

Ealing Homes

Racial Harassment Policy



1. Purpose of Policy

This policy sets out Ealing Homes' guidelines for effectively addressing incidents of racial harassment of service users.

2. Policy Statement

Ealing Homes values racial equality, social justice and condemns all forms of racial harassment and intimidation. Consequently, racial harassment will be dealt with seriously and as a priority.

Ealing Homes recognises the effects of racial harassment on the victim's quality of life and is committed to tackling the problem thoroughly and effectively using all resources available. Furthermore, it will endeavour to ensure all its service users; staff and stakeholders are not subjected to racial harassment.

3. Relevant Definitions

The definition of racial harassment, which we are using is the definition borne out of the McPherson Inquiry Report into Stephen Lawrence case 1999, which states

- **Racial harassment** "is an incident or a series of incidents intended or likely to intimidate, offend or harm an individual or group because of their ethnic origin, colour, race, religion or nationality".

Furthermore, the definition of a racist incident is also adopted from the report:

- **Racist incident** "A racist incident is any incident that is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person".

Using this definition of a racist incident during an investigation does not prejudice the perpetrator's intention. After a thorough investigation of an incident it may be clear that the harassment is not racially motivated. But using a survivor-centred definition for report taking and investigation ensures that any racial motivation is fully considered while the incident is investigated. (Tackling Racial Harassment: Code of Practice for Social Landlords, 2.1.3)

4. Policy Objectives

- Accurate recording and monitoring of incidents
- For victims/witnesses to be dealt with sympathetically and sensitively
- Support victims, their families and any witnesses when racial harassment occurs
- Take appropriate legal action against perpetrators
- Ensure that actual or potential perpetrators of racial harassment are aware of the consequences of their actions
- Encourage victims/witnesses to report incidents
- Prevent further racial harassment
- Multi-agency working

- Ensure that staff are fully trained to be able to deal with complaints of racial harassment
- Effective managing of cases within the given timescales
- Utilise appropriate procedures and systems in place deal effectively with racial harassment
- Take timely and appropriate action against perpetrators

5. Supporting Victims and Witnesses

Ealing Homes takes a victim centred approach when dealing with cases of racial harassment

Ealing Homes:

- Keeps monthly contacts with victims of racial harassment and review their of cases monthly.
- Considers management transfers on the grounds of racial harassment fairly and sympathetically where it has not been possible to resolve the problem.
- Provides victims of racial harassment with victim support packs in order to increase their confidence to report racial incidents.
- Ealing Homes have increased investment in the use of CCTV equipment to assist in evidence gathering that is admissible in court.
- Where necessary improve security, helping to protect vulnerable residents in their homes i.e., Window locks, fireproof letterboxes, door entry systems, better street lighting.
- Aims to provide comprehensive practical and emotional support to victims and witnesses of racial harassment
- In addition we will also work with other local agencies to map racist incidents, so as to detect trends and “hot spots” of racist activity

6. Tools Used Against Perpetrators of Racial Harassment

Ealing Homes utilises a number of legal remedies in order to effectively tackle racial harassment.

Anti Social Behaviour Orders

Anti Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) are utilised as a mean of combating serious incidents of racial harassment

Acceptable Behaviour Contract

The contract is not legally binding as such but it can be used to record an agreement between the council and the perpetrator, and if broken will be useful evidence for any court action.

Injunctions

Housing Injunctions are used to prohibit acts of racial harassment and breaches can lead to imprisonment.

Evictions

The tenancy agreement specifically prohibits harassment on grounds of race being committed by tenants or their visitors. Breaches can lead to evictions.

7. Training of Officers

Ealing Homes recognise that it is imperative that staff are familiar with our procedures and able to accurately record incidents and aware of the measures we can take to deal with actions of racial harassment. Hence regular training is held to cover the following areas:

- Policies and Procedures
- Sharing Ideas
- Civil and legal remedies
- Accurate recording of incidents

8. Multi Landlord Mixed Tenure Schemes

Ealing Homes manage stock on estates shared by other landlords and these types of schemes are growing due to major housing regeneration.

Ealing will participate in forming common management agreements, which will include tackling racial harassment.

9. Publicity

Ealing Homes is fully committed to this policy and we will widely publicise our commitment to dealing with racial harassment. Information leaflets, the media partners will be used to make the community aware of our intention to address racial harassment effectively.

Ealing Homes will publicise its successes to deter potential offenders and build confidence from the community that action is being taken against such perpetrators.

10. Encouraging Reporting

Ealing Home want to empower its service users to report by implementing the Home Office code of practice on the Reporting and Recording of racist incidents.

11. Multi Agency Working

Ealing Homes recognises that it cannot tackle racial harassment in isolation. Hence have fostered effective working partnerships with voluntary and statutory agencies and will continue to do so.

Ealing Home currently work with a range of agencies including

- The Borough Anti Social Behaviour Task Group

- The Borough co-ordinating and Tasking Group and Ealing Racial Crimes Advisory Group.
- Six Safer Neighbourhood Teams

12. Customer satisfaction

In order to improve our service to victims of racial harassment our Service Development Team carry out quarterly customer satisfaction surveys with our service users. This information is fed back to staff and lead officers on policies and procedures so that concerns can be included when reviews are carried out.

Customer Satisfaction questionnaires are also available at our reception so that we can assess satisfaction levels from face to face service users who are experiencing racial harassment.

13. Monitoring and Evaluating

Ealing Homes will record incidents from beginning to the conclusion of the case. This should identify the need for change and development in both the policy and procedure.

The views of the service users and external agencies are paramount in reviewing of this policy.

In the case of any legislative changes the law will supersede this policy until such time the policy is revised accordingly. Annual reviews of this policy will allow us to take account of changing legislations and the results of our monitoring.