

Welcome to

Momentum Collective
Community Housing

| Tenant Handbook |

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Momentum Collective 1300 506 710

Ballina Office

4/79 Tamar Street, Ballina NSW 2478

Postal: PO Box 578, Ballina NSW 2478

Tweed Heads Office

35 Wharf Street, Tweed Heads NSW 2485

Postal: PO Box 793, Coolangatta QLD 4225

Welcome to your new home

This handbook provides you with basic information about your rights and responsibilities as a community housing tenant.

If you need more information about your new tenancy with us, please contact our friendly staff at your local Momentum Collective office. We also have a range of factsheets available that cover matters that may be helpful to you during your tenancy with Momentum Collective.

When moving into your new property you will be provided with:

- a legally binding agreement (e.g. a residential tenancy agreement)
- a Property Condition Report describing the current state of your property
- a set of keys for your new property
- the name and contact number of your Momentum Collective Tenancy Officer

These are legal documents that set out your legal rights and responsibilities between you as a tenant and Momentum Collective.

If you need assistance contact Momentum Collective on **1300 506 710**.

Rent

How your rent is calculated

Your rent is calculated on the basis of:

- 25% of gross income (15% for household members aged between 18-21 years who are not the "head tenants")
- 15% of Family Tax Benefit
- 100% of the Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA)

If your income changes, or the income of any other persons living in the property changes, you are required to notify us within 14 days so we can make the necessary adjustments to your rent. It is your responsibility to provide us this information.

We are required to use the NSW State Government's Community Housing Rent Policy for all rent assessments. This makes sure that rents are fair and affordable for all tenants. We are unable to make further adjustments to individual rent assessments where this Policy does not allow us to.

Rent payment

Rent must always be paid in advance. Momentum Collective's Community Housing Service encourages all payments to be made by Centrepay deductions through Centrelink. Your Tenancy Officer will assist you with this at the time of signing your agreement with us.

If you are having difficulties paying your rent, please advise us **immediately** to discuss your situation. If you fall behind in your rent by more than two weeks, then a Notice of Termination may be issued due to rent arrears which may result in further action through the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT).

Rent assessment

The amount of rent you are required to pay is reviewed every six months. You will be asked to supply up-to-date information about your household income so your rental subsidy can be re-assessed.

If you do not supply the information we ask you for, we will assume you do not wish to apply for a subsidised rent and your rent will be set at the market rate.

Other costs

As well as rent, you are responsible for electricity, gas, telephone and contents insurance costs.

In any type of shared housing managed by Momentum Collective, additional charges can be levied to pay for common area cleaning and garden maintenance. These arrangements will be discussed with residents of the shared house prior to signing their agreement. This is in addition to charging for common area water and power.

Water usage

You will also need to pay for your water usage. This is assessed according to the *Residential Tenancies Act 2010*, Clause 139 as a social housing provider.

Your rental bond

Momentum Collective's Community Housing Service requires new tenants to pay a bond at the time they sign their agreement with us. The rental bond is four weeks rent and is sent to **NSW Fair Trading**. If you are unable to pay the full amount of bond, then an arrangement can be made to pay the remaining amount over an agreed period.

At the end of your tenancy, Momentum Collective may claim any of the bond if there is rent owing, cleaning charges or damage to the property requiring repairs.

Property Condition Report

The *Property Condition Report* is for your protection and is part of the tenancy agreement and should be completed carefully and returned within 7 days after the signing of the agreement.

You are responsible for taking care of the property and leaving it in a similar condition to when you rented it. You will be held responsible for any damage, cleaning or lawn mowing costs at the end of the tenancy, if you cannot prove it was like that when you moved in.

Your feedback

Momentum Collective encourages tenants to provide feedback about any area of our service. We try to maintain a very high standard of service to you and we appreciate our tenants letting us know if we have not met that standard.

Please contact our local office and speak to one of our team members if you have an idea for further improvement.

We also conduct regular tenant satisfaction surveys and our staff will be visiting you in your home regularly to complete property inspections. These are also good opportunities provide feedback

We will keep you up-to-date with any changes at Momentum, of other important news through our quarterly newsletter.

Your privacy

Your privacy is important to us. Momentum Collective staff and management are not allowed to discuss your tenancy with anyone outside of the office, unless they have your permission. Sometimes we can be required by law to provide information about our tenants e.g. Centrelink, Police or Courts.

