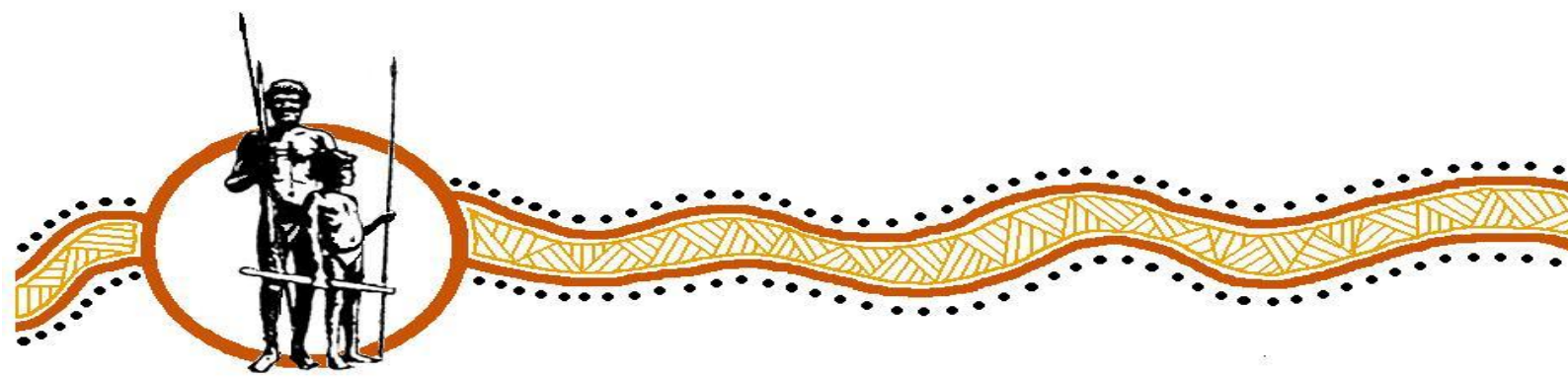


**Woomera Aboriginal Corporation**

# **WOOMERA ABORIGINAL CORPORATION**

## **HOUSING HANDBOOK**





# Woomera Aboriginal Corporation

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## Woomera Aboriginal Corporation

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## **Woomera Aboriginal Corporation**

# **WELCOME TO WOOMERA HOUSING**

### **OVERVIEW**

We are delighted to welcome you as a tenant. Woomera Aboriginal Corporation (Woomera) is committed to providing you not only with secure, sustainable housing but also a high standard of service. This handbook has been developed to provide you with general information about your tenancy with Woomera.

### **WHAT WE DO**

Woomera not only provides Social Housing, our services also include Out of Home Care, Family Preservation, Early Childhood Education and Community Connections.

Woomera's main objective is for tenants is to provide and manage secure, affordable housing for people on a low to moderate income.

### **WHO WE ARE**

Woomera is a not-for-profit Community Housing Provider that has provided community housing to those in need since 1990. We are governed by a Board of Management and our day to day operations are managed by our Manager, Angela Macfarlane. The team responsible for Housing is Eve Royle-Mathews (Housing Officer) and Meredith Nielsen (Housing Admin Officer).

