

Good Neighbour Behaviour Policy

1. Purpose

This policy outlines how disputes raised by neighbours of Jubilee Housing properties (JHI), including people renting neighbouring properties managed by JHI, regarding the behaviour of Jubilee Housing renters can be made to JHI. and how Jubilee Housing will respond.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all disputes about the behaviour of a person renting from JHI (or their guest or household member) while on property managed by Jubilee Housing. Complaints about the behaviour of Jubilee Housing staff or committee member are dealt with under the Complaints Policy

3. Communication

JHI. will ensure this policy is readily available to all neighbours, residents, staff and committee members. It will be issued to all new renters at the start of their tenancy and publicly available on the Jubilee Housing website.

4. Guiding Principles

JHI is committed to building respectful, positive, and constructive relationships with neighbours and, where the opportunity exists, for neighbours to learn about our work, to contribute to an improved understanding of the issues that affect our residents and community housing generally.

In applying this policy JHI will ensure:

- Allegations of antisocial behaviour are promptly responded to;
- Where tenancies are at risk, intervention will occur as early as possible to attempt to rectify any issues;
- Decision making is person-centred, and tenancies are sustained where possible;
- A collaborative approach when dealing with neighbour disputes;
- Consistent, fair, and accountable processes are followed, and renters are provided with information about processes that impact their tenancy;
- Proper consideration is given to the human rights of renters under the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic) (Charter);
- Compliance with the Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic) (RTA);
- A commitment to respond to matters that may be family violence related, that is trauma informed and promotes the wellbeing and safety of renters and their families; and
- All contractual, legal and regulatory duties are met.

4.1 Good neighbour behaviour

Most JHI renters are good neighbours, but the behaviour of some renters can make life in local communities less enjoyable and unsafe for others.

Local communities work best when neighbours:

- Respect each other's rights and privacy;
- Take responsibility for their actions and those of family or friends;
- Respect communal areas and others' rights to use these spaces;
- Are considerate and tolerant of others;
- Keep noise to a minimum, especially late at night. Further information can be found on EPA Victoria's website about [Residential noise and the law](#).

4.2 Un-neighbourly behaviour

Renters who interfere with the neighbours' rights are not good neighbours.

Examples of un-neighbourly behaviour include:

- Vandalism or destruction of others property or common areas;
- Aggressive or violent behaviour including but not limited to:
 - Acts of physical violence – hitting, kicking, punching, slapping or any act that causes physical hurt;
 - Shouting, swearing and harsh language;
 - Insults, cruel or unkind remarks intended to cause pain and distress;
 - Bullying;
 - Any act with specific intent to hurt someone or destroy something.
- Illegal activity;
- Preventing access to parking and/or blocking common driveways/areas;
- Excessive noise (see above for EPA guides);
- Failing to keep the rented property, including outdoor areas, in a reasonably clean condition.

Keeping a property reasonably clean could include such things as:

- Maintaining the garden, including lawns, garden beds and removal of clutter in the front and back yards;
- Not storing unroadworthy or unregistered vehicles on the property
- Properly disposing of rubbish which could otherwise lead to odours or risk of vermin;
- Not storing, inside or outside, excessive amounts of furniture, household goods or paper which could create a fire risk.

5. Responding to neighbourhood disputes

JHI may receive reports about renter behaviour from other renters, staff, body corporate representatives and members of the public, including neighbours who are not JHI renters.

Only where it is safe to do so, JHI will encourage neighbours to first speak with each other to try and come to a solution and to resolve the issues. This can be helpful as often people are not aware of their behaviour and the effect that they are having on their neighbours.

It's a good idea to keep a record of antisocial behaviour; write down what happened and the time it happened. This could be used as evidence if there is a need to take legal action against a neighbour causing problems for other people. Please use the [Neighbourhood disturbance Diary](#).

Disputes between neighbours may also be referred to the [Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria](#) for mediation.

