

Complaints, Reviews and Feedback Policy

22 December 2022

1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- provide a process for renters and prospective renters, and their advocates or support workers, neighbours of Unison properties and members of the general public:
 - to make a complaint about Unison’s services
 - to ask for a review of a Unison decision about a complaint
 - to provide feedback about Unison’s performance
- outline how Unison will manage complaints, review complaint decisions and feedback
- describe how Unison will use information collected from complaints and feedback to identify opportunities to improve its operations and service delivery

2 Scope

This policy applies to:

- all renters, people who have applied to become renters, their advocates and support workers
- neighbours of Unison properties and members of the general public
- all Unison staff, including employees, contractors and volunteers

3 Policy Statement

3.1 Principles

Unison is committed to:

- providing opportunities for people to make complaints and give feedback to Unison easily and safely
- recording all complaints
- managing all complaints and complaints decision reviews in a fair, transparent and timely manner as required by Unison’s legal and other obligations
- respecting people’s privacy and their confidential information
- using information collected through complaints and feedback to improve its operations and services

3.2 Definitions

Complaint

A complaint is an express or implied statement of dissatisfaction about a matter adversely affecting the complainant relating to a service delivered or action taken by Unison where a response is either sought, or is reasonably expected or is legally required.

Unison has adopted the 'no wrong door' principle and must recognise complaints which are outside its areas of responsibility. These complaints are resolved by referring the complainant to the correct complaint pathway.

Feedback

Feedback is a compliment, criticism, comment or suggestion where a response is not sought, is not reasonably expected and is not legally required.

Complaint v Feedback

The key difference between complaints and critical feedback is the requirement for, or the reasonable expectation of, a response.

Complaints v Incidents

Issues involving violence, injury, death, illegal activity or allegations of sexual assault should be managed as incidents, not complaints. Staff members should refer to the Incident Management – Tenant Client Procedure.

3.3 Complaints To Unison

Procedures and Registers

Unison will have:

- procedures for recording, investigating and responding to complaints
- a complaints register which records information about complaints and Unison's responses
- procedures for analysing and reporting on complaints and their resolution

How Complaints Can Be Made

Unison allows renters and prospective renters to make complaints by telephone, email, post, online, or by raising the matter with a place manager or facilities adviser.

Unison ensures that all complaints are recorded in Unison's complaints register and are handled in accordance with Unison's complaints policy and procedures.

Providing Information

Unison ensures that all its renters and prospective renters are provided with information about Unison's complaints procedures, including:

- how they can make a complaint about Unison's services and service delivery (including to external agencies)
- how Unison handles complaints
- Unison's performance standards for responding to complaints
- their options if Unison fails to resolve a complaint within the required time period
- their options if they disagree with Unison's decisions about a complaint
- their right to use an advocate or support worker to help or represent them when making a complaint

- their right to access interpreter services if required
- how Unison safeguards the privacy and confidentiality of complainants
- that Unison will not discriminate against any person because they have made a complaint

This information must be:

- included with any initial information given to prospective renters
- included in tenancy information packs given to new renters
- available on Unison’s website
- available at any of Unison’s offices
- given to complainants after they have made a complaint
- if reasonably practicable, available in the renter’s or prospective renter’s preferred language

Providing Assistance

Unison will provide reasonable assistance to renters and prospective renters who want to:

- make a complaint about Unison’s services, or to
- ask for a review of a decision made by Unison about a complaint

Complaint Handling Performance Standards

Unison’s complaint handling performance standards are:

Acknowledgement to complainant	1 business day
Written response to complainant	Within 10 business days
Follow-up response to complainant	Within 5 business days of receipt of complainant’s responses
Final resolution and/or completion of process	Within 30 days

Cooperation with The Housing Registrar

Unison will, on request, promptly give the Housing Registrar’s office a copy of its complaints register.

Unison will comply with any directions of the Housing Registrar concerning a complaint or future complaints.

Requests for Reviews of Unison Complaints Decisions

Unison has established procedures for reviewing complaints decisions made by Unison.

3.4 Complaints to Regulators and Public Agencies

Information to be Made Available

Unison will provide information to renters and other people making a complaint about how to contact the regulators and other external agencies listed below. This information will be included on the Unison web site and in closure letters for complaints made directly to Unison.

The Housing Registrar

Consumer Affairs Victoria

The Victorian Ombudsman

The Victorian Equal Opportunities and Human Rights Commission

Renters and other people may choose to make a complaint directly to a regulator or other external agency rather than to Unison, or may ask for a complaint decision made by Unison to be reviewed by one or more of these external bodies.

Cooperation with Other Regulators and Public Agencies

Unison will cooperate with all regulators and public agencies investigating complaints about Unison or a decision made by Unison.

Performance Standards

Unison's complaint handling performance standards when dealing with external regulators or public agencies are:

Acknowledgement	1 business day
Initial written response to inquiries	Within 10 business days
Further responses to additional inquiries	Within 5 business days

3.5 Feedback

Unison will:

- encourage feedback from renters and prospective renters
- provide information to renters and prospective renters about how feedback can be given and the use which Unison makes of feedback received
- develop procedures to ensure that feedback is acknowledged and analysed.

3.6 Privacy & Confidentiality

Unison will treat all personal information collected through complaints and feedback in accordance with its Information Privacy Policy.