



Being a good neighbour in your new home

Tips for getting along with your new neighbours

This fact sheet provides practical hints on how you can be a good neighbour and how to deal with issues in your neighbourhood.

The Department has a Good Neighbour Policy that promotes how neighbours can live together in harmony.

Being a good neighbour

- Try not to disturb your neighbour by making too much noise, such as having music playing loudly, dogs continually barking or loud arguments.
- Try to be tolerant of your neighbours' children playing outside in their yard or in the common area if you live in a block of units. Children naturally get excited. It makes things easier if you avoid complaining about children, unless they are being very noisy/disruptive at an unreasonable time.
- Try to accept that your neighbours may have opinions and ways of doing things that are different from you. Try not to be disapproving of your neighbours because of this.
- Be willing to listen and, if you feel comfortable, talk to your neighbour to try and settle problems quickly.

What you can do if you have a problem with neighbours

It is better to sort out neighbourhood problems in an informal way. For example, talk to your neighbour first if loud television noise or children playing ball on a wall late at night are problems.

If you find it difficult to talk to your neighbour, you can contact the Community Justice Centre (CJC) to settle problems. This is a free service. Mediators will hear both sides of the story and try to help you reach an agreement that everyone is happy with. Your local Department of Housing office can provide you with the CJC contact details.

If the problem is more serious (eg. harassment, verbal abuse, intimidation or threats), then you may need to contact the police or the chamber magistrate at your local court to apply for an apprehended personal violence order (APVO). You should also tell your local Department of Housing office.

If there is a problem involving violence or drugs, you should contact the police immediately, then advise your local Department of Housing office. Any illegal or criminal activity should be referred directly to the police.

Ask your local Department of Housing office for the fact sheets on *Problems with Nuisance and Annoyance* and *Antisocial Behaviour, Problems with Noise* and *Problems with Harassment* for more information about what to do about these problems.

What can the Department of Housing do?

If your neighbour's behaviour is a breach of their lease, the Department may ask the Consumer Trader and Tenancy Tribunal to give your neighbour a formal warning (or order) to stop their behaviour or even terminate their tenancy. The Tribunal decides whether this happens.

It is illegal for an officer of the Department to ask for money or favours or other benefits of any kind in exchange for helping you with your housing needs.

It is also illegal for you or anyone else to offer money or favours or other benefits of any kind to an officer of the Department in exchange for helping you.

If you have any information regarding this, please contact the **Department of Housing's Business Assurance Unit on 1800 806 206**. The Department may refuse the provision of further housing services to anyone who has engaged or sought to engage in corrupt or illegal conduct.



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More information

For more information you can:

- visit your local office, Monday to Friday, 8.30 am – 4.30 pm (closed public holidays and 8.30 am – 1.00 pm on Wednesdays)
- phone the Department on **Freecall 1800 629 212**, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- phone the Aboriginal Enquiry Line on Freecall 1800 355 740, Monday to Friday, 8.30 am – 4.30 pm (excluding public holidays)
- go to the Department's website www.housing.nsw.gov.au

Interpreter Services

If you have difficulty understanding English, contact the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 131 450. TIS will telephone the Department of Housing for you at no cost.

If you are hearing impaired, please contact the TTY Service on 1800 628 310.

Arabic

خدمة الترجمة الخطية والشفهية المجانية
اتصل على الرقم 131 450

Chinese

免費的翻譯傳譯服務
致電 131 450

Russian

Служба бесплатного письменного и устного перевода
Позвоните по номеру 131 450

Spanish

Servicio Gratuito de Traducción e Interpretación
Llame al 131 450

Vietnamese

Dịch vụ Phiên dịch và Thông dịch Miễn phí
Điện thoại 131 450