### **CONTACT DETAILS**

Housing – Woomera Aboriginal Corporation

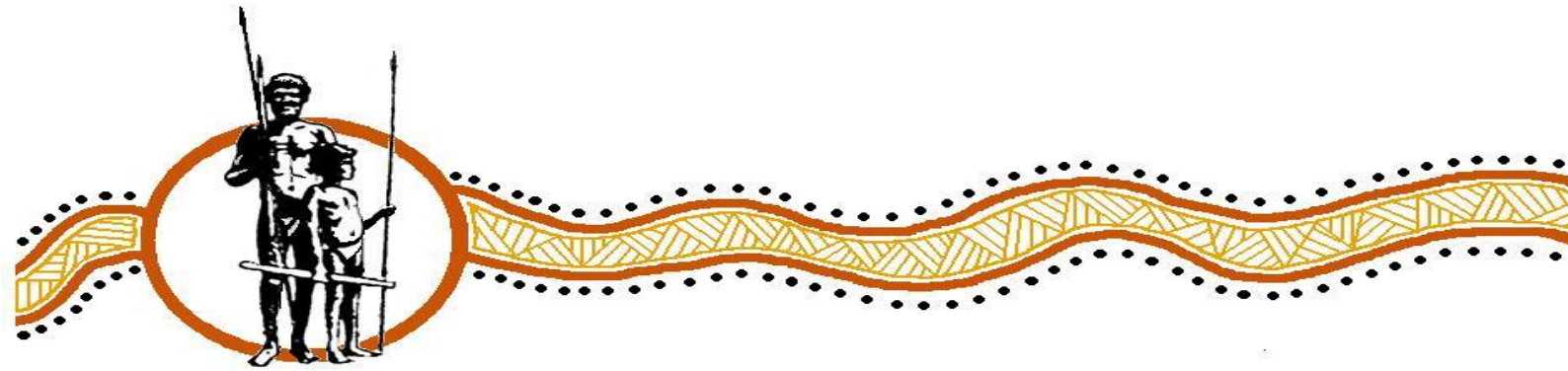
Office hours Monday – Friday 8.30am – 4.30pm

684 Daniel Street

ALBURY NSW 2640

Ph: 02 6057 740 or 0487 922 214

[housingadmin@woomera.org.au](mailto:housingadmin@woomera.org.au)



## **Woomera Aboriginal Corporation**

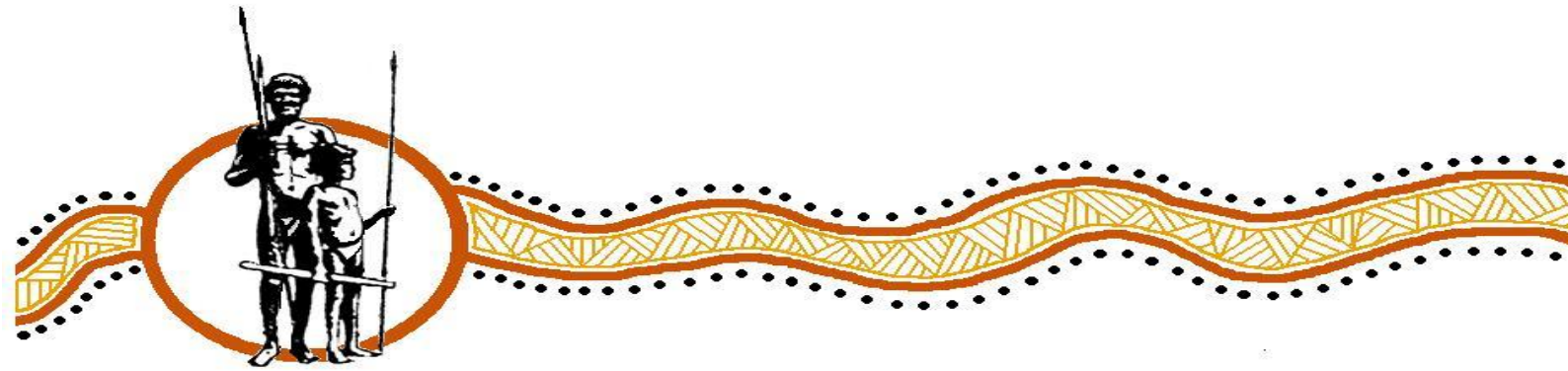
### **YOUR RIGHTS**

#### **WE RESPECT YOUR RIGHT TO**

- Be treated with respect in a fair and non-discriminatory manner
- Have safe, secure, and affordable housing
- Be fully informed of your entitlements and to have access to the information that you require
- Have privacy and confidentiality in the services you receive
- Access the personal information we collect about you
- Lodge complaints or appeals and to have them investigated and resolved fairly

#### **YOU CAN HELP US BY**

- Providing complete, accurate and timely information
- Keeping us informed if your personal circumstances change
- Being respectful and courteous to staff, contractors, and your neighbours
- Letting us know if you need support or assistance
- Managing all your responsibilities outlined in your Tenancy Agreement, such as paying your rent and any utilities
- Keeping your home in good condition
- Granting us access to your home when we need to complete inspection, home visits or repair work
- Contacting us and negotiating a payment plan should you be facing any difficulties paying your rent and/or utilities
- Providing us with feedback about the quality of our services



## Woomera Aboriginal Corporation

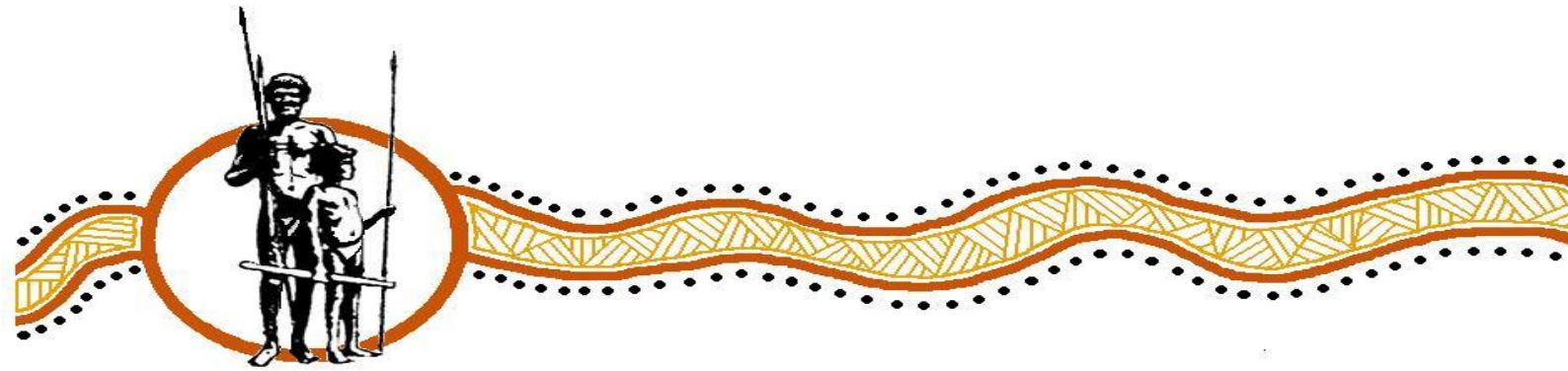
### PRIVACY and CONFIDENTIALITY

All information about your tenancy is kept in our office both as a tenant file and as a computer record. Information collected includes your application, lease, condition reports, rent reviews and all correspondence between you and the office. This information is used by your Housing team.

Your privacy is very important to us, and we will not, without your consent, give your personal information to anyone outside the organisation except in the following circumstances if we need to:

- Confirm your name, address and lease start date with essential services (electricity, gas, phone).
- Provide your phone number to contractors for repairs to be undertaken.
- Release information where this is required by law such as written requests from Centrelink, the Australian Taxation Office, or the Police.

All tenants have the right to look at their own information. If you need to do this, please contact your Housing Officer.



## Woomera Aboriginal Corporation

### RENT:

The amount you will be asked to pay Woomera each fortnight is based on your household income and calculated according to our Setting Initial Rents Policy and Procedure.

Your income is income from all sources including wages, pensions and benefits and rent assistance. For full details of how your rent is calculated please ask your Housing Officer.

Woomera undertakes six monthly income reviews for all housing tenancies to ensure that you are paying the correct rent. We will inform you of any changes and give you plenty of notice about any rent increases or decreases. If you receive a Centrelink Benefit, you may be eligible for Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA).

There are 2 ways that you can pay your rent to Woomera.

