

## COMPLAINT HANDLING PROCEDURE

### 1. INTRODUCTION

When responding to complaints, board members, volunteers and our administration service provider act in accordance with complaint handling procedures as well as any other internal documents providing guidance on the management of complaints.

Board members and our administration service provider should also consider any relevant legislation and/or regulations when responding to complaints and feedback.

### 2. STAGES OF COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The five key stages in our complaint management system are set out below



### 3. RECEIVE

We will record all complaints and their supporting information, including those that have been resolved at the outset. We will also assign a unique identifier/number to the complaint file and provide a copy of this Complaint Handling Procedure to the complainant, so they are aware of our process and timeframes.

The record of the complaint will document:

- Contact information of the person making a complaint and the date received
- Issues raised by the person making a complaint and the outcome/s they want
- Any other relevant information, and
- Any additional support the person making a complaint requires.

#### 3.1 ACKNOWLEDGE

We will acknowledge receipt of each complaint promptly, and preferably within five working days. When appropriate we may offer an explanation or apology.

The timeframe to respond to your complaint will depend on the complexity of the complaint and the available resources to handle the complaint. However, if we are unable to provide a definitive response to your complaint within 30

working days, then we will advise you of the time frame that we intend to have a response to your complaint.

Consideration will be given to the most appropriate medium (e.g. email, letter) for communicating with the person making a complaint.

## **3.2 ASSESS AND INVESTIGATE**

### **3.2.1 INITIAL ASSESSMENT**

After acknowledging receipt of the complaint, we will confirm whether the issue/s raised in the complaint is/are within our control. We will also consider the outcome/s sought by the person making a complaint and, where there is more than one issue raised, determine whether each issue needs to be separately addressed. When determining how a complaint will be managed, we will consider:

- How serious, complicated or urgent the complaint is
- Whether the complaint raises concerns about people's health and safety
- How the person making the complaint is being affected
- The risks involved if resolution of the complaint is delayed, and
- Whether a resolution requires the involvement of other organisations.

### **3.2.2 INVESTIGATING THE COMPLAINT**

After assessing the complaint, we will consider how to manage it. We may:

- Give the person making a complaint information or an explanation
- Gather information about the issue, person or area that the complaint is about, or
- Investigate the claims made in the complaint.

We will keep the person making the complaint up-to-date on our progress, particularly if there are any delays. We will also communicate the outcome of the complaint using the most appropriate medium. Which actions we decide to take will be tailored to each case and take into account any statutory requirements.

## **3.3 DETERMINE OUTCOME AND PROVIDE REASONS FOR DECISION**

Following consideration of the complaint and any investigation into the issues raised, we will contact the person making the complaint and advise them:

- The outcome of the complaint and any action we took
- The reason/s for our decision
- The remedy or resolution/s that we have proposed or put in place, and
- Any options for review that may be available to the complainant, such as an internal review, external review or appeal.

### **3.4 CLOSE THE COMPLAINT: DOCUMENT AND ANALYSE DATA**

#### **3.4.1 DOCUMENT**

We will keep records about:

- How we managed the complaint
- The outcome/s of the complaint (including whether it or any aspect of it was substantiated, any recommendations made to address problems identified and any decisions made on those recommendations), and
- Any outstanding actions to be followed up, including analysing any underlying or root causes

#### **3.4.2 ANALYSE DATA**

We will ensure that outcomes are properly implemented, monitored and reported to the complaint handling manager, senior management or the Chair of our board.

### **4. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS**

- Complaint Handling Policy

### **5. REFERENCES AND LEGISLATION**

- Australian and New Zealand Standard Guidelines for complaint handling in organizations AS/NZS 10002:2014
- 'Handling Privacy Complaints' Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (October 2016)
- NSW Ombudsman Complaint Handling Model Policy 2015
- 'Building better relationships through complaints' The Society for Consumer Affairs Professionals Australia (SOCAP) and The Australian Centre for Justice Innovation (ACJ), Monash University
- [www.nfplaw.org.au/sites/default/files/media/Complaint\\_Handling\\_By\\_Chairties\\_and\\_Not-for-profits.pdf](http://www.nfplaw.org.au/sites/default/files/media/Complaint_Handling_By_Chairties_and_Not-for-profits.pdf)

### **6. CONTACT**

Complaints can be made to Eastern Star Foundation by email or post:

**Att:** Chairman, Eastern Star Foundation

**Email:** [info@easternstarfoundation.org.au](mailto:info@easternstarfoundation.org.au)

**Post:** PO Box 1202, Fortitude Valley QLD 4006