

COMPLAINTS POLICY FOR SERVICE USERS AND VOLUNTEERS

Preamble

Any complaint made by a service user or volunteer of WAMIAC will be dealt with promptly and objectively.

Any person making a complaint has the right to have an advocate of him or her choice to assist him or her during the process of making a complaint.

To eliminate the risk of a conflict of interest, the advocate "engaged" by the person making the complaint needs to be someone other than a member of WAMIAC staff and Committee of Management.

Objectives

To deal with service user or volunteer complaints in a timely and impartial manner.

To provide service user and volunteer guidelines for making a complaint.

To ensure the principles of natural justice are applied to all parties to the complaint.

Grievance

A grievance is a situation where a person has grounds for making a complaint about the organisation or another person's behavior who is associated with the organisation.

Complaint's Agencies

Any person making a complaint has the right to make the complaint directly to WAMIAC or to another organisation that deals with complaints.

Alternative agencies include:

Health Services Commissioner: Office of Chief Psychiatrist
30th Floor 11th Floor
570 Bourke St 555 Collins St
Melbourne 3000 Melbourne 3000
Ph. 86015200 Ph. 96167777

Office of Public Advocate Equal Opportunity Commission
5th Floor 3rd Floor
436 Lonsdale St 380 Lonsdale St
Melbourne 3000 Melbourne 3000
Ph. 96039500 or 1800136829 Ph: 92817111

State Ombudsman's Office
Level 22
459 Collins St
Melbourne 3000
Ph. 92778777

Complaints Process

In the first instance the person making the complaint should try to resolve the issue with the person he/she has the complaint with. This should occur within 7 days of the incident.

The discussion should take place in private and in a quiet area. If necessary, both people can have a support person with them. The feelings of each person involved in the discussion should be respected.

If the above fails to resolve the issue or the person making the complaint decides not to take step (1) above, then:

- The complaint can either be put in writing and/or verbally communicated to the Director of WAMIAC, or the Chairperson of the WAMIAC Committee of Management.
- Depending on the nature of the complaint and/or the preference of the person making the complaint, the matter can either be dealt with by the Director or referred to the Committee of Management.

The person making the complaint will receive a written acknowledgement regarding receipt of the complaint within 10 days after lodging the complaint.

The Committee of Management may investigate the complaint or elect a sub-committee of the Committee to investigate the complaint.

Each person who is involved in the complaint should be provided with an opportunity to speak to the Director or members of the Committee of Management (sub-committee). The person making the complaint may bring an advocate (support person) to this meeting.

Once the complaint has been investigated, the Director or Committee of Management (sub-committee) should communicate the results to the Committee of Management along with any recommendation(s) for resolving the issue(s).

Once the Committee of Management has received the above report, they should then formally accept the recommendations or decide what alternative actions if necessary need to be taken.

The recommendations should then be communicated to the person who made the complaint and the person the complaint was made about within 6 weeks. Feedback should be sought as to whether the person who made the complaint is satisfied with the result.

If the person who made the complaint is dissatisfied with the findings and recommendation(s) then he/she may lodge the complaint with the external agencies previously mentioned.

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