

# 04.19 HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS SERVICE RESPONDING TO REPORTS OF HARRASMENT (RACIAL & SEXUAL) POLICY

## SCOPE

RQ Property Portfolio & Tenants

## POLICY

RQ aims to ensure that all tenants have the right to live in a safe and peaceful environment, free from racial harassment. RQ values diversity and equity and takes any reports or complaints of racial harassment very seriously and will endeavour to deal with any complaints or reports of such in timely and firm manner.

## PURPOSE

To provide guidelines of how RQ responds to reports or complaints regarding racial and/or sexual harassment.

## DEFINITION/S

RQ	Roseberry Qld
General Manager	Also refers to Acting General Manager
Workforce	Refers to all individuals providing service on behalf of RQ, such as Staff, Volunteers, Independent Clinicians, Consortium.
Staff	Refers to paid staff, graduates and student placements.
RTA	Residential Tenancies Authority
QCAT	Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal
LTCH	Long Term Community Housing
CMSU	Community Managed Studio Units
EEH	Employment and Education Housing

## PROCEDURES

### 04.19.01 Racial and Sexual Harassment

1. RQ will respond to reports / complaints of harassment of tenants, including racial or sexual harassment.
2. Investigating the report / complaint
  - a) The RQ Housing Officer shall inform the Manager of RQ Housing and Homelessness Service immediately the report/complaint is received.
  - b) The RQ Housing Officer will immediately notify the complainant that an investigation will be carried out.
  - c) The RQ Housing Officer or Manager of RQ Housing and Homelessness Service, within 2 days of receiving the complaint/report, will talk individually with:
    - the complainant – to describe the incident, present witnesses or other evidence and are encouraged to put the complaint in writing
    - the person accused of the harassment (where possible) – to gain their perspective of the incident and to reiterate that RQ will not tolerate any form of racial harassment
    - any witnesses to the event.
  - d) The person who complained will never be asked to work out the problem directly with the accused person/s unless specific assistance is provided (mediators, counsellors etc) and they make a choice to do so.

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### 04.19.02 Refer to Relevant Authorities

1. The RQ Housing and Homelessness Manager will discuss the complaint with the General Manager. RQ may then:
  - a) seek further advice, information and assistance to assist the complainant, or
  - b) refer the complainant to relevant and appropriate authorities to assist them with legal remedies/action to protect and support the victim/s, for example the police.
2. Referrals are made only with the written consent of the complainant / victim.
3. The organisation will support and assist the complainant / victim by providing information on their rights and how to access help.

### 04.19.03 Acting upon the complaint / report

1. The Housing Officer / General Manager will be guided by the outcomes of the referral to relevant authorities and act upon the complaint / report of harassment within reasonable timeframes by:
  - a) Relocating / transferring the tenant to other suitable accommodation within the organisation's portfolio
  - b) Assisting with relocation to other areas by liaising / referring / providing references to other housing organisations
  - c) Continued monitoring / recording of any further incidents that might occur
  - d) Ensure that the process and outcomes are documented, including the Complaints Register.

### 04.19.04 Actions taken for the Complainant

1. If a complaint is made, the RQ Housing Officer and the RQ Manager of Housing and Homelessness Service will need to know all the details. RQ has a duty to be fair to everyone involved and needs as much information as possible.
2. RQ will encourage the complainant to be prepared to give the following information:
  - a) The names of everyone who might have seen or heard about the offensive conduct
  - b) The names of anyone the complainant is aware of who may have had a similar experience with the alleged harasser
  - c) A chronology -- when and where each incident occurred (if it has occurred more than once)
  - d) The reasons the incident was not reported earlier (if there has been any delay at all); and
  - e) Their thoughts on what RQ can do to correct the problem and maintain a harassment-free environment.

### 04.19.05 Record Keeping

1. RQ Housing Services will ensure that file notes are accurately maintained of the complaint, action taken and outcomes.
2. This information will also be recorded in the RQ Housing Services Complaint Register.

## ACCOUNTABILITY

RQ General Manager, Staff, Tenants

## EVALUATION METHOD

Review of RQ policies as per [01.10 Policy and Procedure Development and Review Policy](#).  
[02.23 Quality Evaluation & Improvement Policy](#)

Tenant Surveys

Complaints and appeals register

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## LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

[Racial Discrimination Act 1975](#)

## RELATED DOCUMENTS

[03.04 Privacy and Confidentiality of Information Policy](#)

[04.11 Housing and Homelessness Service Referral Policy](#)

[04.13 Housing and Homelessness Service Ending Tenancies Policy](#)

RQ Client Consent Form

RQ Tenant Information Kit

## DOCUMENT CONTROL

Category	Current document details
Document owner	RQ Board
Current author/s	Sherrie Stringer
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Timeline for review	Annually or as required
Date of next review	February 2024
Storage	Document Library/Policies/Service Delivery Housing

Review Date	Version	Summary of Changes	Approved By and Date	
24/05/2018	V1		RQ Board	05/06/2018
November 2018	V2			
16/03/2020	V3		RQ Board	27/03/2020
02/01/2023	V4	Minor updates	General Manager	13/02/2023