If you want us to discuss your tenancy with someone else then you need to be present during the discussion; or you need to complete and sign a *Disclosure Consent Form* (available from our offices) that gives approval for Momentum Collective to do this.

Complaints, reviews and appeals

You have every right to request a review of a decision that you believe is unfair or to make a complaint.

Most issues can be resolved quickly by contacting one of our housing team members to discuss your concern directly. However, we realise that this is not always appropriate and so Momentum Collective has a range of ways in place for you to have your concern dealt with more formally.

For a copy of our Complaints and Appeal factsheet, contact our office or visit our website at www.mymomentum.org.au

If you have made a complaint or lodged an appeal with Momentum and the matter was not resolved by us to your satisfaction, the following information may assist you.

Appeal about a matter that is covered by the Residential Tenancies Act (e.g. repairs, termination action, utility charges, tenancy agreement matters, etc.)	NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal Telephone: 1300 006 228
Appeal about a decision we made that is not covered by the Residential Tenancies Act (e.g. rent assessment, transfer request, etc.)	NSW Housing Appeals Committee Telephone: 1800 629 794
Complaint about services provided	Registrar of Community Housing Locked Bag 4001, Ashfield BC 1800 Telephone: 1800 330 940
Allegation of fraud, corruption or serious misconduct	Registrar of Community Housing Contact details as above
Complaint about NSW community housing policy (e.g. the NSW Community Housing Rent Policy)	Services Australia Community & Private Market Housing Directorate Locked Bag 4001, Ashfield BC 1800 Telephone: (02) 8753 8280
Complaint about matters concerning your privacy	Office of the Australian Information Commissioner Telephone: 1300 363 992

Reporting repairs and maintenance

Momentum Collective is your landlord and you are responsible for reporting all repairs at your property. If you are responsible for damage to the premises Momentum Collective will recover the cost of the repairs from you. You should make all requests for repairs and general maintenance directly to our office using the phone numbers listed on the agreement.

There are different types of repairs which have different response times. These include:

Emergency repairs

Emergency repairs are required for all faults which present a serious and immediate threat to your health, safety or security or to the property. Prompt action is required and Momentum aims to have these works completed within 4 hours.

Urgent repairs

This includes situation where there is major disruption to you and where there may also be a possible risk to you or others. This includes:

- electrical outages
- blocked drain outside which could cause internal damage
- burst water main
- a blocked toilet where there are more than one in the residence
- a major roof leak
- broken glass
- failure of all cooking and hot water systems

Routine repairs

Routine repairs refers to all other maintenance repair work and we aim to complete these works within 21 days.

Asbestos in Momentum Collective properties

Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral fibre which has been used extensively in the past in construction materials. The most common type of asbestos building material is fibro sheeting used in internal wall cladding, eaves and wet areas in bathrooms and laundries.

Asbestos can be a health risk if the building material is cut, sanded, drilled, nailed or damaged in any other way as it allows for the release of asbestos fibres. This material is considered safe if left undisturbed and in good condition.

Tenants who live in properties where asbestos is present will be provided with our Asbestos factsheet.

If you need any information about asbestos, please contact our office.



Considerations for tenants

Routine property inspections

As a landlord, Momentum Collective may conduct up to four routine inspections in a 12-month period. This is an opportunity to report any maintenance issues and update your details. Momentum Collective will provide written notice when these inspections are to be undertaken.

Tenant charges

Where Momentum Collective has organised maintenance that is not considered to be the result of fair wear and tear, or where the property has been damaged maliciously by the tenant, the costs of the damage will be charged to the tenant.

Every effort will be made to notify the tenant of the likelihood of a claim by Momentum Collective *prior* to the work orders being issued, providing an opportunity for the tenant to have the work rectified.

Removal of large items	\$55.00 per item
Removal loads of rubbish	\$145.00 per 2.5 square cubic metres
Holes in walls - Small	\$30.00
Holes in walls - Medium	\$50.00
Holes in walls - Large	\$70.00
Replace front door	\$500.00
Replace internal doors	\$350.00
Replace fly screens	\$75.00
Cleaning fees - internal	\$250.00
Cleaning fees - external	\$150.00
Steam clean carpets	From \$165.00
Graffiti removal	\$45.00 per square metre

These are approximate costs only and are provided as a guide for our tenants. Actual costs for these works may be greater than the estimates provided in this table.