- CENTREPAY is a voluntary bill-paying service which is free for Centrelink customers. Use Centrepay to arrange regular deductions from your Centrelink payment. You can start or change a deduction at any time. The Housing team at Woomera can help you set up Centrepay.
- DIRECT DEPOSIT means that you can pay your rent directly into Woomera's Bank Account. We will give you details of Woomera's Account number etc. if you choose this option. We require you to use your tenant number when you deposit your payments  
Bank – WESTPAC  
BSB : 032 775  
Account number : 204 304  
Please put your reference tenant number on all deposits to ensure that we allocate them to your account



## Woomera Aboriginal Corporation

### CHANGES TO PEOPLE LIVING IN YOUR HOME

When you signed your tenancy agreement with Woomera, we agreed on how many people could live in your home and who those people are. However, we recognise that families change – partnerships start or break up, children are born or grow up and leave home. You must keep us informed of the changes in your household as this could affect the rent you are paying.

### CHANGES TO YOUR HOUSEHOLD INCOME

If there are any significant changes for any member of your household, it is important that you tell Woomera and provide confirmation from employers or Centrelink within 14 days of the change taking place. Examples of changes might include:

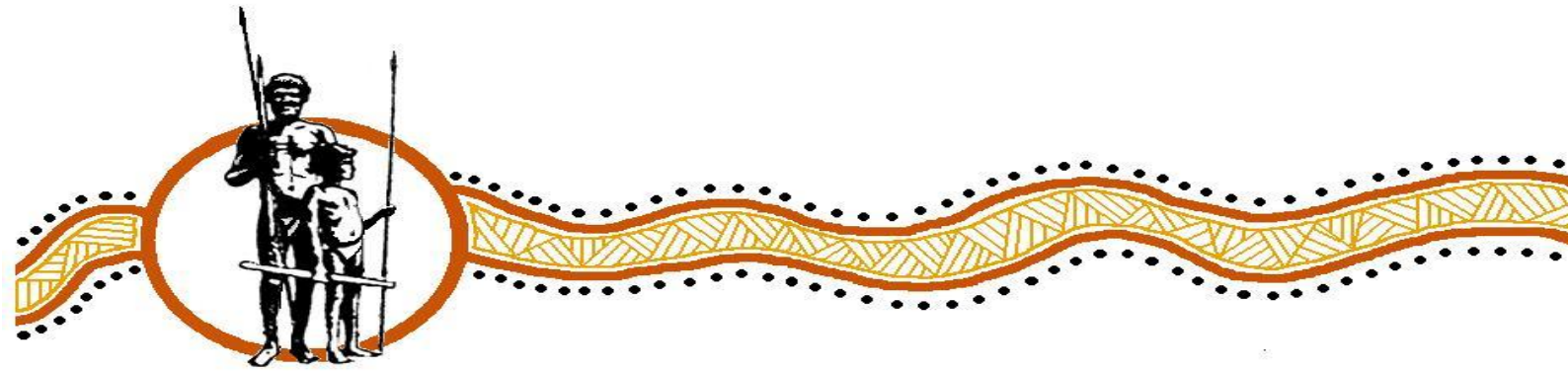
- You or someone else in your household starts or stops working.
- A change in the amount of wages you or someone in your household receives.
- A change in the type of benefit or pension you receive.
- One of your children reaches 18 years of age, or you have another child.
- An additional person over the age of 18 years of age moves into the property.

### RENT ARREARS

When you signed your Tenancy Agreement, you agreed to pay your rent when it is due and in advance. **If you have any problems paying your rent**, please ring your Housing Officer to see if we can work out a payment arrangement. It is important that you do not get behind in your rent because it may mean that:

- You can be evicted. If you get too far behind and we can take the matter to the NSW Consumer and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT). Our aim is to maintain your tenancy, so if you are having problems, please speak with your Housing Officer to come to an arrangement for payment of your arrears.
- You will not be able to get a transfer to another Woomera property if you need one.





