legislative compliance, and in accord with best practice. To achieve this, the Board will ensure that processes and procedures are in place to monitor, report upon, and remediate if required, the condition of properties.

3. Property Maintenance

The Board shall ensure that fit-for-purpose systems are in place to schedule the physical maintenance of its housing assets. Maintenance and repairs shall be carried out in a safe, prompt, practical and cost-effective manner.

Alliance Housing will comply with all regulatory and legislative requirements for property maintenance, and will at all times endeavour to keep all of its properties in good order before and during any tenancy.

4. Housing Development

The Board shall develop a strategy for housing development, which will be expressed in documents such as:

- Business plan
- Strategic asset management plan
- Financial planning and forecasting
- Risk management plan
- Project management methodology
- Industry partnerships.

In all cases, Alliance's objective shall be to ensure a safe, healthy and secure environment for our tenants and ensure our assets maintain their value.

Version control history: “2. Asset Management Policy”

Document or version number	Modified By	Narrative	Date approved by Board	Status
AH-2AMP-1	Upland Consulting	Original version	19/09/2018	Approved

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3. Community Engagement Policy

To achieve our mission to “relieve housing related poverty” and “develop and promote awareness of housing issues” it is vital that Alliance Housing engage effectively with the community it serves.

1. Inter-Organisational Relations

At all times Alliance Housing will collaborate with people and organisations that share goals involved with place renewal, social inclusion, the building of community capacity, and well being. Alliance Housing will liaise with agencies from a range of community activities, ensuring that there is a common interest, vision and commitment for people to work together. Staff will be encouraged to participate in Community Housing industry working parties and Boards, to maintain positive Alliance Housing networks.

Alliance Housing will seek to enter into formal agreements with support agencies that provide services for tenants housed by Alliance Housing. Agreements will be thoroughly negotiated and agreed to before signing to ensure that the agreement meets the organisation’s aims and objectives as outlined in the business plan.

2. Broader Community Relations

Alliance Housing will maintain its commitment to building sustainable community relationships and capacity. Specific strategies for achieving this shall be documented in its business plan.

Alliance Housing will engage with tenants, families, and the community at large to identify housing needs by:

- Monitoring tenant requests, applications and housing waiting lists
- Taking into account staff observations
- Collaborative work with and referrals from other community agencies
- Consultation with local government

Subject to the availability of staff and resources, Alliance Housing may implement strategies to improve the wellbeing of its tenants and their families by supporting relevant local projects.

Version control history: “3. Community Engagement Policy”

Document or version number	Modified By	Narrative	Date approved by Board	Status
AH-3CEP-1	Upland Consulting	Original version	19/09/2018	Approved

4. Board and Governance Policy

The Board has the overall legal responsibility for everything the organisation does and must have effective structure, processes, and appropriate skills. The Board will exhibit leadership in fairness, respect, inclusiveness, and proactive thinking.

1. Governing Instruments

The Board shall ensure that fit-for-purpose instruments are in place to govern its operation, and that these comply with the regulatory framework. These instruments may include:

- A constitution
- A board charter
- A schedule or schedules of delegation
- Terms of reference for the board and committees

These instruments shall be subject to review by the Board as may be required from time to time. The Board will as far as practical follow recommended best practice in governance, strategy and risk management.

2. Scope of the Board's work

Decisions that have to be made at a Board level shall be distinguished from decisions for which the CEO and other staff have the delegated responsibility. Decisions which fall within the Board's remit include:

- Review of the constitution, rules and standing orders
- Schedule or instrument of delegation
- Terms of reference of any board committees, and their delegated powers, if any
- Standing financial instructions which outline key financial reporting requirements and the financial responsibilities of governing body members
- Overseeing the development and approval of strategic, operational, financial and risk management plans
- Overseeing and directing the work of the CEO to give effect to such plans
- Ensuring compliance with all Legislative and regulatory requirements

- Policy direction

3. Recruitment, Service, and Succession

All stages of Board membership shall be conducted in accord with the constitution. The Board shall seek to attract and retain members with:

- An interest in and commitment to community housing
- Ability to understand Alliance Housing's business, even if the member has no prior experience with governing committees or with public or community housing
- Good interpersonal skills, with an emphasis on an ability to work as part of a group, and to express views in a way that is both challenging and supporting
- Commitment to taking the time to engage in a meaningful manner at Board meetings
- Integrity, truthfulness, honesty and preparedness to comply with the policies and codes of conduct of Alliance Housing
- Business acumen and sound judgment.

The Board will regularly review its own capacity and performance by assessing whether its members collectively have the appropriate skills/expertise to fulfil its role. The Board may organise training or appoint ex-officio members with appropriate skills as required. The Board shall also engage in succession planning so that knowledge, skills and experience of key members can be passed on when they leave.