Break-ins

If your property has been broken into and damage has been caused, then you need to notify the Police immediately and contact one of our Housing team members. When you make a report to our office of any damage caused during a break-in, you will be asked for a *Police Report Number or Event Number*.

Absence from the property

You will require written approval from us if you planning to be away from your home for more than 4 weeks.

Visitors and relatives

Visitors and relatives are welcome to stay with you from time to time, however you are required to advise Momentum Collective if they are staying for more than 2 weeks. Momentum Collective will consider a visitor staying longer than 14 days as an additional occupant. Momentum Collective must approve any additional occupants and your Tenancy Officer must be contacted.

Pets

Momentum Collective has a **NO PET** policy with the exception of those covered by the Companion Animal Act. In certain properties, special consideration may be given in situations where this policy may cause undue hardship or where the pet is an “assistive animal”

Ending your tenancy

The law requires that you provide written notice *prior* to moving out of your property. You will need to pay rent until you return the keys. A joint inspection between you and your Tenancy Officer is conducted when vacating to ensure the property is left in a clean and undamaged condition.

Domestic and family violence

There are options available to improve your safety if you feel you need to leave in order to escape violence in the home. The law also provides you with certain protections if you experience domestic and family violence.

Ending a tenancy

If you or a dependent child are in circumstances of domestic violence, you can end your tenancy immediately without being penalised. You will need to give a domestic violence termination notice to Momentum.

Staying in the property (agreements)

Below are some steps you can take to improve your safety if you decide to stay in the rented property.

- **Removing a perpetrator of domestic violence.** If a final Apprehended Violence Order (AVO) is granted that excludes a co-tenant (perpetrator) from accessing the property, then the perpetrator's co-tenancy will automatically end. The tenancy simply transfers to any remaining co-tenant(s) named on the agreement. A remaining occupant who is not named on the agreement can ask the landlord or agent to have the agreement put in their name.
- **Changing locks or other security devices.** Changing the locks or other security devices immediately can increase the safety of a tenant from domestic violence.

Property damage

If you are experiencing domestic violence, you cannot be held not responsible for any damage caused by a domestic violence perpetrator (whether or not the perpetrator is a tenant) during a domestic violence offence.

A co-tenant who is not the domestic violence perpetrator does not have to pay for this type of damage.

Getting assistance

If you are experiencing domestic and family violence, you can get help. We have included the contact details for some services in the final page of this Handbook.

We also encourage you to speak to one of Housing team members about how we can help you further.

Complaints from neighbours

Tenants have a right to the peaceful enjoyment of their home and an obligation to abide by the conditions of their tenancy agreement. They have a right to complain about individuals who deny them this right.

In order for Momentum Collective to best respond to complaints about your neighbours, please keep written evidence of all incidents over a period of time. Incident report forms are available from our office.

The information you gather will only be used if we pursue this matter further and only with your permission at the time.

Nuisance, annoyance, anti-social behaviour, or illegal activity which disturbs your neighbours will not be tolerated.

How will Momentum Collective respond to a complaint about a neighbour?

Firstly, we will check that you have notified the police. *This must always be your first point of call with all Noise, Nuisance, Anti-Social Behaviour or Illegal Activity* complaints. Momentum Collective will address complaints of this nature by:

Step 1:

- Obtaining incident report/s from neighbours, with Police Event Numbers if available.
Note: Momentum Collective has a Record of Understanding (ROU) with NSW Police, permitting us to make enquiries about activities at our properties.
- Investigate reported incident/s by contacting other neighbours and/or police.
- Arrange a meeting between the tenant, Momentum Collective Tenancy Officer and any support agency (where relevant), if that will be useful to help avoid further complaints.
- Write to the tenant/s who we have received the complaints about, detailing the nature of the complaint and the breach. The tenant/s then has the opportunity to discuss the matter with Momentum Collective within 14 days of receiving this letter.

Step 2:

If no further complaints are received, the matter will be closed.

If further complaints are received, Momentum Collective can issue a *Notice of Termination* for breach of the *Residential Tenancy Agreement* and further action may be taken through the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT).

What happens if the matter goes to the NCAT?