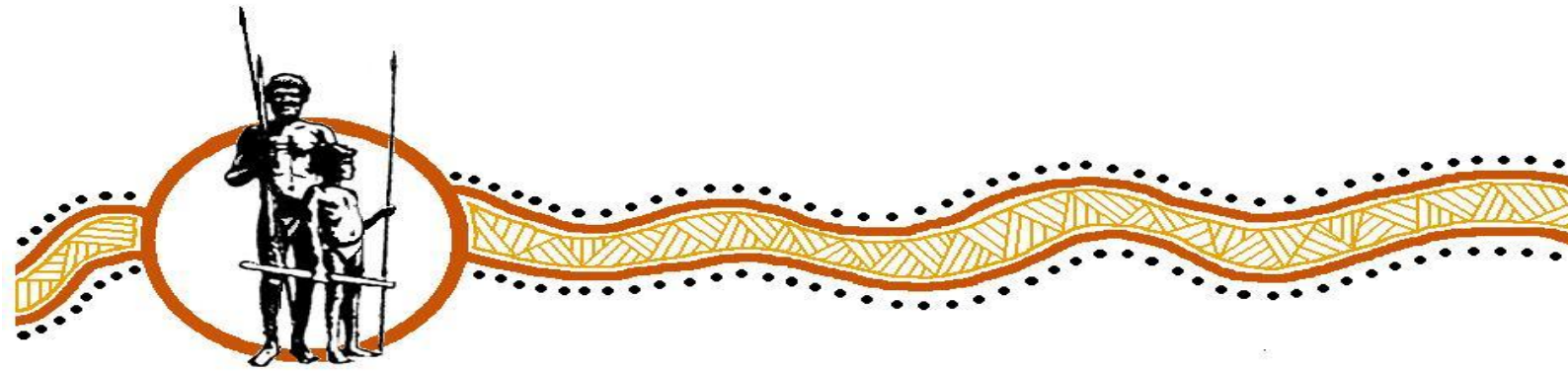
## Woomera Aboriginal Corporation

### NON-RENT DEBTS

As part of your tenancy agreement, you are responsible for:

- Paying for the water that you use.
- Any damage that you cause to the property.
- The cost of a locksmith to replace locks or to provide new keys.

These are all **non-rent debts**. It is important that you pay these debts. Woomera may go to the tribunal to terminate the tenancy if you have not paid these debts. We can arrange for you to pay an extra amount to Woomera each fortnight to cover these debts once your rent is paid in advance. Please talk to your Housing Officer about arrangements for non-rent debts.



## Woomera Aboriginal Corporation

### MOVING INTO AND LIVING IN YOUR NEW WOOMERA PROPERTY

#### CONNECTING UTILITIES

Before you move in, do not forget to have the electricity, gas and phone connected in your name. You are responsible for paying all connection and usage costs. If you are on a pension, check with the service company to see if you are eligible for a rebate.

Woomera will ensure that your water is connected but you are responsible for paying for the water you use. Water payments must be made to Woomera, not to the Council.

#### PROPERTY CONDITION REPORT

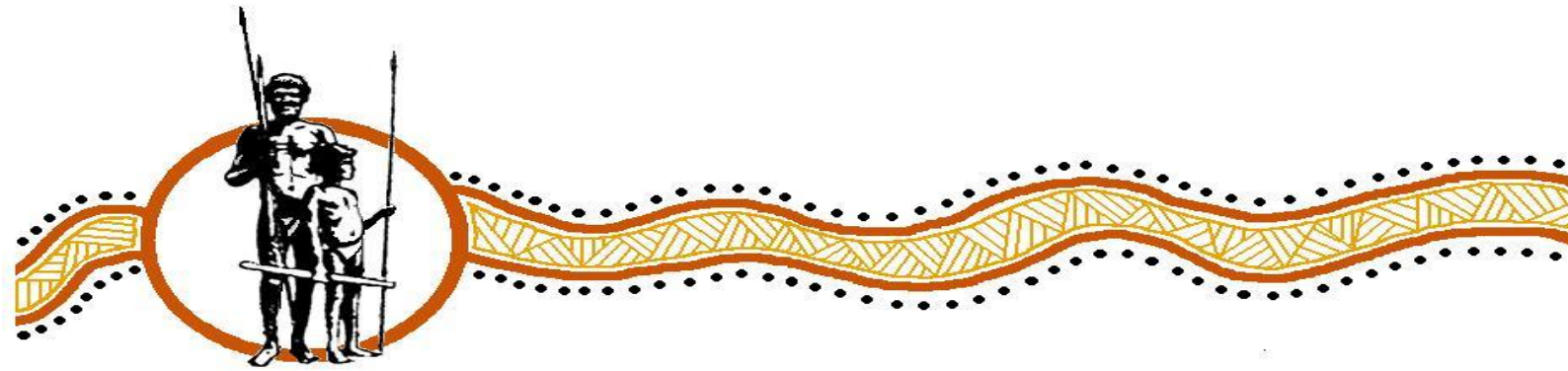
When you sign your lease, you will receive a Condition Report prepared by Woomera. This report will give details of the condition of the house before you move in. You must check to make sure that the report is correct and then **return it to us within seven days** from the start of your tenancy. Make sure that you write details of any items that may have been missed in the report. The condition report will be referred to at the end of your tenancy to determine whether your bond will be refunded.

