

1. PURPOSE

UnitingSA Housing is committed to fostering safe, inclusive and respectful communities where every tenant can enjoy the peaceful use of their home.

Community housing brings together people from diverse backgrounds, cultures, beliefs, ages, abilities and life experiences. These differences strengthen our communities and should be recognised with respect, understanding and consideration. A successful community is one where people value diversity, respect personal boundaries, and contribute positively to the wellbeing of those around them.

The purpose of this procedure is to

- 1.1. Outline the expectations of tenants, household members and visitors in maintaining respectful neighbourhoods,
- 1.2. Explain how concerns in relation to neighbour behaviour will be managed by UnitingSA Housing employees.

2. SCOPE

This Procedure applies to all tenants, approved household members, occupants and visitors residing at or attending properties managed by UnitingSA Housing. This procedure also applies to UnitingSA Housing employees responsible for tenancy management.

This Procedure will be monitored and updated to reflect best practice, professional practice standards and guidelines, regulatory, and legislative requirements.

3. DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
USAH	UnitingSA Housing
SACAT	South Australian Civil and Administrative Tribunal
SAPOL	South Australian Police
Tenant	A person or family who rents a home, apartment, or room to live in
Residential Tenancy Agreement	A legally binding agreement between a landlord and tenant that outlines the rights and responsibilities of both parties under the Residential Tenancies Act 1995 (SA)
Residential Tenancies Act (SA) 1995	The South Australian law governing residential tenancy agreements and the rights and obligations of landlords and tenants
Worker	Includes an employee, contractor, supported worker, labour hire, trainee, apprentice and volunteer whilst at UnitingSA sites and Uniting SA community housing properties
Leaders	Managers, Supervisors, Coordinators or anyone with a role that influences others

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4. PROCEDURE

4.1. Guiding Principles

USAH is committed to building communities where people feel safe, respected and connected. The following principles underpin this procedure

- 4.1.1. **Respect** – Every person has the right to live free from discrimination, harassment, intimidation and un unnecessary interference. Differences in culture, religion, beliefs, lifestyle, age, ability and personal circumstances are valued and respected.
- 4.1.2. **Personal Responsibility** - Every tenant is responsible for their own behaviour and for the behaviour of members of their household, visitors and pets. Community living requires consideration for others and an understanding that individual actions can affect neighbours.
- 4.1.3. **Privacy** – Every tenant has the right to establish personal boundaries and determine the level of interaction they wish to have with neighbours. While friendly relationships are encouraged, tenants should respect the privacy of others and avoid unnecessary involvement in another person's personal affairs.
- 4.1.4. **Early Resolution** - Many neighbourhood concerns can be resolved through respectful conversation. Where it is safe and appropriate, tenants are encouraged to speak directly with one another before requesting assistance from UnitingSA Housing.
- 4.1.5. **Fairness** - All concerns raised with UnitingSA will be considered impartially. Decisions will be based on available evidence and the principles of procedural fairness and natural justice.
- 4.1.6. **Safety** - The safety and wellbeing of tenants, visitors, contractors and employees remain a priority in every interaction and decision.

4.2. Good Neighbour Expectations

Living within a community does not require neighbours to become friends or to share the same opinions, beliefs or lifestyles. It does, however, require everyone to respect each other's rights and contribute to an environment where people feel safe, welcome and able to enjoy their home.

4.2.1. Tenants are expected to:

- treat neighbours, visitors and staff with courtesy and respect;
- respect cultural, religious and personal differences;
- maintain reasonable noise levels and avoid behaviour that unreasonably disturbs others;
- care for shared spaces and facilities;
- supervise children appropriately in common areas;
- clean up after pets where permitted;
- respect allocated parking and visitor parking arrangements;
- ensure household members and visitors behave responsibly; and
- comply with the terms of their residential tenancy agreement.

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4.2.2. Tenants should also recognise that neighbours may choose different levels of social interaction. Friendly communities are encouraged; however, persistent unwanted contact, unnecessary involvement in another person's private affairs, speculation, or behaviour that creates conflict within the community is inconsistent with respectful community living.