The action Momentum Collective takes through the NCAT will depend on the nature and the severity of the complaint.

If the complaints are not of a severe nature, Momentum Collective may request the NCAT to put in place a "Specific Performance Order" states the tenant/s must stop this behaviour at the first NCAT hearing. If further complaints are received, Momentum Collective will pursue the matter through the NCAT at which time we may ask for termination of the *Residential Tenancy Agreement* and vacant possession of the premises.

If the complaints were of a serious nature, Momentum Collective would take the matter to the NCAT and may ask for termination of the *Residential Tenancy Agreement* and vacant possession of the premises immediately.

For Momentum Collective to pursue *Noise, Nuisance, Anti-Social Behaviour, Illegal Activity* or other complaints action through the NCAT, it is most important that we have well documented written accounts of the incidents from eye witnesses, complainants and include police incident reports and event numbers.

Please refer to the Residential Tenancies Agreement for further information about your rights and responsibilities in relation to your neighbours.

Smoke Alarms

If there is a fire, call 000

In NSW, all home and units are required by law to have smoke alarms.

Smoke alarms help to protect your life and your property. Smoke alarms are early warning systems which detect smoke and fires and sound a warning alarm and they provide additional security and safety in your home. Most fatalities in house fires are caused by breathing in smoke and toxic fumes, which can overcome you, particularly if you are asleep.

In our properties, smoke alarms are connected to the wiring system of the house or unit. The alarms are usually mounted in a high position and may be located in the living room, hallway, or in the bedrooms.

Under the *Residential Tenancies Act*, Momentum Collective is responsible for the installation of smoke alarms in rented premises.

You will notice two different lights on your smoke alarms

- a steady green light indicates that the alarm is being powered
- a red light flashes once a minute to indicate that the alarm is working

What should I do if the alarm goes off?

If you are woken by a smoke alarm, wake everyone and leave the house immediately. Once outside, phone 000 and report the fire. Alarms can sometimes go off from smoke or steam (such as burning toast or showers). You should make sure there is ventilation when cooking in a small area, or when smoking.

If the alarm sounds because of these activities, you can turn it off by pressing the hush button or fanning away the smoke or steam. If the power is turned off, you will hear a short beep every few seconds. When the power is first connected to the alarm, it may sound for two to three seconds and continue to beep once every 40 seconds for around 10 minutes. This is normal.

If a smoke alarm sounds regularly for no clear reason, or you think it is not working properly phone Momentum Collective Community Housing offices on **1300 506 710**.

The emergency after hours mobile number is **0458 029 101**. Please note only voice calls are accepted, do not send text messages as they cannot be received or responded to.

How do I look after my smoke alarm?

It is against the law to remove or interfere with the operation of a smoke alarm. If you interfere or remove a smoke alarm and an electrician has to be called out, you will incur a cost. This is tenant damage.

Momentum Collective will arrange to inspect and check your smoke alarm annually. You can also test it yourself once a month using the test button. Simply press the test button gently and hold for five seconds. Do not test the alarm with a flame.

Carefully vacuum the smoke alarm several times a year to remove dust, cobwebs, or insects.

Do not attempt to open the alarm as it is connected to the main power supply of the house and could give you an electric shock. The standby battery in the alarm will last for 5-10 years and does not fit into any other electrical appliance.

Insects may be attracted to smoke alarms and can sound the alarm. If this occurs, spray the ceiling around the alarm, with insect surface spray. Never spray the alarm directly.

Need more information?

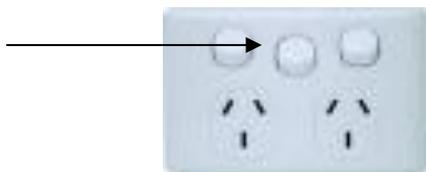
Visit the NSW Fire Brigades website www.fire.nsw.gov.au for handy tips and fact sheets on fire safety including a home safety checklist, home escape plan, and keeping fire safe in all seasons.

Trouble shooting around your home

Appliance Power

All new units are equipped with isolation switches that control electricity to your fridge power point and oven. If these appliances are not operating then Please check your kitchen area to find the isolation switches. Generally these switches are similar to the picture below.

