

Purpose

We want residents to feel comfortable raising concerns early. Your feedback helps us understand what is working well, what needs to improve, and how we can continue to provide a safe, respectful and well-managed village.

You can raise a complaint or dispute without fear of being treated unfairly because you have spoken up.

This procedure explains:

- how to raise a complaint or village dispute;
- how we will manage and respond to the matter;
- the protections that apply to you; and
- where you can seek external advice or assistance.

This procedure is prepared in line with the *Retirement Villages Act 1986 (Vic)* and does not limit your rights under the Act or any other law.

Complaints and village disputes

Complaint

A complaint is when you tell us you are unhappy with something about the village, services, communication, decisions, actions, inaction, or how a previous concern has been handled.

Village dispute

A village dispute is a dispute that falls under the Retirement Villages Act 1986 (Vic). This may include:

- a dispute between a resident and the Association about the management or operation of the village;
- an action or failure to act that affects your use or enjoyment of the village;
- the provision of services (or failure to provide services); or
- a dispute between residents that affects safety, wellbeing, quiet enjoyment, or village harmony.

If you are unsure, raise the concern and we will help determine the appropriate process.

Contact persons for this village

You may raise a complaint or give notice of a village dispute to either of the contact persons below.

If the matter involves the primary contact person, or they are unavailable or unable to resolve the matter, you may contact the alternative contact person. [aveo.com.au]

Village details

Village name: Martha Cove Village

Village address: 101 Pickings Road, South Beach, VIC 3936

Primary contact person

Name: Leanne Avery

Position: Village Manager

Phone: 0421 208 395

Email: lavery@boltonclarke.com.au

Postal address: 101 Pickings Road, South Beach, VIC 3936

Alternative contact person

Name: David Gent

Position: Assistant Regional Operations Manager

Phone: 0473 561 993

Email: dgent@boltonclarke.com.au

Postal address: Suite3.01B, 134 Logis Boulevard, Logis Connect, Dandenong South VIC 3175

How to raise a concern

You can raise a concern in a way that suits you:

- in person;
- by phone;
- by email;
- by letter;
- through a feedback form or website (if available); or

- through a family member, advocate, representative or support person.

You may raise a village dispute verbally or in writing. You are not required to put a dispute in writing.

You may also be represented by another person at any stage.

Our process at a glance

We follow a simple process:

1. **Tell us**
Raise your concern verbally or in writing.
2. **Record**
We record the concern and the outcome you are seeking.
3. **Check risk**
We prioritise urgent safety or wellbeing risks.
4. **Acknowledge**
We confirm next steps and how the matter will be handled.
5. **Review**
We consider the information and speak with relevant people.
6. **Outcome**
We explain the outcome, next steps, or available options.

Recording and timeframes

As soon as practicable after receiving notice of a village dispute, we will:

- create a written record of the dispute; and
- provide you with a copy of that record,

unless the issue has already been resolved to your satisfaction.

If the dispute is not resolved to your satisfaction within 72 hours of being raised, we will:

- record the reasons the matter remains unresolved; and
- record what actions will or may be taken next.

Records of disputes will be retained in accordance with legal requirements.

If you request a copy of this procedure, it will be provided within 2 business days. This procedure is also available online and at the village.

Your rights

You have the right to:

- be treated fairly and respectfully;
- have your concern considered objectively;
- have a support person, advocate or representative assist you;
- ask for help to communicate your concern;
- be informed about the process and who is handling your matter;
- receive updates where the matter takes time;
- have your personal information handled confidentially; and
- seek external advice or assistance at any time.

If someone is acting on your behalf, we may need to confirm your consent or their authority before sharing information.

If your concern is about another resident

Where safe and appropriate, it is often helpful to speak respectfully with the other resident first.

If you do not feel comfortable doing this, or the issue continues or escalates, you may contact the primary or alternative contact person.

We may:

- help clarify the issue;
- remind residents of village rules or expectations;
- facilitate discussion where appropriate;
- suggest mediation or external support; or
- take action where required for safety or compliance.

We do not act as a court or tribunal and cannot force agreements between residents.

What we will not do

In managing complaints or disputes, we will not:

- require a dispute to be put in writing;
- prevent you from being represented by another person;
- discourage or deter you from raising a concern;
- treat you unfairly or cause detriment because you raised a concern; or

- use this process to override any law or contract.

Privacy and confidentiality

We only share information with people who need to know so the matter can be managed, resolved or escalated.

This may include relevant staff, committee members, advisers, regulators or external bodies, where appropriate or required by law.

Your personal information is managed in line with applicable privacy obligations.

External advice and dispute resolution

You do not have to use this internal process before seeking external advice or assistance.

Depending on the situation, you may contact:

- **Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV)** – information and guidance
- **VicAssist Retirement Villages** – conciliation service
- **Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT)** – for formal decisions
- **Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria (DSCV)** – for mediation
- **Retirement Living Code of Conduct Administrator** – for Code-related concerns
- **Advocacy services** – including Elder Rights Advocacy

Key contacts

Consumer Affairs Victoria

Phone: 1300 55 81 81

Website: www.consumer.vic.gov.au

Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT)

Website: www.vcat.vic.gov.au

Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria

Phone: 1300 372 888

Resident of Retirement Villages Victoria Inc.

Phone: (03) 9015 8402

Respectful communication

We understand that complaints and disputes can be stressful. We will treat all parties with respect and ask that everyone does the same.

Unacceptable behaviour (such as abuse, threats or harassment) may result in changes to how communication occurs, but valid concerns will still be considered.

Annual reporting

Each year, a summary of complaints and disputes will be presented at the annual meeting of residents. This will include:

- the number and types of matters raised;
- outcomes; and
- any improvements made or proposed.

No individuals will be identified.

Availability and review

This procedure is:

- available on the website; and
- available at the village on request.

It will be reviewed at least every two years, or earlier if required.