4.2.3. Strong communities are built on trust, mutual respect and recognising that every person has the right to enjoy their home without unnecessary interference.

4.3. Resolving Concerns Between Neighbours

4.3.1. Minor disagreements are a normal part of community living and often arise from misunderstandings or differences in expectations.

4.3.2. Where it is safe, appropriate and reasonable to do so, tenants are encouraged to discuss concerns directly with their neighbour before asking USAH to become involved. A respectful conversation can often resolve matters quickly and preserve positive neighbour relationships.

4.3.3. Examples of concerns that may be suitable for neighbour-to-neighbour discussion include and are not limited to:

- Occasional noise
- Parking misunderstandings
- Use of shared outdoor spaces
- Minor maintenance matters affecting neighbouring properties or
- Other day to day issues that do not involve safety concerns

4.3.4. Tenants are not expected to approach a neighbour where there is a risk of violence, intimidation, harassment, abuse, unlawful behaviour or where they otherwise feel unsafe. In these situations, tenants should contact emergency services first and then USAH.

4.4. Role of UnitingSA Housing

4.4.1. USAH supports tenants to maintain positive neighbourhoods but is not responsible for resolving every disagreement or difference of opinion between neighbours.

4.4.2. Our role is to investigate matters where there is evidence that a tenancy obligation, lease condition or legislative requirement may have been breached.

4.4.3. Issues arising solely from personality differences, differing lifestyles, or neighbour preferences may not require formal intervention.

4.4.4. USAH recognises that not all neighbour disputes arise from breaches of tenancy obligations. Many issues can be successfully resolved through open communication and early intervention.

4.4.5. Where appropriate, USAH may recommend referral to a free, independent community mediation service before progressing to formal tenancy action. This approach aims to preserve positive neighbour relationships, reduce conflict and support sustainable tenancy outcomes wherever possible.

4.5. Behaviour Requiring Investigations

Behaviour that may result in investigation includes and is not limited to:

- Repeated excessive noise
- Verbal abuse or threatening behaviour
- Constant harassment, bullying or intimidation
- Discrimination or vilification
- Physical violence

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- Damage to property
- Unlawful activity
- Repeated nuisance behaviour
- Behaviour that interferes with another person's reasonable peace, comfort, privacy or safety
- Behaviour by household members or visitors that adversely affects the community.

Each matter will be assessed on its own merits, considering the seriousness, frequency, impact and available evidence.

4.6. Investigation Process

4.6.1. When concerns are reported, UnitingSA Housing will investigate matters in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness and natural justice.

4.6.2. This means that:

- Complaints will be assessed objectively
- All relevant parties will have an opportunity to provide their account of events
- Decisions will be based on available evidence
- Confidentiality will be maintained where practicable and
- Investigations will be conducted respectfully and without bias

4.6.3. Investigations may include discussions with complainants, responding tenants and witnesses, consideration of supporting evidence, review of tenancy history where relevant, and consultation with external agencies where appropriate.

4.6.4. The receipt of a complaint does not automatically indicate that a breach of the tenancy agreement has occurred

4.7. Respectful Communication

4.7.1. UnitingSA Housing is committed to treating every tenant with dignity, fairness and respect.

4.7.2. Employees are expected to communicate professionally, remain impartial and conduct investigations respectfully. Tenants are expected to extend the same level of respect to employees, recognising that staff have a responsibility to investigate concerns fairly and to hear from all parties before making decisions.

4.7.3. Communication with staff must remain respectful regardless of whether there is agreement with a decision or process.

4.7.4. Unacceptable behaviour towards employees includes, but is not limited to:

- abusive or offensive language;
- shouting or aggressive behaviour;
- personal insults;
- threats or intimidation;
- discriminatory or offensive remarks;
- harassment; or
- behaviour that places the health, safety or wellbeing of employees at risk

4.7.5. Where communication becomes unreasonable or unsafe, UnitingSA may end meetings or telephone conversations, require future communication to occur in writing, nominate a single point of contact, require another employee to be present during meetings, or implement other reasonable measures to protect the safety and wellbeing of employees while continuing to provide services.

