

Category:
Tenant Administration

Section:
Client Complaint and Appeals Policy

Subsection:
N/A

POLICY STATEMENT:

Capital Region Housing Corporation (“CRHC”) expects that in the normal course of business, there will be occasions where clients feel they have not received adequate services, or that there are issues that should be further addressed by CRHC. CRHC will endeavor to promptly respond to these.

The Client Complaint and Appeal process is intended to deal with issues remaining unresolved after attempts between clients and staff fail to reconcile the matter.

DEFINITIONS:

“Complaint” A Complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction by a Client, with a policy, procedure, product or service offered or provided by CRHC.

“Appeal” An Appeal is an expression of disagreement or dissatisfaction with a specific decision that has been made by CRHC, and a request has been made, in writing, for that decision to be reconsidered.

“Client” A Client is any person who has a file with CRHC including Applicants, Community Housing tenants, CRHC Subsidy recipients and Affordable Housing tenants.

“Third Party Release of Information” In order for CRHC to discuss a file with an outside agency or person a client must complete a third party release of information form in order to ensure compliance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

POLICY: COMPLAINTS

1. All Complaints will be handled in a timely manner. Although some Complaints cannot be resolved immediately, every effort should be made to advise the Complainant within three (3) working days to acknowledge the receipt of the Complaint and advise a response is forthcoming in the event the matter cannot be immediately resolved.
2. If the Complaint is against a staff member (employee or contractor) the Complaint is to be referred to the staff member’s immediate Supervisor. Complaints against staff will not be placed on the tenant file.

3. With the exception of Complaints against staff, a copy of the Complaint will be placed on the clients file and/or comments entered into the data base.
4. Complaints requiring follow up, will be done in writing to the Client.
5. Every effort will be made to resolve a Complaint within thirty (30) working days of receipt of the Complaint unless circumstances prevent resolution within this time frame.
6. In the event a Client identifies their legal rights have been infringed upon they are to be directed to seek advice either through the Edmonton Community Legal Centre or a lawyer. CRHC will not provide legal advice to clients.
7. Complaints that deal with individual privacy concerns should be directed to the CRHC Freedom of Information & Protection of Privacy (“FOIP”) Coordinator.
8. Ongoing frivolous complaints, or significant interference with CRHC as a landlord, will be dealt with in accordance with the Residential Tenancy Act and as such, complaints may be rejected by the Chief Executive Officer with due cause.

APPEALS

1. The Appeal process includes but is not limited to the following matters:
 - a. Rent (rent adjustment or annual income review processed in an untimely manner or with incorrect rent calculation);
 - b. Notices to terminate tenancy other than rent;
 - c. Cancellation of subsidy;
 - d. Tenant charge backs; and
 - e. Application of a CRHC policy.
2. The following matters are not subject to Appeal:
 - a. Rent calculation regulations established through legislation/Alberta Government/City of Edmonton;
 - b. Notices of rent increases compliant with *Alberta Housing Act, Residential Tenancies Act* or other legislation; and
 - c. CRHC policies.
3. All Appeals must be in writing. Clients are encouraged to submit documentation, whenever applicable, supporting their Appeal.
4. Every effort will be made to acknowledge Client Appeals within three (3) working days as having been received by telephone, e-mail, or by letter.
5. In the event more information is required the request will be made in writing to the Client.
6. If the additional information requested is not received within thirty (30) working days, or no contact has been had with the Client in response to the request for more information, the Appeal will be deemed abandoned.

7. In the event a Client identifies their legal rights have been infringed upon they are to be directed to seek advice either through the Edmonton Community Legal Centre or a lawyer. CRHC will not provide legal advice to Clients.
8. Appeals that deal with individual privacy concerns should be directed to the CRHC FOIP Coordinator.

Appeal Level 1 (Supervisor)

1. A Client may appeal a decision by a clerk in writing to the clerk's immediate Supervisor.
2. The Supervisor will review the file and, if necessary in consultation with the department Manager, render a decision.
3. The Supervisor will advise the Client in writing regarding the decision reached.

Appeal Level 2 (Manager)

1. A Client may appeal a decision by a Supervisor to the Manager of the Department.
2. The Manager will review the file and grounds for the appeal and, if necessary in consultation with the department Director, render a decision.
3. The Manager will advise the Client in writing regarding the decision reached.

Appeal Level 3 (Director)

1. A Client may appeal a decision of a Manager to the Director.
2. The Director will review the file and render a decision in writing to the Client.
3. The Director will advise the Client in writing regarding the decision reached.

Final Level (Chief Executive Director)

1. A Client may appeal a decision of a Director to the Chief Executive Officer.
2. The Chief Executive Officer will review the file and render a decision in writing to the Client.
3. The decision of the Chief Executive Officer is final.

REPORTING

1. The following types of Complaints and Appeals will be reported to the Board of Directors of CRHC through the Chief Executive Officer:
 - a. Incidents that may adversely affect CRHC reputation in the community;
 - b. Incidents that may be of concern to the Province or City;
 - c. Incidents indicating trends contrary to Board direction; and
 - d. Anything that the Chief Executive Director deems to be of interest to the Board.
2. Alberta Government will be advised through the Chief Executive Director about any Complaints or Appeals that may:
 - a. Affect the Government of Alberta's reputation in the community,
 - b. Have serious concern to the Housing Division.