4. Practical Engagement

The Board will keep itself abreast of developments “on the ground” by participating from time to time in such activities as:

- Induction sessions to ensure they are fully briefed on AH’s goals, activities, housing programs and policies.
- Field trips to visit some of Alliance Housing properties
- Personally making the acquaintance of Alliance Housing staff.

Board members will at all times seek the greatest good for the community, by exercising their abilities in the service of Alliance Housing in accord with the principles of benevolence, fairness, and respect.

Version control history: “4. Board and Governance Policy”

Document or version number	Modified By	Narrative	Date approved by Board	Status
AH-4BGP-1	Upland Consulting	Original version	19/09/2018	Approved

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5. Probity and Culture Policy

A not-for-profit organisation must be able to demonstrate to its stakeholders and to the community that it conducts its business with high standards of probity and accountability. Alliance Housing is committed to this principle and to nurturing an organisational culture which supports these standards.

1. Codes of Conduct

Alliance Housing will ensure that it conducts its business, including procurement and provision of services, in an ethical, honest and fair manner. It will adopt a code or codes of conduct, governing the behaviour of Board members and employees.

Such a code or codes will address such topics as:

- Independence of the Board
- Gifts and gratuities
- Required standards of personal behaviour
- Communication and confidentiality of intellectual property
- Use of Alliance Housing resources
- Handling of Alliance Housing funds
- Mechanisms for identifying and handling conflicts of interest
- Statement of ethical principles
- Enforcement and penalties
- All Board members and staff will be required to agree to and abide by the code of conduct prior to their commencement.

2. Employment and Appointment

Employment of staff and the appointment of Board members shall be governed by the relevant policies, which will be supported by processes to ensure that appropriate checks are carried out. Persons desiring to gain employment or appointment must be of good character, and consideration will be given to previous conduct, any criminal history, and the testimony of referees.

3. Fraud, Corruption, and Criminal Behaviour

Alliance will use its best endeavours to foster a culture of service and integrity, and yet acknowledges that no organisation is immune to the possibility of corruption. Alliance Housing will guard against real or perceived conflict of interest by implementing processes to ensure that fraudulent, corrupt or criminal behaviour is detected and handled appropriately.

Fraud – To dishonestly obtain or arrange a benefit by deception or other means:

Examples include:

- Theft such as stealing property, petty cash, gift cards, donations, client funds or the organisation's assets
- Falsification of records, accounts or documents to deceive
- Dishonestly destroying or concealing accounts or records
- Embezzlement or misappropriation of funding or other assets
- Misuse of assets or property for personal benefit
- Forgery or issuing false or misleading statements with intent to obtain financial advantage or deceive.

Corruption – Dishonestly obtain a benefit by misuse of power, position, authority or resources:

Examples include:

- Bribery, extortion & blackmail
- Secretly permitting personal interests to override the organisation's interests
- Secretly giving or accepting gifts & benefits in return for preferential treatment to the giver
- Collusion, false quotes, false invoices or price fixing
- Manipulating design & specifications or processes for personal gain or to conceal defects
- Complicity in excessive billing or submission for false support documents or concealment of documents
- Falsifying job qualifications or work or safety certifications
- Nepotism (favouring relatives)
- Privacy breaches or data manipulation with intent to cause harm

Criminal Behaviour - Criminal behavior is defined as an act or failure to act in a way that violates public law.

- The criminal behavior must result in a conviction, not only the act (actus reus) must be proven, but the criminal intent or mental state (mens rea) behind the act must be proven as well

Alliance takes a very serious view of self-interested or dishonest conduct on the part of any of its Board or staff, and will take all practicable steps to ensure that its standards of probity and accountability are upheld.

Version control history: “5. Probity and Culture Policy”

Document or version number	Modified By	Narrative	Date approved by Board	Status
AH-5PCP-1	Upland Consulting	Original version	19/09/2018	Superseded
AH-5PCP-2	CEO	Section 3 updated	21/11/18	Approved

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6. Executive Management Policy

Alliance Housing, as represented by its Board, manages its resources by means of various delegations and instruments to ensure the cost-effective achievement of its stated objectives. Such delegations, instruments, and related policies and procedures are subject to regular review in response to changing operational needs, legislative and regulatory developments, and other external factors as may arise from time to time.

The principal means of management by the Board are outlined below:

1. Chief Executive Officer

The Board delegates responsibility for the day-to-day running of the organisation to a Chief Executive Officer. The organisation, under direction of the CEO, shall employ staff who will assist the CEO in carrying out the business of Alliance Housing.

