



Working with Our Communities

Policy

Establishing Referral and Support Links

The overall responsibility for community engagement strategies is the Operations Manager.

Coast2Bay will establish effective referral and support links with relevant local, regional and state wide agencies, to assist applicants and tenants.

All staff of Coast2Bay are responsible for updating the electronic databases containing referral information and processes, agency contact information and services provided by each agency.

All staff are required to keep up to date agency contact information electronically to be accessed from each workstation and ensure that referral information provided to clients is accurate and up to date.

Coast2Bay staff will ensure that all agency directories, data bases, community resource guides and other information is collected and disseminated throughout the organisation, including web based information, printed information and agency contact names and details.

Coast2Bay will appoint representatives from the staff group to attend local, regional and state-wide meetings of housing networks, inter-agency forums, information presentations and service provider workshops.

Coast2Bay will appoint representatives from the staff team to represent the company on committees, peak bodies, forums, conferences, working parties and other gatherings related to social housing, affordable housing and related issues.

Coast2Bay will appoint representatives from the staff and Board to attend other official functions and meetings as appropriate.

Coast2Bay will ensure that information, agreements and referral protocols between support agencies and the company are kept current and accessible in order to provide correct information to clients and staff.

Coast2Bay will keep informed by subscribing to newsletters and journals (electronic and print form) of social and community housing organisations, peak bodies, and industry and professional bodies.

Providing Information

Coast2Bay will ensure that practitioners and experts from relevant service providers and agencies are invited to participate in formal and informal processes within the organisation to further good communication and information flow between the staff of the Coast2Bay and staff of other agencies.

Coast2Bay will regularly inform local and regional agencies about its services, and provide agencies with eligibility and referral information for prospective tenants and clients.

Each of the Coast2Bay program areas will plan to promote the service and keep local and regional service providers and tenant groups and the local community informed about housing issues.

Coast2Bay will provide information about relevant community support services to applicants requesting additional information and support.

Communication between agencies about a tenant or applicant or client must be with the clients consent and mindful of confidentiality and privacy policy and procedures. Coast2Bay, the tenant and support agency will work together with awareness of the tenant's rights to privacy and confidentiality.

Coast2Bay will ensure that up to date information about the company is provided to local and regional referral agencies through its publications, brochures, annual reports, website and directories. This information is provided to, for example, real estate agencies, local offices of government departments, support agencies, community development workers, local government, inter-agency networks, and courthouses.

Coast2Bay will redevelop and maintain its website so as to deliver a comprehensive array of information to all interested parties. The website will provide sections directly targeting:

- Prospective tenants and applicants
- Existing tenants
- Potential business partners, financial institutions etc
- Contractors
- Developers, builders
- Investors
- The General public and media

Coast2Bay will from time to time monitor communication and information links with other agencies to seek feedback on how well communication and referral processes are working and to continuously improve information and referral processes.

Coast2Bay staff will make themselves available from time to time to conduct agency information sessions and staff training sessions for staff of other organisations.

Coast2Bay will from time to time provide information through the local media to keep the wider public informed of its activities, to promote success and positive community outcomes.

Participation in Wider Community Issues

Coast2Bay will actively promote and develop community and affordable housing and the interests of tenants in the wider community.

Coast2Bay will seek to contribute to sustainable improvements in the well being of tenants and communities through all its activities and specifically through:

- Identifying and responding to particular needs
- Targeting specific communities of interest, culture, age cohort, gender or circumstance and providing specific information, activities, tenant participation opportunities
- Advocacy for a particular group or issue
- Referral and linkages of tenants to wider community activities, opportunities and issues
- Continuously improving housing standards and environments
- Supporting and resourcing tenant projects, community actions and initiatives and tenant participation in housing issues/forums/meetings.
- Collaborative working arrangements with tenants and tenant groups on projects and joint initiatives

Tenants will be regularly informed of wider housing issues via newsletters, through Tenant Advisory Group (TAG) and other meetings and discussions. Tenants are encouraged to participate in the company's activities and to contribute to wider community and social housing debates and policy input.

Coast2Bay will develop partnerships, joint initiatives and projects and dedicate resources, as appropriate, which contribute to improved housing opportunities, improved outcomes for tenants and improved access to affordable housing options.

Coast2Bay encourages staff to contribute to the development of knowledge in the social and community housing sector by writing articles, conducting research and collating data and information on local and wider housing issues, by offering expertise, advice and comment.

Coast2Bay encourages staff and Directors to contribute to the development of policy and policy debates in the sector through representation in peak bodies and forums, commenting on submissions and attending workshops.

Coast2Bay is able to offer efficient and effective housing management services to other agencies.

Building Community Capacity

Coast2Bay staff will seek every opportunity to form working relationships with key government departments and community agencies across the Sunshine Coast and Moreton Bay regions and elsewhere as necessary to ensure a continuous dialogue, development of projects, and discussion of issues relating to tenancies, community/social housing and affordable housing including:

- Queensland Department of Housing and Public Works Housing Services Centre
- Disability Services Queensland
- Women's Info Link
- Mental Health Services
- Queensland Health
- SAAP Services
- Sunshine Coast, Noosa and Moreton Bay Councils
- Neighbourhood and Community Centres
- Legal Services
- Centrelink
- Advocacy Groups
- TAFE and University of the Sunshine Coast
- State and Federal Members
- Churches
- Welfare Agencies
- Real Estate Agencies
- Service Clubs and groups
- Aged Services
- Court Houses
- Mediation and Dispute resolution Services
- Media
- Tenants Union
- Residential Tenancies Authority
- Peak bodies eg CHFA, QCOSS, CHPs for QLD

Coast2Bay will actively promote local social and community housing issues, needs and solutions, and will contribute to the on-going work of the Sunshine Coast and Moreton Bay Housing and Homelessness Networks, for information sharing and for the amelioration of housing stress.