

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY

QA REFERENCE	M't P&P No 45
INTRODUCED	15 th February 2021
LAST REVIEWED	03 rd August 2021
NEXT REVIEWED	2nd August 2024
RESPONSIBILITY	The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the review and currency of this policy and associated procedures.
APPROVED	Approved by the Chief Executive Officer on 03/08/2021
ENDORSED	Endorsed by the Operational Leadership Group 03/08/2021
AMENDED – RECOMMENDED	
RATIFIED	Ratified by the Board of Directors by resolution at a meeting of the Board on 7 th September 2021 This policy is valid from the date of introduction and remains in force, as amended from time to time, until such time as formally revoked by resolution at a meeting of the Board of Directors.
REFERENCES	
Related Legislative Acts and other sources of Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children Youth and Families Act 2005 • Community Services Act 1987 • Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 • Housing Act 1983 (Vic) Part VIII A – Social Housing • Residential Tenancies Act 2018 – with amendments 1/1/21 • National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013
Related Standards, Guidelines and other References	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human Services Standards • Performance Standards for Registered Housing Agencies • MASP Strategic Plan
Related MASP Policy and Procedure Documents	
Related MASP Instructions & Guidelines	
ACRONYMS/DEFINITIONS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board • CEO • OLG • Program • MASP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board of Directors • Chief Executive Officer • Operational Leadership Group comprising the CEO, CFO, Practice Leader and Managers (Programs, People and Culture, Performance and Risk, Strategy and Innovation) • Business unit identified on the organisational chart • Mallee Accommodation and Support Program

PURPOSE

Community engagement refers to the broad range of activities and strategies MASP can use in order to better connect and involve its clients and tenants in their local communities.

Community engagement provides local communities and other key stakeholders, such as service providers, philanthropic trusts, local and state government, funding bodies, as well as neighbours, with the opportunity to engage with MASP and its clients in a variety of means.

Community engagement aligns with MASP's Strategic Plan 2019-2022 goals and actions including

- "Our systems and processes enable and empower people from diverse communities".
- "Be inclusive of LGBTQI, indigenous, disabled, CALD people, and people living with a mental illness."
- "Effective collaboration with other agencies to ensure positive outcomes for clients."
- "Services are aligned with emerging government priorities; trends; and the needs of our communities"

POLICY

MASP takes a proactive approach in developing community engagement plans based on its business needs.

MASP undertakes community engagement activities:

- For improved social and economic outcomes for clients;
- For greater community understanding of the role community managed or owned housing plays as a fundamental building block in overcoming social and economic disadvantage;
- To be a key organisation in offering employment and other opportunities for local residents;
- To attract funding – whether it is a local business providing goods and other services for specific events or a large philanthropic trust for a specific activity;
- To produce more stable tenancies, which may result in fewer instances of rent arrears and fewer neighbour complaints;
- To improve the amenity of local areas, leading to increased community integration and reduced levels of vandalism; and
- To improve health and well-being thereby reducing the pressure on health services.

MASP community engagement activities will comprise:

- **Informing** – MASP will communicate via various means including newsletters, appearing regularly in local newspapers and radio interviews and advertising events through its website or on Facebook.
- **Collaborating/enabling** – MASP will undertake alone or in partnership with others activities that actively work to overcome the social exclusion of clients and tenants and build strong linkages with the local community.
- **Leading** – MASP will seek to be involved in activities designed to influence service provision or government policy, or involve research or the development of new programs.

MASP aims to work in partnership with relevant organisations to promote community housing and to contribute to socially inclusive communities.

MASP seeks to have strong collaborative relationships with other organisations in the state, regionally and locally and endeavours to build constructive respectful relationships via the provision of:

- Cooperation in service development activities
- Participation in network meetings
- Support and advocacy for other services where appropriate.

MASP involves itself in key committees and networks including:

- Community Health and Wellbeing Plan Steering Group (Mildura Rural City Council)
- Northern Mallee Local Learning & Employment Network (Training, education and employment)
- Mallee Partnership for Transitioning Aboriginal Children to ACCOs
- Mallee Hub Leadership Group, The Orange Door Mallee (Family Safety Victoria)
- Mallee Family Violence Executive (regional advocacy for family violence responses)
- Mallee Child, Youth & Family Services Alliance (regional advocacy for family services responses)
- Northern Mallee Mental Health Alliance (regional advocacy for mental health)
- headspace consortium (partner with Mildura Base Public Hospital and other service providers)
- Hands Up Mallee (regional advocacy for social services sector).

SCOPE

Community engagement is the responsibility of the MASP leadership group in the first instance, but also applies to the board of directors and MASP employees where possible.