

# Complaints handling policy and procedure

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## Introduction

The Surrey Hills Neighbourhood Centre aims for a high standard of participant, staff and volunteer satisfaction, and as such acknowledges all participant, staff and volunteer feedback – both positive and negative. Participant, staff and volunteer feedback will be sought through a range of methods including the evaluation process undertaken at the end of each program offered, annual staff appraisals and reviews and volunteer evaluations. This document also covers a complaints procedure for all participants, staff and volunteers of the Surrey Hills Neighbourhood Centre.

## Purpose

This policy is intended to ensure that all participant, staff and volunteer complaints and/or grievances will be taken seriously and dealt with in a respectful and equitable manner, making every effort to reach an outcome acceptable to all parties.

## Procedures

Those involved should attempt to resolve all verbal and/or written complaints initially through discussion and conciliation.

Surrey Hills Neighbourhood Centre maintains a register of complaints which will allow identification of the following issues:

- submission date of complaint
- nature of complaint
- date/s when cause of complaint occurred
- proposed action/process agreed upon
- timeline for action
- signatures of all parties involved in process
- the privacy and security of such information should be ensured.

If the parties are unable to resolve the dispute amicably, then the parties must within ten [10] days hold a meeting in the presence of a mediator. Both parties should agree on the choice of mediator, who can be either the Centre Manager, the Chairperson or other member of the Board, or an independent mediator chosen by agreement between each party involved.

All applicants shall be given the opportunity to formally present his or her case to the mediator.

- The mediator cannot be party to the dispute.
- The parties to the dispute must in good faith attempt to settle the matter by mediation.

The mediator, in conducting the mediation must:

- give the parties to the mediation process every opportunity to be heard with respect
- allow due consideration by all parties of any written statement submitted by any party
- ensure that natural justice is accorded to the parties to the dispute throughout the mediation process.
- The mediator must not determine the dispute.

### **Appeals**

Upon completion of a resolution process for a complaint or grievance, the participant, staff member or volunteer may wish to dispute the outcome of a resolution and seek a reassessment. All appeals are requested to be submitted in writing to the Chairperson of the Surrey Hills Neighbourhood Centre Board.

### **Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the Surrey Hills Neighbourhood Centre Board to ensure that these procedures are followed.

The Centre Manager shall be responsible for reporting to the Surrey Hills Neighbourhood Centre Board of any grievances/complaints received within 7 days.