



# Social Media Moderation Guide

# In this document you'll find:

Framing

Challenges

Workflows & Responses

Tools & Technical Implementations

Support

## OBJECTIVE

The primary objective of this moderation plan is to maintain a positive online presence during the digital campaign, manage negative comments effectively, and provide practical guidance on response strategies and technical implementations.

Further to this, we would encourage CHIA Vic and other housing organisations to utilise these guidelines where appropriate in their day-to-day marketing and communications activities.

# Our platforms & audiences

## Instagram

General Public

Current/Prospective Residents

## Facebook

General Public

Current/Prospective Residents

Other housing organisations

## Twitter

Local Politicians

Journalists

Politically opposed followers

## LinkedIn

Local politicians

State housing bodies

Developers

Other housing organisations

Lower instance: residents

## CURRENT CHALLENGES

Community housing organisations face significant challenges in managing their social media presence. Managing comments and messages from disgruntled tenants and those in need of housing through messages from those who are politically opposed is difficult. Adding to this, having staff available to moderate these comments as they come in poses issues. These challenges create a complex environment where misinformation, repeated negativity, and politically charged discourse can undermine the goals of organisations and hinder effective communication with audiences.

## Comments from current and prospective tenants

Disgruntled tenants often turn to social media to voice their frustrations, which can range from maintenance issues to dissatisfaction with housing policies. These negative comments, if not addressed promptly and effectively, can spread quickly and create a negative perception of community housing projects. These posts and comments can overshadow positive news and updates, making it difficult to maintain a constructive online presence.

Prospective tenants who face long waiting times or other barriers to accessing community housing may also express their dissatisfaction on social media. Their comments can paint a negative picture of the housing process and discourage others from seeking assistance. This frustration can lead to repetitive and widespread negative commentary that challenges the reputation and perceived efficiency of the housing organisations.

## Comments from those politically opposed

Political opposition presents a multifaceted challenge.

On the one hand, some individuals and groups do not want community housing projects in their neighbourhoods, often due to misconceptions or fears about property values and community safety.

On the other hand, there are advocates who believe that all social housing should be public, and they oppose private or community-driven housing initiatives.

These groups can be vocal and influential on social media, using platforms to rally support and spread their views and, often, misinformation.

## Staff availability and resourcing

Many community housing organisations struggle with limited staff resources, which makes it challenging to maintain an active and responsive presence on social media.

Without dedicated personnel to monitor and respond to comments and enquiries, important messages can go unanswered, leading to frustration among community members and potential stakeholders. This lack of responsiveness can exacerbate negative perceptions and hinder the organisation's ability to engage effectively with the public.



GUIDELINES, PROCEDURES, AND RECOMMENDED RESPONSES

# Recommended workflows and responses

## Establish clear guidelines

To maintain a positive and respectful online environment, it is crucial to set clear expectations for user behavior on the organisation's social media platforms. These guidelines should be prominently displayed and communicated to users, ensuring they understand the standards of conduct required.

[You can view CHIA Vic's guidelines here as an example.](#)

Expected behaviours may include:

- **Respectful Communication:** Users should engage in discussions respectfully, avoiding offensive language, personal attacks, and derogatory comments.
- **Constructive Feedback:** Encourage users to provide constructive feedback rather than venting frustrations.
- **Compliance with Laws:** Users must comply with all relevant laws and regulations, including those related to privacy, copyright, and harassment.
- **Reporting Violations:** Encourage users to report any content or behaviour that violates the guidelines.

## Set expectations

It's important to clarify that social media is not the appropriate channel for seeking help, obtaining housing, or reporting issues with properties. Instead, these matters should be directed to the appropriate contact points within the organisation. Key points to communicate include:

- **Help and Support:** Inform users that while social media is a valuable tool for community engagement and information sharing, it is not equipped to handle individual help requests or support inquiries. Direct users to the organisation's dedicated help and support channels, such as phone numbers or email addresses, for assistance with their housing needs.
- **Housing Applications:** Make it clear that social media cannot be used to apply for housing or check the status of housing applications. Provide information on the proper procedures and contact points for housing applications, ensuring users know where to find and submit necessary forms and documents.
- **Reporting Issues:** Users should understand that social media is not the appropriate platform for reporting maintenance issues or other problems with their properties. Encourage them to use established reporting mechanisms, such as a tenant portal, maintenance request hotline, or designated email address, to ensure their issues are addressed promptly and efficiently.
- **Response Times:** Make the intended response times to messages and comments clear to people, and if their enquiry or issue is urgent, direct them to the appropriate channels.

