

Access to services

Operating Hours

The general operating hours of the offices will be:

Lismore	Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday (9.00am - 4.00pm). Wednesday (9.00am to 1.00pm)
Clarence (Grafton)	Monday – Friday (9:00am – 1.00pm)
Tweed Heads	Monday, Tuesday and Thursday (9:00am – 4:00pm). Wednesday (9.00am to 12.30pm)

All NCCHC offices are closed between 12.30pm and 1.00pm. An answering machine will be operational during this period.

Where clients are unable to attend the office at these times, arrangements will be made to ensure individual clients are able to access the staff at other times.

Where staff are unable to personally attend to telephone contact from clients, an answering machine will be used to receive messages from clients.

Office accessibility

The Company's office premises will be accessible to all people including people with mobility problems such as people with disabilities or older frail people.

The office will be well located particularly in relation to its proximity to public transport.

Where it is not possible for clients to attend the office, efforts will be made by Company to meet the client at an acceptable location, including in the client's home.

Communications

The Company will ensure that all written information from the Company, including letters, newsletters, etc is clear and is written in plain English.

The written policies and procedures of the Company will be available to any clients of the Company upon request.

The policies will be made available on the website of the Company.

The Company will produce:

- A quarterly newsletter for all tenants
- A Tenant Handbook, providing concise and relevant information for tenants about their agreement with NCCH
- A series of factsheets, providing concise information to tenants and applicants about key areas of NCCH services

Written information in community languages

The Company does not have the resources to transcribe all of its publicly available information community languages.

However, where tenants have been identified with special communication needs (eg inability to read English, sight impairment or illiteracy) arrangements will be made to ensure that any information is understood.

Such arrangements may include:

- liaison with welfare/referral services;
- availability of the documentation in community languages
- engagement of interpreter services

Use of interpreters

To better improve the access of people from non-English speaking backgrounds to the Company's services, the Company will use professional interpreter services wherever appropriate and possible.

It is recognised that clients may prefer to bring their own interpreter for reasons of confidentiality and comfort and, where this is the case, this interpreter can be used. Company staff must be satisfied that the use of the interpreter selected by the client is in the best interests of the client.

The Company will not use any person under the age of 16 years as an interpreter.

Use of advocates and third parties

All clients will be welcome to bring friends, family or advocates of their choice to any interview or meeting with the Company.

Company website

The company will maintain a website that provides information to all tenants concerning:

- Relevant policies and procedures of NCCH
- Changes to any service arrangements or provisions
- Contacts for emergencies and other after-hours information
- Information concerning relevant events or forums for tenants

Client service visits

NCCH will conduct regular (generally six-monthly and not less than annual) visits to all tenancies.

INFORMATION	
Title	Access to services
Section	Housing Services
National Regulatory Code Evidence Guideline	Performance Outcome 1: Tenant and Housing Services
National Community Housing Standard	Standard 3.1 Tenant rights
Last review	31 May 2014
Next review	31 May 2016
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