#### PETS

No animals or pets are permitted to be kept or remain upon the premises without prior written consent of Woomera. Should it be found that an animal is kept inside the residence, Woomera has the right to withdraw from this agreement and issue a termination notice to vacate the property.

#### SMOKING

Tenants and guests are not permitted to smoke inside the property. Should it be found that the tenant is allowing anyone to smoke inside the residence, Woomera has the right to withdraw from this agreement and issue a termination notice to vacate the property.



## **Woomera Aboriginal Corporation**

### **SMOKE ALARMS**

Smoke alarms are required by law to be in every property. They save lives and are there to protect you. All Woomera properties have smoke alarms, and it is Woomera's responsibility to inspect and service the smoke alarm at least every 12 months.

You must never disconnect or damage smoke alarms. This could put you and other people in your household in danger. Talk to your Housing Officer if you have any problems with the smoke alarms.

### **UNREGISTERED CARS**

No unregistered vehicles are allowed to remain on your premises.

### **MAKING CHANGES TO YOUR HOME**

It is important that your home is kept in much the same condition it was when you moved in.

You must not make any changes to the house or garden without first getting written consent, even if you pay for it. This includes changing floor coverings, painting inside or outside, changing fittings, improving security with doors, grills or locks, attaching insect screens, removing plants or lawns or creating gardens. Gold picture hooks may be used sparingly

If there is an improvement you would like to make, please write to your Housing Officer and await written approval



## Woomera Aboriginal Corporation

### REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

During office hours please refer all repairs to Woomera Aboriginal Corporation – phone 6057 7400.

Please tell us if your repairs have not been completed within a reasonable timeframe so that we can follow-up with our contractors.

### EMERGENCY REPAIRS

For after hours emergencies you may only call the following tradespeople

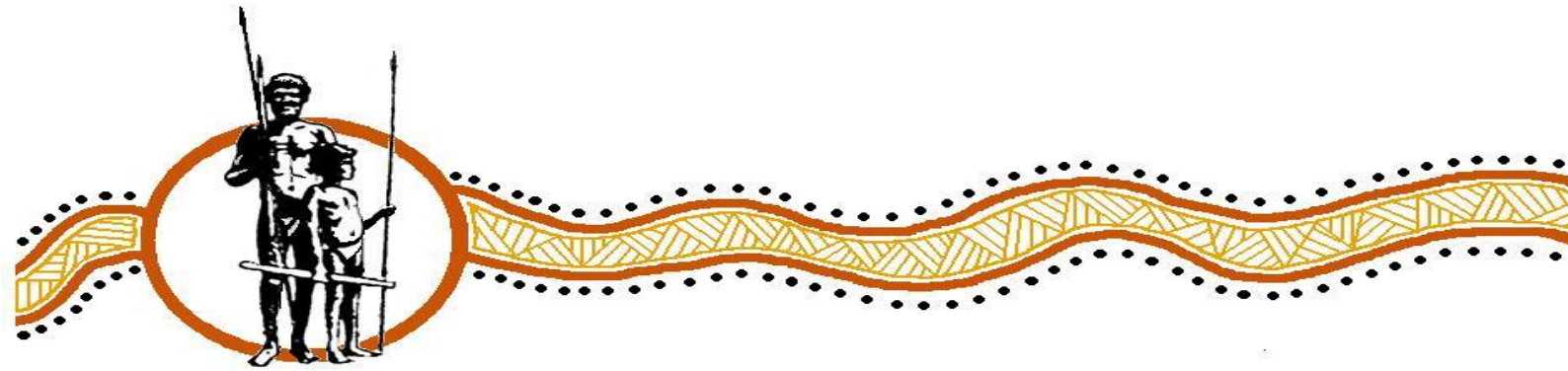
DEECEE Electrics	(02) 6021 77 99	Electrician- for all electrical faults
Wellos Plumbing & Gas	0401 283 926	Plumber – for all plumbing faults

### NEIGHBOURS

Everyone has the right to quiet and peaceful enjoyment of their home. Having good relationships with neighbours makes your home a safer and more pleasant place to live. Please think about your neighbours if you are playing music, having friends over or coming home late at night. Also be considerate about how and where you park vehicles. If you have problems with a neighbour, try sorting it out with them first. If this doesn't work, please talk to your Housing team

### PROPERTY INSPECTIONS

As part of our commitment to you we will make sure that your home is being properly maintained. Woomera are able to inspect properties up to 4 times in a 12 month period. However, this will generally occur every six months and we will give you at least seven days' notice in writing prior to the inspection date.



## **Woomera Aboriginal Corporation**

### **PROPERTY TRANSFERS**

If your circumstances change so that home is no longer suitable, we may be able to assist you in finding another more suitable home. To be accepted to go onto the transfer list:

- You must apply to Woomera in writing for a transfer to a more suitable property stating your reasons why.
- Your rent and non-rent payments must be up to date.
- There must be no Tribunal orders or serious complaints against you.

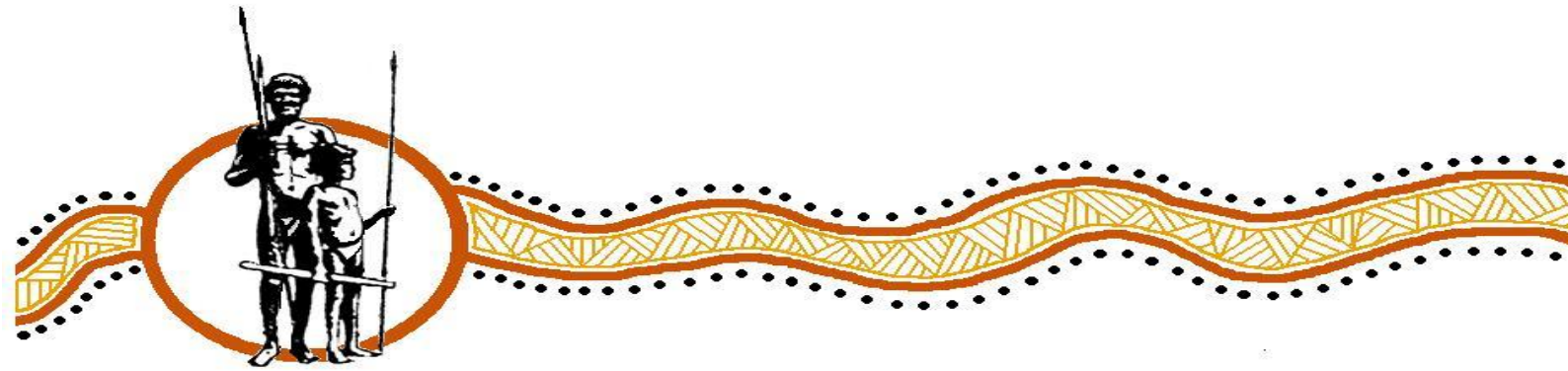
If you are accepted onto the transfer waiting list, you need to:

- Wait for a suitable property to be available. This may take some time.
- Meet the cost of moving.

