

Village Disputes Policy (Victoria)

Version	2.0	Date of last revision	18 August 2026
Approved by	Chief Operating Officer	Review date	18 August 2027

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 At Lutheran Homes Group Inc (**we, us, our, LHG**), are committed to ensuring that our residents (**you, your**) are listened to and supported during their time at our retirement villages. This includes through having procedures and policies on the proper handling of village disputes between management and other residents.
- 1.2 Our commitment and actions are a part of how we maintain the quality of services under the *Retirement Villages Act 1986* (Vic) and its associated regulations (as applicable) (**Act**).

2. Scope and Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of this Village Disputes Policy (**Policy**) is to set out for Village residents the procedure to be used in:
 - 2.1.1 Addressing management disputes; and
 - 2.1.2 Mediating resident disputes.
- 2.2 This Policy and the procedures set out within apply to all residents at LHG retirement villages in Victoria (**Village**), and relevant LHG staff, Board, contractors and volunteers (as applicable).
- 2.3 However, this Policy (whole or in part, as applicable) does not operate to override any existing contracts that are in place between a resident and LHG. In the event of an inconsistency between this Policy and the provisions of a contract between a resident and LHG, the contract will prevail.

3. Definitions

In this Policy:

3.1 **Primary Contact Person** means the following person at each LHG Victorian Village:

Village Name	Contact Name	Contact Details	
Lutheran Homes Hamilton	Karen McLean	Telephone:	0427 603 372
		Email:	kmclean@lutheranhomes.com.au
		Post:	16/78 George Street Hamilton VIC 3300
Lutheran Homes Horsham	Charlene Labram	Telephone:	0426 622 838
		Email:	clabram@lutheranhomes.com.au
		Post:	6 Trinity Drive Horsham VIC 3400
Lutheran Homes Mildura	Cindy Weller	Telephone:	03 5021 1077
		Email:	cweller@lutheranhomes.com.au
		Post:	333 Eighth Street, Mildura VIC 3500

3.2 **Alternative Contact Person** means the following person at each LHG Victorian Village:

Village Name	Contact Name	Contact Details	
Lutheran Homes Hamilton	Charlene Labram	Telephone:	0426 622 838
		Email:	clabram@lutheranhomes.com.au
		Post:	6 Trinity Drive Horsham VIC 3400
Lutheran Homes Horsham	Christine Schirmer	Telephone:	0426 622 838
		Email:	cschirmer@lutheranhomes.com.au
		Post:	6 Trinity Drive Horsham VIC 3400
Lutheran Homes Mildura	Charlene Labram	Telephone:	0426 622 838
		Email:	clabram@lutheranhomes.com.au
		Post:	6 Trinity Drive Horsham VIC 3400

Part A – Dispute Resolution

4. What Is a Village Dispute Under This Policy?

- 4.1 There are two types of disputes which can be made under this Policy: a management dispute and a resident dispute (both, a **village dispute**).
- 4.2 A management dispute is a dispute between a resident at a Village and LHG that is about:
 - 4.2.1 The control, management or administration of the Village by LHG;
 - 4.2.2 Any action or failure to act by LHG that affects residents' use or enjoyment of the Village land; or
 - 4.2.3 The provision of services or a failure to provide services by LHG to residents at the Village.
- 4.3 A resident dispute is a dispute between residents at the Village about any action or failure to act by residents that affects:
 - 4.3.1 The use and enjoyment of Village land by other residents at the Village; or
 - 4.3.2 The use of the LHG-provided services by other residents at the Village.

5. How To Make a Village Dispute Notice

- 5.1 If you wish to give notice of a village dispute to us, you can do so by contacting the Primary Contact Person.
- 5.2 Dispute notices may be made to the Primary Contact Person:
 - 5.2.1 By telephone between the hours of 10am – 3pm;
 - 5.2.2 In person: by visiting the on-site Village office between the hours of [10am – 3pm] and giving the notice verbally or in writing;
 - 5.2.3 By email; or
 - 5.2.4 By post.
- 5.3 Alternatively, if your dispute involves the Primary Contact Person or if the Primary Contact Person is unavailable or is not empowered to deal with the dispute, you may contact the Alternative Contact Person:
 - 5.3.1 By telephone between the hours of [10am – 3pm];
 - 5.3.2 In person: by visiting the on-site Village office between the hours of [10am – 3pm] and giving the notice verbally or in writing;
 - 5.3.3 By email; or

- 5.3.4 By post.
- 5.4 Dispute notices may be made anonymously and can be withdrawn at any time. Notification of a dispute is not required to be in writing.
- 5.5 You may also make a complaint to or seek advice about your dispute from the director, officer or employee at Consumer Affairs Victoria:
 - 5.5.1 By telephone: 1300 55 81 81; or
 - 5.5.2 By directing correspondence to:
Consumer Affairs Victoria
GPO Box 4567
Melbourne VIC 3001

6. **Process For Resolving a Dispute**

- 6.1 At any point during the dispute resolution process, if LHG, the Primary Contact Person or the Alternative Contact Person considers that the dispute cannot be resolved, we, the Primary Contact Person or the Alternative Contact Person (as applicable) will give you a notice which states the following:
 - 6.1.1 That the dispute cannot be resolved;
 - 6.1.2 Why LHG, the Primary Contact Person or the Alternative Contact Person considers that the dispute cannot be resolved; and
 - 6.1.3 That you may:
 - 6.1.3.1 Contact Consumer Affairs Victoria for assistance;
 - 6.1.3.2 Conciliate your dispute under the Retirement Villages Conciliation Scheme within the Act; or
 - 6.1.3.3 Seek independent legal advice.
- 6.2 As soon as practicable, and no later than 14 days after we have received notice of a village dispute, we will schedule a meeting between you and us which will explore the following:
 - 6.2.1 The nature and basis of the village dispute;
 - 6.2.2 Whether there are any other persons or residents involved who should be brought into the discussions; and
 - 6.2.3 How to resolve the village dispute.
- 6.3 Where it is agreed that other persons or residents should be involved in discussions relating to the dispute, a further meeting should be convened, preferably within the next week, to have an open discussion on how to resolve the problem.