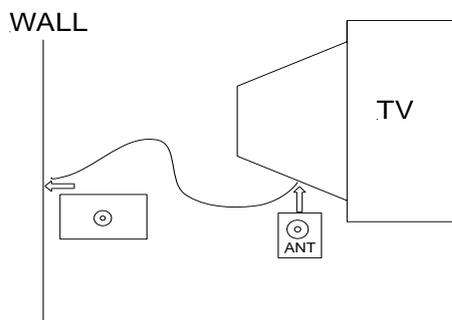
The middle switch is the isolator which needs to be turned on.



TV Antenna

All new units are connected to a central TV antenna system with the wall connection general found within the general lounge/living area. Refer to the picture below for connection.

The connecting cable is called a co-axial cable.



Telephone

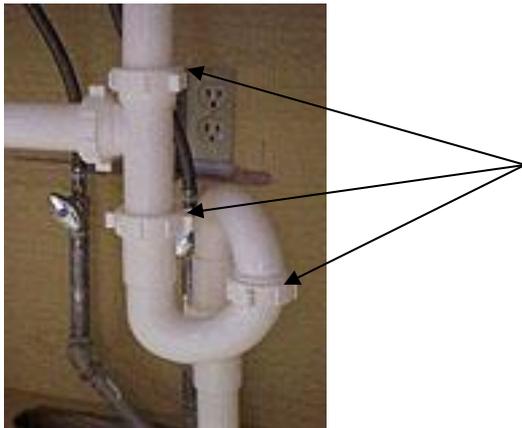
All new units have telephone numbers already established; this has been done to assist you with hassle free reconnection of the service. Advise Telstra or your preferred carrier that the line has been established, this ensures that you don't have to pay their establishment fees.

Please contact your Tenancy Officer for further information if needed.

Leaks in kitchen sinks or laundry troughs

When first settling in to your new unit /home (if possible) check if you have any leaks under these units. If it is coming from the water connections, **contact us immediately**.

If it is from the drain (plastic pipe) you may be able to tighten the ribbed collar to stop this leak (do not over tighten these collars). If you are not able to do this, contact us immediately as water can damage the timber of the kitchen units.

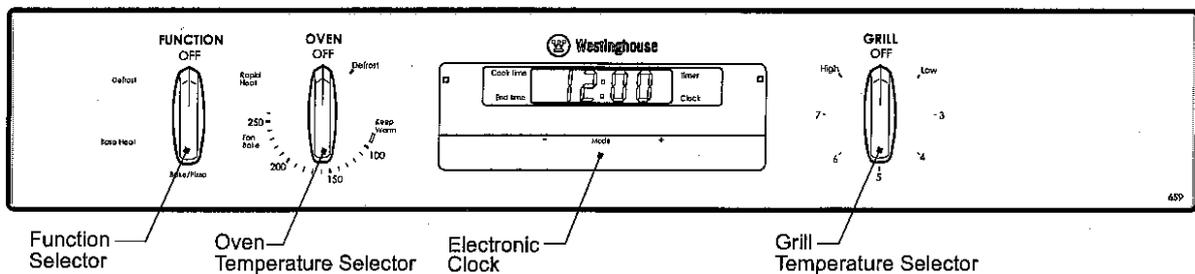


Oven and cook top

Please read your instruction manuals concerning the use of these appliances.

Before you start you need to make sure you turn on the large switch usually located on the tiles behind the bench top. (This is an isolation switch which turns off all power to the oven and cook top in an emergency.)

With modern electric oven, you will need to set the timer prior to turning on all other controls on the oven.



If you still cannot get the appliances to work then report it as soon as possible, so it can be fixed.

Toilets

Modern toilets use very little water and if objects such as baby wipes and large amounts of toilet paper are flushed down toilets they will cause blockages in drains.

Do not flush anything other than toilet paper down the toilet.

Useful contact phone numbers

Momentum Collective <u>after hours emergency maintenance</u>	0458 029 101
Centrelink (Older Australians) Line	132 300
Electricity outages and interruptions	132 080
Energex	136 262
Telstra Phone Connections	132 200
Tenants Advice and Advocacy Service	1800 649 135
Tenant's Hotline	1800 251 101
NSW Domestic Violence Line	1800 656 463
Domestic violence	1800 810 784
Northern Rivers Tenancy Advice and Advocacy Service	1800 649 135
Northern NSW Aboriginal Tenants Advice and Advocacy Service	1800 248 913