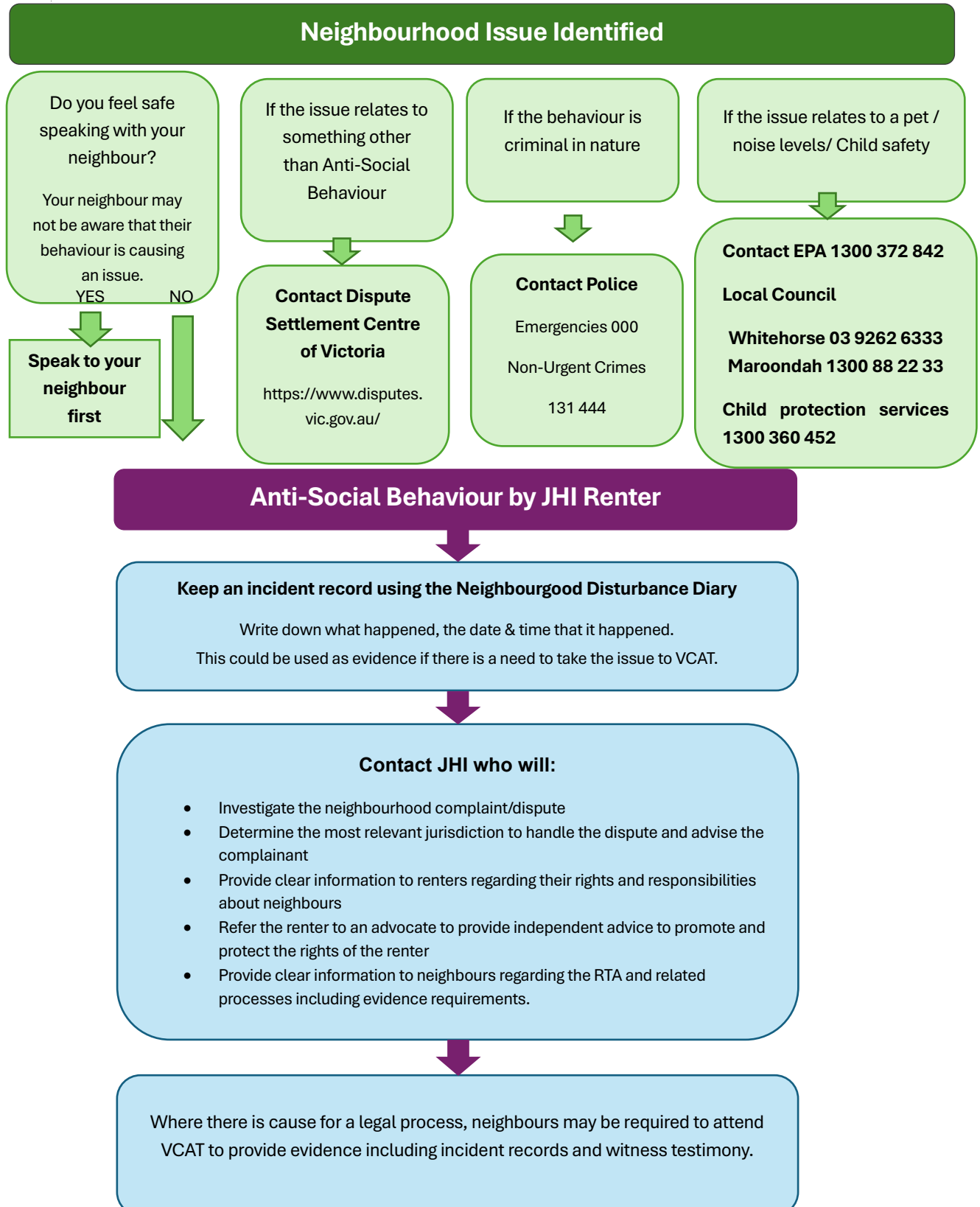
If the behaviour is criminal in nature, JHI will encourage the witness to contact the police in the first instance.

If a JHI renter is engaging in anti-social or nuisance behaviour, JHI may take appropriate action under the Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic) (RTA),

Following receipt of evidence of anti-social behaviour JHI will:

- Investigate the neighbourhood complaints/disputes;
- Determine the most relevant jurisdiction to handle the dispute and advise the complainant (e.g., noise complaints that can be dealt with by local council);
- Provide clear information to renters regarding their rights and responsibilities about neighbours;
- Refer the renter to an advocate to provide independent advice to promote and protect the rights of the renter;
- Provide clear information to neighbours regarding the RTA and related processes including evidence requirements.
- Record and monitor progress of complaints, investigations and outcomes on a Neighbourhood Complaints Register. A de-identified summary of the complaints register will be reported to the Jubilee Housing Committee of Management on a regular basis

The below flow chart outlines the process for managing neighbourhood disputes:



6. Related documents

Neighbourhood Disturbance Diary

Complaints Policy

7. Legislation and standards

This policy implements JHI's obligations under the:

- Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic);
- Housing Act 1983 (Vic);
- Residential Tenancies Regulations 2021 (Vic);
- Performance Standards for Registered Housing Agencies.

Definitions

In this policy:

EPA Victoria	Environment Protection Authority Victoria (EPA) is Victoria's environmental regulator and an independent statutory authority, operating under the Environment Protection Act 1970.
Rental agreement	Lease under the Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic), which sets out rights and duties of the renter and the rental provider.
RTA	The Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic). The principal legislation governing rental housing in Victoria.
VCAT	Victorian Civil & Administrative Tribunal. A legal institution set up to administer several Acts. For residential tenancies, the Tribunal administers the Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic).