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|  | COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY | Policy Number | QA05 |
| | | Version | V1 |
| | | Date | December 2018 |
| | | Review Date | December 2020 |

1 Purpose

This policy will support Access 2 Place Housing (A2P) to engage effectively with its community in a meaningful, accountable, responsive and equitable way; and work in partnership with relevant organisations to promote community housing and to contribute to socially inclusive communities.

2 Context

This policy has a focus on engaging with communities and compliments the *A2P Tenant Engagement Policy* which has a greater focus on engagement with tenants. This policy also informs the *A2P Engagement Strategy*.

In addition to organisational objectives, A2P has community engagement requirements that it must meet as a National Regulatory System (NRS) Tier 2 Provider (refer to 5.2 for more information).

This policy draws from the best practice community engagement approach identified in *Community Engagement: A key strategy for improving outcomes for Australian families*. This article highlights that It is important to note that the difference between engaging individuals and engaging *communities* is more than just an economy of scale. A community is *more* than simply a group of individuals. We engage communities in order to improve outcomes *for communities* and we seek improved outcomes for communities not only as a means of improving outcomes for individuals, but also to bring about change in the community itself: to improve the social fabric that provides us with a sense of belonging and connection. Community is defined both in terms of geography and relationships. A community refers to a group of people who reside in a specific location, and to the relationships between them.

3 Scope

This policy applies to all A2P employees. Community Engagement initiatives and activities will be within the scale and scope of A2P business.

4 Risk

Without a Community Engagement Policy, there is a risk that A2P will not maintain an effective engagement process by the which the aspirations, concerns, needs and values of communities and community members are incorporated into planning and decision making. There is also a risk that A2P will fail to meet NRS and NDIS regulatory obligations and performance indicators.

5 Policy Detail

5.1 General Principles

All staff will engage with communities in accordance with the *A2P Code of Conduct Policy*, *A2P Cultural Charter* and *A2P Tenant Charter (in development)*

A2P will develop and maintain an Engagement Strategy that identifies a variety of community engagement activities and initiatives.

A2P will undertake community engagement in a manner that reflects best practice.

5.2 Regulatory Requirements

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|  <p>ACCESS 2 PLACE HOUSING</p> | <p>COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY</p> | Policy Number | QA05 |
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A2P will meet NRS requirements relating to supporting tenant engagement (Performance Outcome 3) through working in partnership with relevant organisations to promote community housing and to contribute to socially inclusive communities, specifically in relation to:

- a. Promoting community housing to local organisations that work with potential residents, tenants or clients, and community housing providers;
- b. Contributing to place renewal and social inclusion partnerships and planning relevant to the provider’s community housing activities.

Note 1: Only Tier 1 NRS providers are required to engage in place renewal under Performance Outcome 3. At this stage, A2P is a Tier 2 provider, and as such is not required to contribute to place renewal and has no performance requirements in this area.

Note 2: Assessment under the National Regulatory Code (NRC) will recognise the context in which the provider operates and the scope and scale of A2P business.

Note 3: A2P does not necessarily have to be ‘leading ‘community engagement activities.

A2P can submit evidence such as:

- Community engagement policies and practice.
- Strategy or plans showing examples of initiatives.
- Outreach services, training held, participation in local strategic groups and/or holding community events.

5.3 Core Features of Effective Community Engagement Strategies

Community engagement is essentially a relational process that occurs at a local level. It involves professionals who represent services and service systems building personal relationships with community members and groups, based on mutual trust and respect.

Community engagement involves:

- starting from the community's own needs and priorities rather than those dictated from outside;
- inviting and building local autonomy, giving leadership to people in the community and acting as a resource to them;
- building the capacity of families and the community to meet their own needs more effectively;
- having a flexible service system that can be tailored to meet local needs;
- balanced partnerships between providers and consumers based on mutual trust and respect;
- working with the community rather than doing things for them or to them;
- information sharing so that the community can make informed decisions; and
- providing the community with choices regarding services and intervention options.

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5.4 Data Collection and Reporting

A2P will maintain effective data collection and reporting systems to ensure accurate records are kept for organisational and compliance requirements.

All staff must manage tenant information in accordance with the *A2P Record Retention Policy* and the *A2P Information Management Policy (in development)*.

5.5 Responsibilities

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| Community Engagement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff are responsible for working in an inclusive way that encourages community engagement and participation. The Operations Manager is responsible for supervising the planning, implementation and review of the engagement strategy. The Tenant Engagement Coordinator is responsible for the planning, implementation and review of the Engagement Strategy. |
| Data Collection | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Tenant Engagement Coordinator be responsible for maintaining the collection of accurate data and provide it to the Operations Manager for compliance requirements. |
| Reporting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Tenant Engagement Coordinator is responsible for reporting to the Operations Manager on matters related to community engagement activities and initiatives. The Operations Manager is responsible for reporting to the CEO on matters related to community engagement activities and initiatives. |

6 Procedure

6.1 How to Engage

There is no one-size fits all approach to community engagement activities. A variety of methods will be required to cater for the different purposes of engagement as well as the broad range of groups and individuals in the community. The stages in this engagement circle (Figure 1) are adaptive and will be relative to the scale and scope of the engagement activity undertaken.

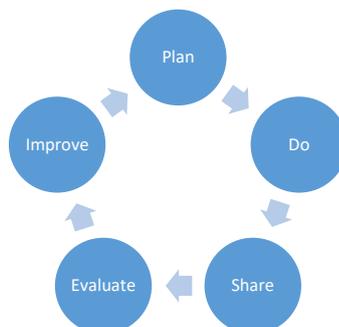


Figure 1: Engagement Circle

Staff are encouraged to use the *Engagement Circle Tool* when undertaking engagement activities.

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7 Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, **community engagement** is defined as a process whereby a service system:

- proactively seeks out community values, concerns and aspirations;
- incorporates those values, concerns and aspirations into a decision-making process or processes; and
- establishes an ongoing partnership with the community to ensure that the community's priorities and values continue to shape services and the service system.

8 Reference Documents and Links

{List any associated documents used to enact the policy. Insert hyperlinks to these documents where possible.}

8.1 Directive Documents

A2P Strategic Plan 2015-2020

A2P Service Charter

NRS Evidence Guidelines

8.2 Supporting Documents

- *Community Engagement: A key strategy for improving outcomes for Australian families*, Child Family Community Australia (CFCA) Paper No. 39 – April 2016 T Moore, M McDonald, H McHugh-Dillon and S West <https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/community-engagement>

8.3 Related Documents and Resources

Engagement Circle Tool

A2P Cultural Charter, A2P Service Charter, A2P Record Retention Policy

A2P Information Management Policy (in development)

A2P Engagement Strategy (in development)

A2P Community Engagement Policy (in development)

A2P Tenant Charter (in development)

9 Policy Approval

| Content Author: | Delegated Authority: | Executive: (if required) |
|--|---|--------------------------|
| Date: October 2018 | Date: 13 th December 2018 | Date: |
| Name: Rebecca Chapman Position: Policy Consultant | Name: Jonathan Lardner Position: CEO | Name: Position: |



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10 Revision History

| Date | Version | Author / Amended By | Comments / Review History |
|--------------|---------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| October 2018 | 1 | Rebecca Chapman | Original Draft |