2. Business Plan

The CEO, under the Board's direction, will have written plans in place which set out both its long and short term goals, priorities and outline how objectives will be met operationally. Such plans may include:

- A Mission Statement
- Aims and Objectives
- Goals and Values
- Analysis of Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats (SWOT)
- Expansion of Housing stock
- Partnerships
- Tenant relations
- Property management
- Staff recruitment, reviews, training and development
- Development of administrative systems
- Community relations
- Risk management

The business plan shall also document each project objective, target date, strategy for achievement, performance indicators, resources required and allocated, as well as progress to date.

3. Policy Process, and Procedure

The Board, with the cooperation of the CEO, shall conduct regular revisions of policies and processes concerning issues including:

- Service delivery
- Asset management
- Community engagement
- Governance
- Probity
- Executive management
- Financial management
- Employment
- Feedback and complaints
- Document control, and
- Privacy

The CEO shall develop processes and procedures to ensure the effective implementation of policies approved by the Board.

4. Organisational review

Alliance Housing's documented systems and plans reflect a commitment to organisational review and service improvement, by means of:

- Development and regular review of policy and procedure manuals
- Development and regular review of a business plan
- Development of performance indicators and reporting of progress to the Board, staff and other stakeholders
- Continuous use of review processes to improve service delivery
- Internal audits, annually and as mandated by the Board or CEO, to ensure that policies and processes are receiving full compliance

Version control history: “6. Executive Management Policy”

Document or version number	Modified By	Narrative	Date approved by Board	Status
AH-6EMP-1	Upland Consulting	Original version	19/09/2018	Approved

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7. Financial Management Policy

Alliance Housing is expected by government, the community and clients to manage its services and assets prudently, fairly and efficiently.

1. Capital Structure

The Board will put in place processes to maintain an appropriate balance between debt and equity sufficient to ensure Alliance Housing's financial viability. Alliance will maintain such equity to ensure it has reasonable protection against unforeseeable developments.

2. Performance Monitoring and Maintenance

The CEO shall be responsible, under supervision by the Board, for the creation and implementation of business plans and budgets, and to report upon progress. These and other mechanisms will be in place to ensure the long term financial viability of the organisation. The business plan will include such matters as:

- Maintaining diverse sources of income
- Balancing debt and equity
- Future projects and commitments (e.g. long term property maintenance expenses)
- Management of provisional and accumulated funds
- Strategies to achieve or work towards an operating surplus
- Mitigating financial risks and liabilities through appropriate insurances.
- Should there be a threat to the present or future solvency of Alliance Housing, the CEO will report this to the Board, via the Chair, without delay.

3. Risk Management

Alliance Housing will put in place measures to manage its exposure to risk. These may include maintenance of a risk register, establishment of a risk-management subcommittee, and periodic risk assessment exercises.

Version control history: “7. Financial Management Policy”

Document or version number	Modified By	Narrative	Date approved by Board	Status
AH-7FMP-1	Upland Consulting	Original version	19/09/2018	Approved

8. Employment Policy

Alliance Housing ensures that its processes for the recruitment, selection and appointment of staff will meet operational needs as identified in the business plan. It will comply with all legislation and regulations in relation to all aspects of employment, including equal opportunities, pay and conditions, behaviour management, and occupational health and safety.

1. Meeting Operational Needs

Creation of positions and management of employees is the responsibility of the CEO. If there is a need for replacement or a new position becomes available, a review will be carried out of the job description, selection criteria, work hours, pay and reporting structure and a recruitment strategy determined.

Alliance Housing will assess potential staff at initial interview stage. All staff are required to undergo appropriate pre-employment checks to ensure they possess or can acquire the skills and expertise necessary to their employment. Alliance Housing will also adopt a fit-for purpose performance management system to ensure that operational needs continue to be met in an acceptable manner.

2. Recruiting, Selecting and Appointing staff

Processes shall remain in place and be regularly reviewed concerning:

- Recruitment and appointment
- Use of Alliance Housing resources
- Conflicts of interest
- Ethical behaviour standards
- Staff management and development
- Appeals and grievance resolution
- Promoting a positive organisational culture

Alliance Housing will employ staff that can competently perform their duties and contribute to the overall strength and direction of the organisation, Alliance Housing will promote a safe, ethical, and healthy working environment that contributes to the well-being of its employees.

Version control history: “8. Employment Policy”

Document or version number	Modified By	Narrative	Date approved by Board	Status
AH-8EP-1	Upland Consulting	Original version	19/09/2018	Approved

9. Feedback, Complaints & Appeals Policy

Alliance Housing is committed to providing a quality service and to communicating effectively with our tenants, residents and the wider community. We realise that sometimes, despite our best efforts, people may not be happy with some aspect of our service delivery or the conduct of our stakeholders. In other cases, a tenant, resident or member of the community may wish to express a compliment, or to make a suggestion for the improvement of our business. Alliance Housing has processes in place for feedback, complaints, appeals and disputes. Alliance Housing will ensure that feedback is encouraged and supported, and that all feedback is handled in an appropriate, effective and systematic way.

1. Housing Services

Complaints - relate to dissatisfaction with an area of service delivery over which the organisation has direct control. Complaints can be made in writing or verbally to a staff member. A form can be provided for this process. An initial response will be made to the complainant within 10 days of receiving it, if an address or telephone number is provided.

Appeals - relate to a tenant or service user's dissatisfaction with a decision made by the organisation. Complaints and appeals processes will be in place to allow a tenant or third party to formally express their dissatisfaction, have their point of view heard and obtain some form of recourse or resolution. An appeal must be made by the complainant or their representative within 3 months of the decision being made. An appeal response will be made to the complainant within 10 days of receiving it, if an address or telephone number is provided.

Decisions that can be appealed for example are as follows:

- Transfer application
- Assessment of tenant liability changes
- Pet application
- Application for reduced rent

Some decisions made by Alliance Housing can not be appealed, such as:

- Decisions that apply generally to all tenants or residents (market rent increases, how rent is calculated)
- Decisions made over 3 months ago
- Decisions made by the Court Magistrate or State Administration Tribunal

- Consumption charges (water, electricity, gas) that are not determined by Alliance Housing WA
- Decision to end a tenancy due to tenant no longer being eligible for community housing
- Decision to not allow another tenant to be added to the tenancy
- Termination through non renewal of lease
- Termination through 3 strike breaches as explained in Processes for Tenancy Management section 7.

Disputes - relate to wider neighbourhood issues such as difficulties with neighbours or accusations of antisocial behaviour. Often, these are areas over which the organisation does not have direct control; however, Alliance Housing shall do what it can, within reasonable limits, to help tenants or residents resolve such issues.

Lease for Life residents will have their disputes handled according to the Retirement Village Regulations 1992.

2. Other Complaints

There are processes in place to allow for complaints, instances of whistle-blowing, and grievances to be raised both internally and externally. Appropriate safeguards will be in place to ensure that the principles of procedural fairness are applied, and that all matters are handled in a prompt, just, fair and ethical manner.

Alliance Housing recognises that effective processes for feedback and complaints can benefit both tenants, residents and the organisation. It provides the organisation with important information about the standard of its activities and how they can be improved. Feedback is to be welcomed, embraced, and acted upon where possible.

Version control history: “9. Feedback, Complaints and Appeals policy”

Document or version number	Modified By	Narrative	Date approved by Board	Status
AH-9FCP-1	Upland Consulting	Original version	19/09/2018	Superseded
AH-9FCP-2	CEO	Residents of RVA added & section 1 reviewed	21/11/2018	Approved

Notes on the administrative maintenance of this Policy Manual

This manual has been created in Microsoft Word using some intermediate and advanced formatting and page layout functions. The following suggestions may prove useful when making modifications.

- When opening the document to modify it, immediately save it with a new filename, and then modify the newly-saved version. This will ensure that no features of the original document are disturbed.
- **Styles** have been used for policy titles and subheadings, and extensively throughout. The best way to ensure that new material matches the appearance and functionality of existing material is to use the Format Painter brush.
- When a new policy or a new subheading is added, use the Format Painter brush to ensure that the relevant heading style is applied. Applying the correct heading style is essential to ensure that the table of contents operates correctly. Navigate to the Contents page, click on the table, and select "Update Table..." and in the dialog box, choose "Update entire table." Updating the table of contents will disturb the formatting of the table, but this can be corrected manually.
- Automatic numbering has not been used in the body text, as it is not compatible with heading styles. It also becomes problematic in that the Policy Manual comprises several discrete documents, and automatic numbering tends to link unrelated lists in undesirable ways.
- Page numbering has been inserted using **section breaks**. See Microsoft online help for further information.
- A document control table has been inserted at the end of each policy document. Blank pages have been provided so that each policy begins on a new page when printed double-sided and will not be printed on the reverse of an unrelated document control page.

This example demonstrates how changes to "8. Employment Policy" might be tracked:

Document or version number	Modified By	Narrative	Date approved by Board	Status
AH-8EP-1	Upland	Original version	20/10/2018	Superseded
AH-8EP-2	CEO	Improved approach to conflicts of interest	15/03/2019	Superseded
AH-8EP-3	CEO	New focus on diversity	23/10/2023	Active

