

M026 Feedback, Compliments and Complaints Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Feedback, Compliments and Complaints policy is to outline the process for making a complaint or providing feedback to YWCA Australia (YWCA).

This policy ensures that all employees are aware of and supported in understanding the Feedback, Compliments and Complaints Policy and that members of the public can be confident that complaints will be fully assessed and investigated.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all directors, external committee members, executive team members, staff, contractors and volunteers of YWCA (Employees). It also applies to external stakeholders such as prospective clients or tenants, current clients or tenants, guardians and funding bodies.

3. Policy Statement

YWCA embraces feedback and complaints and recognises that everyone has the right to make a complaint or provide feedback about any YWCA service or employee and to appeal any decisions made. The overarching aim of this policy is to increase client satisfaction and strengthen client input into services. We are committed to handling and resolving complaints consistently, impartially, and promptly.

Complaints can be made in a variety of formats by any person. YWCA will make no distinction in the management of complaints based on the method in which the complaint was submitted.

We acknowledge that the effective handling of complaints, including appeals, enables learning and guides continuous improvement.

Complaints will be analysed to identify trends, risks and systemic issues. Corrective actions will be in place to ensure negative feedback is minimised.

The Police will also be notified if a complaint relates to criminal activity in consultation with General Manager. Other external and mandatory reporting will occur as per relevant policy and procedure.

Principles underpinning this policy:

- YWCA has a commitment to, and a culture of, continuous quality improvement.
- Feedback and complaints are welcomed and actively encouraged through surveys, feedback forms and ongoing client reviews.
- No person making a complaint will be disadvantaged or face discrimination from YWCA either at the time of making a complaint or subsequently.
- The complaints process is fair and respectful to all parties ensuring impartiality, confidentiality and transparency. All complaints, simple or complex, will receive continuing attention and be resolved as quickly and efficiently as possible.
- Information about the complaint process will be visible and accessible.

- Where appropriate and possible, complainants will be informed of the progress and outcome of their complaint. They have the right to appeal if they are not satisfied.
- Assistance will be provided for people who require support to provide feedback or appeal the outcome of a complaint – this may include support to refer the matter to an external body.
- Complaints are recorded in local and master registers and are monitored to identify systemic issues and where applicable for regulatory requirements.
- Regular review and improvement of the complaints system ensures best practice principles and compliance with relevant national and state standards and quality frameworks.
- Outcomes and learnings from complaint management will be applied to improve services and prevent reoccurrences through changes to practice where required. This will include regular reporting to the General Manager on the numbers, types of complaints and appeals and their outcomes. All complaints that represent risk to the organisation or that are escalated above the General Manager will be reported to the Board – all reporting to the Board will be deidentified.

4. Policy Implementation

This Policy links directly to the Feedback, Compliments and Complaints Procedure which is to be followed when a complaint or feedback is received. The procedure outlines clear steps for employees to take when resolving complaints with the aim to resolve complaints swiftly and informally where possible. This Policy must be read in conjunction with YWCA's Speak Up and Employee Grievance policies.

5. Definitions

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| Advocate | a person who assists the client/tenant making a complaint. The advocate can be a friend, independent person, an employee or a person from an external advocacy service |
| Appeal | when a person asks for a review of a decision made by YWCA |
| Complaint | an expression of dissatisfaction made to or about an organisation, related to its services, staff or the handling of a complaint, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected. It relates to a specific episode, occurrence or provision of service that has resulted in an impact on any individual or group. |
| Complaint Register | a document or database/system that contains the details of all complaints raised including those made anonymously. The Manager lodges details of the complaint on the Register and updates the entry when the matter is resolved/closed |
| Complainant | the person making a complaint |
| Compliment | an expression of satisfaction with one of YWCA's services or with the way the service has been delivered by one or more employees |
| Corrective Action | an action taken to preclude occurrences of an identified hazard or to prevent recurrence of a problem |
| Feedback | information about reactions to a product, a person's performance of a task, etc. which is used as a basis for improvement |
| Employee concerned | the employee about whom the complaint has been made |

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| Receiving employee | the employee who receives the complaint from the client/tenant or their representative |
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6. Roles and Responsibilities

| Who | Role | Responsibilities |
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| CEO | Oversight Reporting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular reporting to the Board on complaint management and outcomes |
| General Manager /Executive Team Member | Oversight of operational complaint processes and approval of complaint resolution outcomes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approve resolution outcomes from complaints Engage as required in complaint management Manage internal and external relationships as required Support and direct regional teams as required Report to CEO on complaints and resolution process |
| Manager, Quality and Compliance | Support complaint process | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain Complaint Register Monitor complaint outcomes Report to General Manager on trends and outstanding complaints |
| Regional and other service managers | First point of contact | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow Complaint procedure. Engage with complainant to ensure resolution of complaint Advise and seek guidance as required Maintain local complaint register |
| Employees and Volunteers | Support and Engagement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support clients and others to understand the complaints process Engage in the investigation process as required. |

| Document Control Data | |
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| Policy Framework | |
| Responsible Body | Chief Executive Officer |
| Accountable Officer | Director, Organisation Capability and People |
| Application | All employees of YWCA |
| Supersedes | Previous local policies |
| Associated documents | Feedback Compliments and Complaints Procedure Feedback Compliments and Complaints Register Feedback and Complaints Action Plan Feedback Compliments and Complaints Easy Read Complaints Appeal Easy Read Child and Young Person Safety and Wellbeing Policy Child and Young Person Protection and Reporting Procedure |
| Legislation | Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic) Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth) Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic) Housing Registrar (Vic): Performance Standards NRSCH: Evidence Guidelines and Regulatory Code Housing Act 2003 (VIC) Housing Act 193 (VIC) |

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| | National Disability Insurance Scheme (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018 Residential Tenancies and Rooming House Accommodation Act 2008 (Qld) Residential Tenancies Act 1999 (NT) Information Privacy Act 2009 Community Services (Complaints, Reviews and Monitoring) Act 1993 (NSW) Housing Regulation 2015 (QLD) |
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| Approval and Amendment History | | | |
|--------------------------------|---------|---|-------------|
| Review period – 2 years | | | |
| Approval Date | Version | Amendments | Next Review |
| | 1.0 | | 2 years |
| 1.12.2020 | 1.1 | Add legislation | 2 years |
| 16.02.2022 | 1.2 | Add legislation, update definition of complaint and update Roles and Responsibilities | 2 years |
| 28.04.2024 | 1.3 | Associated document name change, new document added and logo update | 2 years |