4.7.6. Serious incidents may be referred to SAPOL or other appropriate authorities.

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4.8. Tenant Responsibilities

- 4.8.1. Every tenant enters into a residential tenancy agreement that outlines their rights and responsibilities. The expectations set out in this Good Neighbour Procedure support those obligations and help foster safe, respectful and inclusive communities.
- 4.8.2. In accordance with the Residential Tenancies Act 1995 (SA) and the USAH residential tenancy agreement, tenants must use their home in a manner that does not unreasonably interfere with the peace, comfort, privacy, safety or wellbeing of neighbouring residents.
- 4.8.3. Tenants are responsible for the behaviour of all members of their household, visitors and pets while they are at the property. They are expected to take reasonable steps to ensure that everyone associated with their tenancy behaves in a respectful and considerate manner.
- 4.8.4. Where concerns are raised about their behaviour or that of members of their household, visitors or pets, tenants are expected to engage constructively with USAH to assist in resolving the matter. This may include responding to enquiries, participating in meetings, engaging in mediation where appropriate, or following agreed actions to address the concern.
- 4.8.5. Failure to meet these responsibilities may result in action being taken in accordance with the residential tenancy agreement, The Residential Tenancies Act 1995 (SA) and this Good Neighbour Procedure.

4.9. Consequences of Breaching Tenancy Obligations

- 4.9.1. Where USAH determines, following assessment of the available information, that a tenant has not complied with their obligations under the tenancy agreement or the Residential Tenancies Act 1995 (SA), an appropriate response will be considered having regard to the nature, seriousness, frequency and impact of the behaviour.
- 4.9.2. Depending on the circumstances, USAH may:
 - provide education or guidance regarding tenancy responsibilities;
 - refer tenants to appropriate support services;
 - offer or recommend participation in mediation or other dispute resolution processes;
 - enter into an Acceptable Behaviour Agreement with the tenant;
 - issue a notice of breach or other notice permitted under the Residential Tenancies Act 1995 (SA);
 - seek reimbursement for damage or loss where the tenant is responsible;
 - refer matters to relevant external agencies, including SAPOL or other statutory authorities where appropriate; and/or
 - make an application to the South Australian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (SACAT) where required.
- 4.9.3. Serious or repeated breaches of the tenancy agreement, including violence, threats, intimidation, significant property damage, unlawful conduct or behaviour that places the safety or wellbeing of others at risk, may result in UnitingSA Housing seeking appropriate orders through SACAT, including an order for termination of the tenancy, in accordance with the Residential Tenancies Act 1995 (SA).

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4.10. Commitment to Positive Communities

- 4.10.1. Building a positive community is a shared responsibility. Every interaction contributes to the culture of a neighbourhood and influences the experience of those who live there.
- 4.10.2. By demonstrating respect, valuing diversity, recognising personal boundaries, communicating constructively and meeting the responsibilities of their tenancy, tenants help create communities where people feel safe, connected and proud to call home
- 4.10.3. Together, we can create neighbourhoods where everyone can live independently, with dignity, security and respect.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1. The Worker is responsible for:

- 5.1.1. Following job description, training and legal requirements to ensure that work is carried out correctly.
- 5.1.2. Adhering to UnitingSA policies and procedures/
- 5.1.3. Taking responsibility for ensuring the quality and safety (both physical and emotional) of the work done, while also exercising duty of care towards tenants.
- 5.1.4. Engaging in risk management and ongoing quality improvement activities as part of regular work duties.
- 5.1.5. Reviewing and suggest enhancement to existing procedure.
- 5.1.6. Escalating any issues promptly to line manager in a timely manner.

5.2. The Manager is responsible for:

- 5.2.1. Identifying and managing risks and incidents as they arise.
- 5.2.2. Ensuring that service delivery workers are adequately trained and comply with relevant operational procedures and practice standards.
- 5.2.3. Offering support to team members in the following of this procedure as well as the aftermath of incidents or allegations including debriefing and follow-up actions.
- 5.2.4. Reviewing and providing valuable feedback on this procedure to help improve its effectiveness.

