



**VENTURE
HOUSING COMPANY**

AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR TERRITORIANS

CUSTOMER SERVICE CHARTER



Venture Housing Company Ltd
Level 2, 66 Smith Street, Darwin NT 0800
GPO Box 3204, Darwin NT 0801
Office: (08) 8981 9804
Mon – Fri 9am – 4pm
W: www.venturehousing.org.au
ABN: 19 154 969 963

CUSTOMER SERVICE CHARTER

This Customer Service Charter outlines our service standards to our customers including:

- Tenants
- Applicants
- People who are enquiring about our services

This Charter outlines what you can expect from Venture Housing Company Limited (Venture) and what to do if you are unhappy with the service you receive.

It also informs you of your responsibilities as a Venture Tenant.

ABOUT VENTURE

Venture Housing Company Limited (Venture) is a not-for-profit organisation that provides affordable housing options for Territorians.

Venture focuses on providing and managing secure, affordable housing in the Northern Territory for people on a low to moderate income who are struggling to find a home but may not qualify for public housing. There is a strong emphasis on targeting key workers vital to the Territory's economy, such as those in the retail, hospitality and trade sectors.

Venture also provides and manages housing for seniors and is working towards innovative solutions to the provision of housing for disadvantaged groups in the community. To achieve this, Venture works with the Northern Territory Government, the private sector and other non-government organisations through partnerships to deliver housing projects.

VENTURE'S VALUES

- Inclusiveness, choice and greater equity for our clients.
- Customers and staff being central to all things.
- Innovation in our thinking and actions.
- Collaboration and partnerships.
- Transparency, honesty and trust in all our dealings.
- Application of business-like disciplines and accountability alongside strict standards of Governance.

In adhering to these Values, Venture is committed to:

- Ensuring equitable access to all interested people seeking affordable housing.
- Ensuring individual's rights will not be discriminated against on the grounds of ethnicity, religion, gender, marital status, physical or intellectual disabilities and sexual preference in accordance with the anti-discrimination legislation.
- Ensuring full compliance with privacy legislation.
- Providing secure, affordable, appropriate and safe housing to tenants.
- Conducting regular reviews of policies and procedures, organisational structure and management information systems to ensure quality service provision.
- Ensuring policies and procedures are transparent and understood by applicants and tenants.

OUR QUALITY SERVICE COMMITMENT TO YOU IS THAT WE WILL:

Venture is committed to creating and developing long-term supportive relationships with our tenants. At all times, you can expect to be treated in a manner consistent with our values and we commit to always communicating in a professional manner. To this end, we undertake that we will:

- Provide you with friendly and timely service
- Provide accurate details of who to contact and how to contact us
- Keeping you informed of the progress of any enquiry
- Provide details of our office location and opening hours
- Ensure that our website is easy for you to navigate
- Show, at all times, understanding and compassion in assisting to resolve your needs
- Ensure that the information we provide you is accurate and in plain English
- Respect and protect the privacy of your personal information
- Listen to you so we can address your request promptly
- Refer you on to other agencies if we are unable to help you directly
- Correct mistakes quickly with integrity and transparency
- Clearly advising on how you can complain or appeal a decision
- Use your feedback to improve our services

YOUR COMMITMENT TO VENTURE IS:

As a tenant, we ask you to:

- Treat our employees respectfully and with courtesy
- Provide us with complete, accurate and timely information, openly and honestly
- Read or have read to you, any information that we send or give to you
- Reply to our requests by the due date
- Keep us informed if your personal circumstances, household or income change
- Inform us of any issues promptly and work with us to resolve them
- Be respectful and courteous to staff, contractors and your neighbours
- Let us know if you need further information, support or assistance
- Keep all your responsibilities outlined in your Residential Tenancy Agreement, such as paying your rent and keeping your home in good condition
- Grant us access to your home should we need to complete inspection, home visits or repair work
- Contact us and negotiating a payment plan should you be facing any difficulties paying your rent
- Provide us with feedback about the quality of our services

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES ARE:

As a tenant, you have the responsibility to:

- Check your Property Condition Report to ensure it is correct and sign, date and return it to us within five (5) business days
- Pay your rent on time and fourteen (14) days in advance
- Pay your water usage bills that are sent to you if stipulated in your lease
- Keep to any agreement to pay off any money owing to Venture

- Submit your Rent Review by the due date
- Keep your property in a clean and safe manner at all times
- Ask permission for any current or future pets
- Advise us within fourteen (14) days if your circumstances change, including income and household members
- Report any maintenance issue as soon as you know that there is a problem or concern
- Contact us if your property's smoke detector is not working
- Provide fourteen (14) days' notice if vacating the property and leave it in the condition agreed to in the Property Condition Report minus fair wear and tear

OUR STANDARDS FOR RESPONSE TIME TO OUR TENANTS:

Please note:

These timeframes are for initial responses and do not indicate the time take for a situation to be resolved:

RESPONDING TO:	RESPONSE TIME:						
Telephone calls	<p>Office Hours: Monday – Friday 9:00am – 4:00pm</p> <p>We aim to answer your telephone enquiries at the first point of contact.</p> <p>Please note that some of our staff work part-time and others work mainly out of the office (e.g. undertaking property inspections and showing), so when it is not possible for them to take the call, we will give you the opportunity to leave a message or transfer the call to someone else who can help you.</p> <p>We aim to respond to your message within one (1) business day.</p>						
Emails	<p>We aim to respond to your emails within one (1) business day.</p> <p>If you have not heard back from the recipient in a suitable timeframe, please contact: admin@venturehousing.org.au or telephone: (08) 8981 9804.</p>						
Letters	<p>We aim to respond to your letter within five (5) business days of receipt.</p>						
In person (with an appointment)	<p>We will be on time for appointments or advise you prior to the meeting time if there is going to be a delay.</p> <p>If we need to cancel an appointment, we will advise you by close of business the day prior, unless there are exceptional circumstances.</p>						
In person (without an appointment)	<p>We will aim to see you as soon as possible and provide you with suitable information and a response where we can. When this is not possible, we will schedule a mutually convenient appointment with you.</p>						
Maintenance	<p>Our timeframes for maintenance calls are:</p> <table> <tr> <td>Emergency Repairs:</td> <td>As soon as possible but not exceeding 24 Hours</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Urgent Repairs:</td> <td>24 to 72 Hours</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Normal Repairs:</td> <td>Within 21 days</td> </tr> </table> <p>You can lodge a non-urgent maintenance request online anytime at www.venturehousing.org.au</p> <p>Alternatively, for all maintenance issues during business hours (9.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday), please call Venture on (08) 8981 9804.</p> <p>For After Hours, <u>Emergency Repairs only</u> please call: 0417 728 615</p>	Emergency Repairs:	As soon as possible but not exceeding 24 Hours	Urgent Repairs:	24 to 72 Hours	Normal Repairs:	Within 21 days
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	<p>An emergency repair is defined as one or more of the following situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burst water service (please turn the water off at the mains) • Blocked or broken toilet system • Serious roof leak • Dangerous electrical fault (e.g. electric shocks or sparks visible) • Flooding or serious flood damage • Serious cyclone or fire damage • Failure or breakdown of the electricity, gas or water supply to the premises • Stove not working • Damage that threatens the security of the premises e.g. broken front door • No hot water • Any fault or damage that caused the premises to be unsafe or not secure <p>Please do <u>not</u> call the emergency number if the issue is not an emergency</p>
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Feedback, Compliments and Suggestions

We aim to continue improving our services and welcome your feedback to help us with this. It is important to us so that we know what we are doing right and what we need to improve. If you have any suggestions or compliments, please feel free to contact us and let us know:

Email: admin@venturehousing.org.au
 Telephone: (08) 8981 9804

From time to time, we will send you surveys to complete. Your participation in this is valuable feedback that helps us to improve.

Complaints

Venture makes decisions based on a set of policies and procedures that aim to be fair to everyone. These policies and procedures are designed to meet agreed standards of service for affordable housing and to comply with the law.

If you are not happy with our service, standards, practices or policies, you have the right to complain. For example, you might think we have done something unreasonable, unfair or have treated you badly.

In the first instance, we hope that you tell us about the problem so that we can try and sort it out. We want to offer a really good service to everyone in our community and we will listen carefully to all your suggestions and complaints.

You may also wish to talk with someone who is not directly involved in the problem. They can help you be clear about the exact nature of the problem and what you would like done about it. They can also talk to us on your behalf if they have your permission to do so.

Making a Formal Complaint or Requesting an Appeal

If you feel that we have not resolved your complaint by talking with us about it, you may lodge an appeal or make a complaint by following Venture's ***Client, Community Member & Agency Complaints (Grievance) Policy and Procedure***.

This involves putting your complaint in writing by writing us a letter or sending us an email describing what happened and why you are not satisfied. This should be sent to:

Chief Executive Officer
Venture Housing Company
GPO Box 3204
Darwin NT 0801

Or by email to:
ceo@venturehousing.org.au.

Venture will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within three (3) business days of receiving it.

When we receive a written record of your complaint, we will investigate your problem and, hopefully, find a solution. We will put our response in writing within twenty-eight (28) days of receiving your complaint and this may include:

- An apology; and/or
- An explanation of why things happened; and/or
- A description of what action we have taken to ensure you do not have that problem in the future.

We will keep a copy of your complaint and/or request for an appeal on your file. These will be kept confidential.

If you are still unhappy with the action taken, you have the right to make an application to the NT Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NTCAT). The NTCAT is available for tenants who feel the conditions of their rental agreement have been breached by Venture. Tenants who are unable to resolve such tenancy matters through negotiation or mediation can take up the matter with NTCAT. NTCAT is also the forum in which Venture may seek resolution of tenancy issues.

You can contact NTCAT on telephone: **(08) 8935 7777**

Appeals

You may not always agree with a decision we make. If you do not agree, it is important that you ask us to review our decision. It is also your right as a tenant to appeal decisions. An appeal is a request to have a specific decision reviewed.

Generally, the decisions that can be appealed are those made under Venture's Policies. The sorts of decisions that can be appealed are:

- An application for housing transfer.
- Property modifications relating to medical needs.
- Absence from a dwelling.

Internal Appeal

If you are not satisfied with the original decision made by Venture, you have the right to request that the decision be reviewed by Venture's Chief Executive Officer by sending us a letter or email requesting an appeal.

The Chief Executive Officer will review your case and the decision made. You will be advised in writing of the outcome of this appeal within twenty-eight (28) days.

External Appeal

If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the internal appeal, you may request for it to be reviewed by an independent appeal panel. You will have an opportunity to present your case to the panel if you choose. Their aim is to mediate between you and Venture to achieve an outcome that is satisfactory to both of us.

FURTHER INFORMATION

More detailed information is available in Venture's 'Tenant Handbook' and on our website:

www.venturehousing.org.au

REVIEW OF THE CHARTER

This Charter will be reviewed annually.

69 Driver Avenue