- 6.4 During that week, any of the people who are coming to the meeting have the opportunity to set out in a document what their concerns are, and suggested solutions to the problem. Any document should be provided to all of the participants at least 24 hours before the time of the meeting.
- 6.5 We must provide a suitable meeting room for the discussion to take place.
- 6.6 Subject to paragraph 6.7, all of the people involved in the meeting must treat the matters discussed in that meeting as confidential, unless the others agree to reveal those matters.
- 6.7 LHG may only disclose information relating to the dispute:
- 6.7.1 For the purpose the information was disclosed to us;
 - 6.7.2 To the extent that the information is reasonably required for us to perform our functions or duties under the Act;
 - 6.7.3 To Consumer Affairs Victoria in order for them to carry out their functions and duties under the Act; or
 - 6.7.4 Where the disclosure is authorised, required or permitted under the Act or any other law.
- 6.8 If a satisfactory resolution to the problem is reached, details of this must be recorded, signed and dated by all of the parties as a proper record of the resolution of the dispute. The Primary Contact Person or Alternative Contact Person (as applicable) will give you a notice of this resolution and its details as soon as practicable.
- 6.9 If the meeting fails to produce a resolution to the problem, then any of the parties subject to the dispute may request a further meeting or seek the assistance of a mediator or conciliator to attempt to resolve the problem. A party may also elect to resolve the dispute via the Retirement Villages Conciliation Scheme set out under the Act.
- 6.10 The mediator or conciliator may be appointed by the agreement of all parties subject to the dispute, and failing agreement, by the President of the Australian Institute of Mediators.
- 6.11 A party subject to the dispute may withdraw their consent to mediation or conciliation at any time up until the appointment of the mediator or conciliator.
- 6.12 For the avoidance of doubt, a party may withdraw their dispute at any time.
- 6.13 Once the mediator or conciliator is appointed, all of the parties to the dispute agree to, in good faith, attempt to settle the problem through mediation or conciliation.
- 6.14 If the mediation or conciliation does not resolve the problem, then the parties may seek to resolve the dispute in accordance with the Act or other legal processes.

- 6.15 An application to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (**Tribunal**) should be the last option in the dispute resolution process and should not be made unless the parties have made reasonable attempts to resolve the problem in accordance with this Policy and such attempts fail to resolve the problem.
- 6.16 Any application must be made to the Tribunal within 4 years after the date on which the act or omission occurred, unless we or you obtain the permission of the Tribunal for an extension of time.
- 6.17 You have the right to be represented or accompanied by a person chosen by you in the resolution of a village dispute under this Policy.
- 6.18 The parties subject to the village dispute may agree to abandon any step in the dispute resolution procedure set out in this Policy and proceed to an application to the Tribunal.
- 6.19 For the avoidance of doubt, we will not take any action in resolving your village dispute:
 - 6.19.1 That is without your and any other party to the dispute's consent;
 - 6.19.2 That duplicates, is inconsistent with or purports to override any other law; or
 - 6.19.3 That duplicates, is inconsistent with or purports to override any contract between you (or any other party to the dispute) and us.

7. Record Keeping

- 7.1 As soon as practicable after we have received notice of a village dispute, the Primary Contact Person or Alternative Contact Person (as applicable) will create and maintain a written record of the dispute (**Record**). This Record will include the following where known:
 - 7.1.1 The date the Record was established;
 - 7.1.2 Your name, address and other contact details;
 - 7.1.3 Your representative's contact details (if any);
 - 7.1.4 Whether your dispute notice was given orally or in writing;
 - 7.1.5 Details of the village dispute as described by you;
 - 7.1.6 Copies of any correspondence or documentation given to the Primary Contact Person or Alternative Contact Person by you; and
 - 7.1.7 Details of any resolution sought by you.
- 7.2 We will provide you with a copy of the Record as soon as practicable after receiving it. However, we may not make a Record or provide you with a copy of the Record if we reasonably believe that the dispute has been settled to your satisfaction.

- 7.3 If a village dispute is not settled within 72 hours of notice being given of the dispute, we must create and maintain an updated Record. This Record will include the following where known:
 - 7.3.1 The reasons why the dispute is considered to not be resolved; and
 - 7.3.2 The actions that will be taken (if any).
- 7.4 We will continue to update the Record with any outcome reached and the action (if any) taken in relation to the village dispute.
- 7.5 We will retain a copy of the Record for at least 7 years after the day it is created or updated.

Part B – Other Matters

8. Amendment of Policy

This Policy may only be amended with the approval of Vanessa Grant-General Manager, Retirement Living

9. Adoption of Policy

LHG will:

- 9.1 Publish this Policy on LHG's website, which can be accessed at:
<https://lutheranhomes.com.au/>;
- 9.2 Ensure that all residents at a Village are informed of the matters contained in this Policy, and make this Policy readily available to all residents at a Village;
- 9.3 Disseminate this Policy to LHG staff and communicate any Policy amendments to LHG staff; and
- 9.4 Implement staff training on this Policy as and when necessary.

Document Revision History

Version	Date	Description of changes	Approved by
2.0	18 August 2026	Document created	Kristian Roocke (Chief Operating Officer)