5.3. The Senior Manager is responsible for:

- 5.3.1. Ensuring that all service delivery and program leadership workers are informed of and comply with applicable laws, regulations, codes and organisation policies and procedures.
- 5.3.2. Establish operations procedures for efficient and effective delivery of services.
- 5.3.3. Implement monitoring and reviewing of systems to evaluate and improve performance.

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6. LEGISLATIVE REFERENCES / STANDARDS

- 6.1. Residential Tenancies Act 1995 (South Australia)
- 6.2. SA Housing Trust – Community Housing Policy
- 6.3. Community Housing Master Agreement
- 6.4. Racial Vilification Act 1996 (SA)
- 6.5. Racial Discrimination Act (1964) Cth
- 6.6. Combatting Antisemitism, Hate and Extremism (Criminal and Migration Laws) Act 2026 (Cth)
- 6.7. Age Discrimination Act 2024 (Cth)
- 6.8. Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- 6.9. Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)
- 6.10. Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth))
- 6.11. RentRight SA (Tenant Assistance and Advocacy Service)
- 6.12. South Australian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (SACAT)

7. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- 7.1. USAH Residential Tenancy Agreement
- 7.2. COR-WHS-PRO-008 Incident Reporting and Investigation Procedure
- 7.3. USA Customer Feedback and Complaints Management Procedure
- 7.4. USAH Being a Good Neighbour Fact Sheet
- 7.5. USAH Tenant Handbook
- 7.6. USAH Appeals Procedure

8. DOCUMENT CONTROL

- 8.1. All records must be retained in accordance with legislation.

Version	Description of change	Committee approved by	Date approved	Owner position title
001	New Procedure HS-Good Neighbour	Chief DPH	22.07.26	Senior Manager Housing Services

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9. APPENDICES

9.1. Acceptable Behaviour Agreement



UnitingSA Housing

ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR AGREEMENT

Working together to support a successful tenancy

About this Agreement

This agreement has been developed because concerns have been raised about behaviour at your property. Our aim is to work together to resolve concerns early, support you to maintain your tenancy and create a safe and respectful community. This agreement is not a formal breach notice and does not change your rights or responsibilities under your Residential Tenancy Agreement or the Residential Tenancies Act 1995 (SA).

Tenant Details

Tenant Name	
Property Address	
Tenancy Officer	
Agreement Date	
Review Date	

Concerns Discussed

☐ Excessive Noise
☐ Visitors
☐ Aggressive Behaviour/ Physical violence
☐ Property Damage
☐ Verbal abuse or threatening behaviour

☐ Pets
☐ Parking
☐ Repeated nuisance behaviour
☐ Not respecting neighbours' privacy
☐ Other

Summary of concerns:

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Our Agreement

- ☐ Treat neighbours, visitors and UnitingSA Housing employees and contractors respectfully.
- ☐ Keep noise to reasonable levels.
- ☐ Ensure visitors behave appropriately.
- ☐ Respect shared areas and common facilities.
- ☐ Contact UnitingSA Housing if support is required.
- ☐ Work cooperatively with UnitingSA Housing to resolve concerns.

Additional Actions

Action	Responsible	Due Date

Support/Referrals Available

- ☐ Mediation
- ☐ Financial Counselling
- ☐ Mental Health Support
- ☐ Homelessness prevention support
- ☐ Disability Support
- ☐ Other

Signing of Agreement

If the Agreed actions are not followed or further incidents occur, UnitingSA Housing may act in accordance with the Residential Tenancies Act 1995 (SA), including issuing formal notices permitted under the Act or making an application to the South Australian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (SACAT), where appropriate. This Agreement will be reviewed in 30 days being [Enter Date].

Tenant Signature	
Tenancy Officer Signature	

OFFICE USE ONLY

Review Date: _____

- ☐ Concerns resolved
- ☐ Actions completed
- ☐ Further support required
- ☐ Agreement can be closed
- ☐ Other _____
- ☐ Tenant Advised of outcome

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