## Reinforce the guidelines and expectations

To reinforce these expectations, consider including the following elements:

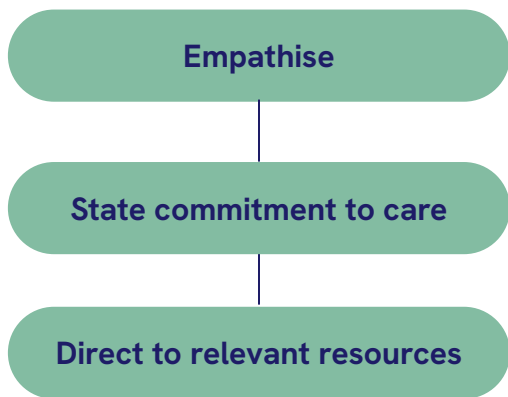
- **Pinned Posts:** Use pinned posts or featured posts on your social media profiles to highlight these guidelines prominently. This ensures that new and existing followers see the information regularly.
- **Profile Information:** Include a brief statement in the “About” section or profile information of your social media accounts, directing users to the appropriate channels for specific inquiries.
- **Automated Responses:** Implement automated responses for direct messages that guide users to the correct contact points for help, housing applications, and issue reporting. This ensures that users receive immediate guidance even outside of regular business hours.
- **Regular Reminders:** Post regular reminders about these guidelines to keep the information fresh in users' minds and reduce the likelihood of inappropriate requests being made on social media.

## Tone and brand image

While each organisation will have their own brand messaging and tone, when engaging with the your online community — whether that be renters, the general public, or opposers — it's imperative to maintain a **trustworthy and expert** tone of voice.

- **Approachable**  
Remain respectful in all communications with users, using friendly and engaging language. There are opportunities to use humour where appropriate.
- **Knowledgeable**  
When answering questions from users, always explain, not assert in plain language. Where possible, back up with evidence and cite sources.
- **Empathetic**  
When dealing with negativity, counteract with the positive. If comments require “debunking”, respond with facts, sources, and welcome a productive conversation directly.

# Response Framework - Resident Complaints



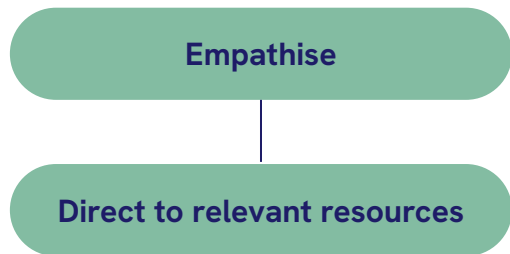
## **Comment:**

Why would we fund more CH when they can't look after the homes they've got. I've been waiting six years for you to fix my sink, it's leaking everywhere and mould and mushrooms are growing in my kitchen cupboards, all because you can't send out a plumber on time!

## **Reply:**

*Hi X, we're sorry to hear about your experience. Community Housing organisations have to meet high standards of service delivery set by the Housing Registrar. The best way to get your issue resolved is to contact your housing organisation directly.*

# Response Framework - Crisis/On Waiting List Comments



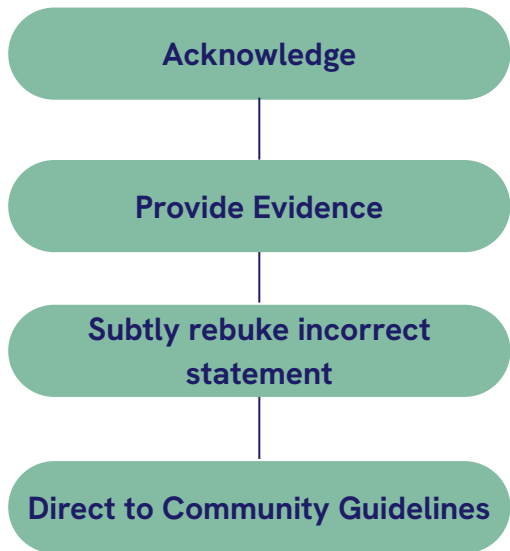
## **Comment:**

I've been living in my car for a week and every time I try and call I get put on hold.