### **GETTING YOUR BOND BACK**

When you leave your property, we would like to be able to return your full bond and offer the home to someone from our waiting list as soon as possible. You can help us do this by:

- Provide us with 14 days' notice, in writing before your lease expires.
- Removing all rubbish, both inside and outside.
- Cleaning the property - further guidance can be provided by your Housing Officer.
- Repairing or replacing anything you have damaged.
- The Housing Officer will arrange a final housing inspection.
- Returning the keys without delay.
- Providing us your new address and bank account details for the refund of your bond.



## **Woomera Aboriginal Corporation**

### **COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS**

#### **COMPLAINTS**

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 or unfair.

In the first instance you should tell us what the problem is so we can try and sort it out. We want to offer an excellent service to everyone in our community and we will listen carefully to all your suggestions and complaints.

You may also want to talk with someone who is not directly involved in the problem. They can help you be clear about what the problem is and what you want done about it. They can also talk to us on your behalf.

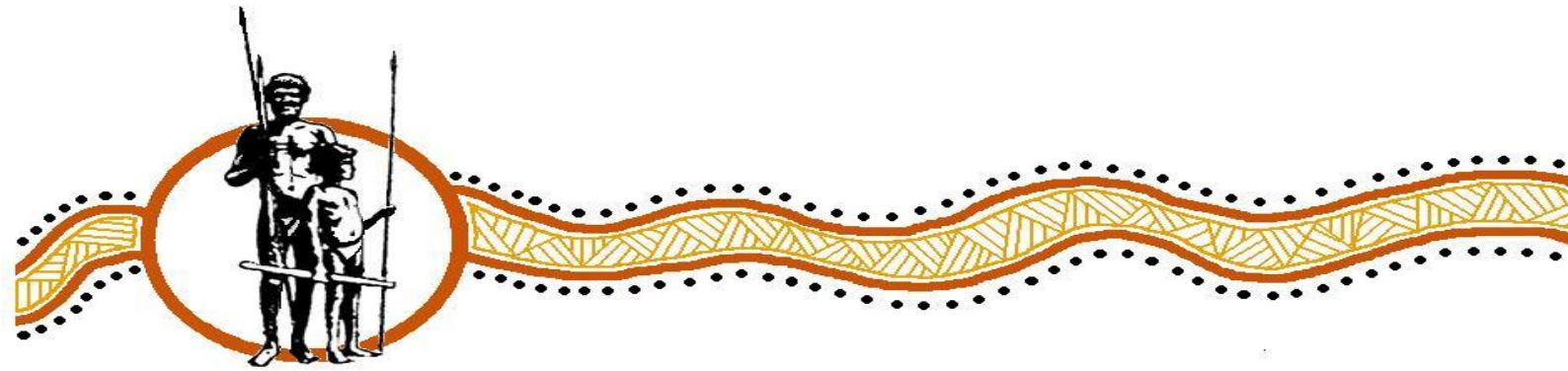
#### **MAKING A FORMAL COMPLAINT**

If you feel that we have not resolved your complaint by talking with us, then you can put your complaint in writing.

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. This may include:

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

You are also entitled to ask for someone to advocate on your behalf. For example, you could ask help from a Tenancy Advice and Advocacy Service Worker, a community worker or a friend.



## **Woomera Aboriginal Corporation**

### **APPEALS**

We make 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 community housing and to comply with the law.

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.

### **INTERNAL REVIEW AND APPEAL**

If you wish to appeal a decision, complete our appeals form which is available from the Housing Office or from the Woomera website.

The appeal will be reviewed by Woomera. After the information has been reviewed, we will send you a written response informing you of the result of your appeal. Where an appeal has been rejected, the written response will also contain a summary of why the appeal was rejected.

### **EXTERNAL APPEAL**

As well as the internal review and appeal process, tenants also have the right to access an independent review process if they are unhappy with the decision of their housing providers.

In NSW, this process is managed by the Housing Appeals Committee (HAC), which is the external body that hears appeals from community and affordable housing tenants in NSW.