## **Reply:**

*Hi X, we are so sorry to hear you are in this situation. We've sent you a DM with the contact information of organisations that can help you directly.*

## Response Framework - Political Opposed Comments

**Comment:**

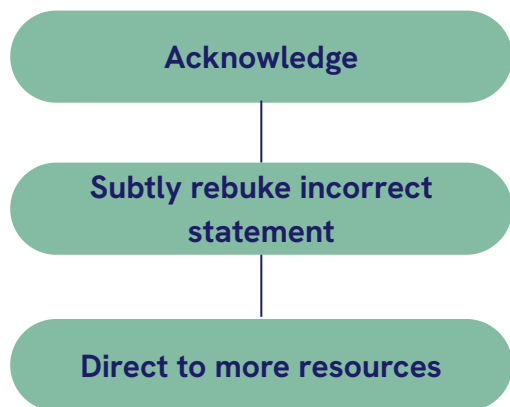
I've been working my whole life, no handouts and people just get these homes for free?? Bloody ridiculous

**Reply:**

*Hi X. Unfortunately, the shortage of affordable rental housing is driving more people into inappropriate housing situations and homelessness. Council to Homeless Persons' 'Employed & At Risk: The new face of homelessness' in Victoria report, released this April, showed a 14% statewide jump in employed people seeking specialist homelessness services' help. Community housing provides affordable homes to those who would otherwise be priced out of the market. We appreciate social media can be a valuable platform for open conversations. However, to encourage a respectful dialogue, we ask all users to adhere to our code of conduct when commenting. Check out our pinned post if you need a refresher.*



## Response Framework - Factual Inaccuracies



### **Comment:**

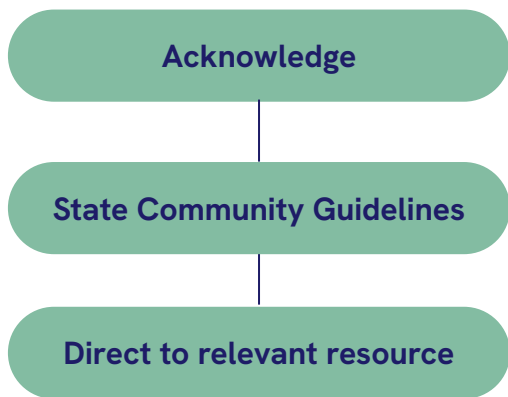
Public housing is better.

Community housing is just private companies who treat tenants badly. We need more public housing

### **Reply:**

*Hi X. Both public and community housing provide safe and secure homes to those in need, which is the ultimate goal. If you want to learn more about the important role community housing plays in developing affordable housing for all Victorians, head to [supportcommunityhousing.com](https://supportcommunityhousing.com).*

# Response Framework - Disgruntled Community



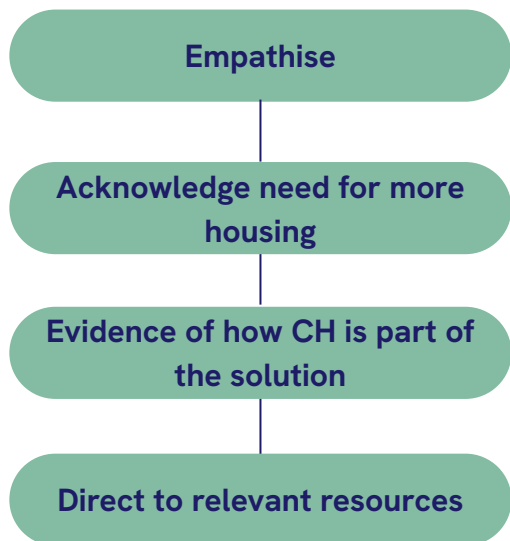
## **Comment:**

I live in X street and the people in housing next to me leave the place trashed! PHOTO

## **Reply:**

Hi X. We understand you are frustrated and appreciate social media can be a valuable platform for open conversations. However, to encourage a respectful dialogue, we ask all users to adhere to our Community Guidelines when commenting. We will be deleting/hiding this comment to protect the privacy of our residents, but we have reached out via direct message with the relevant contact information and channels for feedback.

# Response Framework - Those Waiting For Housing



## **Comment:**

I've been on the waiting list for years and no one is helping!

## **Reply:**

*Hi X, we are so sorry to hear you are in this situation. We need more affordable housing in Victoria and more community housing is part of that solution. We've sent you a DM with the contact information of organisations that can help you directly.*

# Response Framework - Support Comments

**Acknowledge and Thank**

**Direct to relevant action**

**Comment:**

We need thousands more social homes!

@friend, this is so sad! How do we help?

**Reply:**

*Hi X, Thank you for your support as we advocate for safe, secure homes for everyone. To get involved, head to [supportcommunityhousing.com](https://supportcommunityhousing.com) or our campaign page via the link in our bio.*

## Blocking or removing users

When users fail to abide by your community guidelines, you may need to take action by blocking or removing them from your social media channels.

Your community guidelines should clearly outline the expected behaviour for users interacting with your social media profiles, and what steps will be taken if these guidelines aren't followed.

Depending on the severity and frequency of the violation, users may receive a warning, have their comments removed, or be temporarily blocked from engaging with your social media channels. In cases of repeated or severe breaches, users might face permanent removal from your platforms.

It's vital that people know what behaviours are grounds to get them removed from your platforms.

TOOLS & TECHNICAL IMPLEMENTATIONS

# The tools that can help

# Comment Filters & Keyword Moderation

Comment filters and keyword moderation are essential tools to maintain a positive and constructive online environment. These tools help automatically flag and manage comments that may be inappropriate, spammy, or off-topic.

## Instagram:

- **Manual Filters:** Instagram provides manual filters to block comments containing specific words or phrases. These can be set up by going to your Profile > Settings > Privacy > Comments > Manual Filter.
- **Auto Filter:** Enable the automatic filter for offensive comments under the same section to have Instagram hide comments that it detects as offensive automatically. [Here's an instruction video.](#)

## Facebook:

- **Comment Moderation Tool:** Facebook offers a built-in comment moderation tool that allows administrators to create custom rules for filtering comments based on keywords, phrases, or user profiles. To set this up, go to your Page Settings > General > Page Moderation and enter keywords or phrases you want to filter.
- **Profanity Filter:** Enable the profanity filter under Page Settings > General > Profanity Filter to automatically hide comments that contain profane language. [Here's an instruction video.](#)

# Disallow Comments & Targeted Posting

## LinkedIn:

- **Disallow comments:** LinkedIn allows you to turn off users' ability to comment on posts. Start a new post > click on your company name > click Comment Control > Click 'no one'.
- **Targeted posting:** LinkedIn also allows you to control who sees your posts based on specific indicators. Start a new post > Click your company name > click Targeted Audience > select your settings.

[Here's an instruction video on both.](#)



# Report and Hide Replies

## Twitter/X:

Twitter/X has limited tools for a brand or organisation to manage their online community on the platform. When dealing with unruly replies to a post, Twitter/X only allows the author of a reply to delete it. However, there are a few steps you can take to limit the visibility of these comments.

- **Report Replies:** Twitter administrators can delete a reply if it is abusive or violates the content policy. Click on the three-dot menu icon on the reply > click 'Report post' > follow the prompts > Twitter will review and delete if needed.
- **Hide Replies:** If the comment does not go against the community guidelines but is against CHIA Vic's established engagement framework, the response can be "hidden". This moves the reply down to the "Hidden Replies" menu at the bottom of the post. It's important to note that anyone can open this menu and read the responses. Click on the three-dot menu icon on the reply > click 'Hide reply'

[Here's an instruction video](#)

*Some comments may be more complex and require a more nuanced response. If you need time to draft a response, hide the comment from view manually.*

## Auto-responses

Auto responses are valuable tools to maintain timely and consistent communication. These automated messages can acknowledge receipt of messages, provide initial information, or redirect users to appropriate channels for further assistance.

### **Facebook & Instagram Messages:**

- **Messages Auto-Reply:** You'll need to be logged into Meta Business Suite to do this (if you need help setting this up, please let Speckle know). Head to Inbox > Automations > Create Automation. You can then write the message you'd like people to receive when they contact you via direct message on both Instagram and Facebook.

[Here's an instructional video](#)

## Suggested wording for an Auto-response

*Thank you for reaching out to [organisation Name]! Your message is important to us. Please note that our social media inbox is not staffed 24/7, but we strive to respond within 1-2 working days.*

*For urgent inquiries, please visit our website [URL] to access our services or contact our dedicated helpline at [Phone Number].*

*If you require urgent accommodation, please reach out to [organisation] at [URL & Phone Number].*

*We uphold a code of conduct to ensure respectful and constructive communication. Please refer to our guidelines: [Link to Code of Conduct].*

*Thank you for your understanding, and we look forward to assisting you.*

SUPPORT

# What to do if you need help

If you have questions or need support with your social media moderation, please get in touch with the Speckle team. We can support you through open office sessions, or you can request an additional training session.

**Book an open office session** - [follow the link here](#)

**Contact Esther** - [esther@speckledigital.com](mailto:esther@speckledigital.com)

**Contact Olivia** - [liv@speckledigital.com](mailto:liv@speckledigital.com)