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BOARD POLICY COMPLAINTS & COMPLIMENTS POLICY

PURPOSE: The objective of this Policy is to ensure:

1. Customer and client concerns are resolved appropriately
2. Customer and client feedback informs and identifies where improvements can be made

POLICY REFERENCE	BP CS 1
POLICY OWNER	Corporate Support
APPROVED BY	Board of Directors
APPROVAL DATE	28 October 2021
REVIEW DATE	28 October 2023



COMPLAINTS & COMPLIMENTS POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

Community Resources is committed to providing high quality goods and services to its customers and clients and encourages feedback to address concerns and monitor and improve quality.

The Complaints and Compliments Policy (Policy) has been developed to ensure feedback is captured and customers and clients complaints are managed effectively, fairly, confidentially, and objectively, and that complainants are treated with respect at all times.

2. SCOPE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Policy applies to employees, contractors (including their employees), volunteers, suppliers and consultants of Community Resources.

The Policy applies where a customer or client, or their authorised representative, expresses dissatisfaction or great satisfaction about goods or services provided by Community Resources, and the customer or client is directly affected.

The Policy **does not** apply to staff grievances and does not preclude any person from pursuing their complaint through other legal and available avenues, or detract from Community Resources' obligations to manage complaints in accordance with specific legal obligations.

The Policy should be read in conjunction with other Community Resources policies.

3. DEFINITIONS

“Complaint” means a matter where a customer or client, or their authorised representative, expresses dissatisfaction about goods or services provided by Community Resources, and the customer or client is directly affected.

“Compliment” means a matter where a customer or client, or their authorised representative, expresses great satisfaction about goods or services provided by Community Resources, and the customer or client is directly affected.

“Complainant” means a customer or client who raises a Complaint.

“Our, we and us” means Community Resources.

“You, your and yourself” means persons to whom this policy applies as detailed in clause 2.

4. POLICY

4.1. Guiding Principles

This Policy is designed to comply with Community Resources' legal obligations. If anything in this Policy is inconsistent with any law imposed on Community Resources, that legal obligation will prevail over this Policy.

We recognise the value of feedback. We will provide a system to enable us to capture and respond appropriately to Complaints and Compliments.

4.2. Capturing Complaints & Compliments

Customers and clients are to be encouraged to provide feedback and to raise concerns and escalate those concerns when they are not resolved to their satisfaction. Complaints and Compliments are required to be recorded to enable reporting, to facilitate continuous improvement and ensure legal compliance.

When you receive a Complaint or Compliment that you are unable to resolve immediately, you must advise your Manager. Your Manager is responsible for determining whether any further action is required in relation to the Complaint or Compliment.

4.3. Complaints Handling

All Complaints must be taken seriously and Complainants must be treated with respect at all times. Complaints involving serious allegations must be handled in accordance with 4.4.

When you receive a Complaint that is minor in nature, you may encourage the Complainant to discuss their concerns with you with a view to resolving the matter immediately and avoiding escalation. Where the Complaint cannot be resolved immediately, or the Complaint cannot be resolved to the Complainant's satisfaction, or where you have concerns for your safety or wellbeing, you must advise your Manager as soon as possible.

Where the Complaint is referred to a Manager, the Manager is responsible for ensuring the Complaint is recorded and developing and implementing an appropriate action plan with timeframes for resolution.

When managing Complaints, you must maintain good communication with Complainants, including by providing prompt acknowledgement of their Complaint and by providing information about expected timeframes for resolution.

The outcome must be documented and discussed with concerned parties with the Complainant's permission. Follow up processes must be put in place to identify and record whether Complainants are satisfied with the outcome. The records will be used to improve quality.

Quality Assurance must be advised where Complaints cannot be resolved within a reasonable period of time. When matters are referred to Quality Assurance, Quality Assurance will develop and implement an action plan, with timeframes for the resolution of the Complaint.

If the Complaint is still not satisfactorily resolved, the Complainant should be advised in writing their Complaint may be referred to the Board. If the Complainant consents, their Complaint will be referred to the Board to be considered at the next Board Meeting. If this is not acceptable to the Complainant, the CEO can arrange for the Complainant to have an interview or phone call with the Co-Chairs of the Board.

4.4. Complaints involving Serious Allegations

Any Complaint involving serious allegations, such as criminal activity or a serious breach of a customer or client's rights or breach of our legal obligations, **must be** reported to Quality Assurance and the CEO at the earliest opportunity. Quality Assurance is responsible for ensuring the Complaint is reported in accordance with Community Resources' legal obligations, and the CEO and the Board is responsible for determining how the Complaint is to be managed.

4.5. Confidentiality of Complaints

We are committed to ensuring Complaints are treated confidentially. When handling complaints, you must ensure confidentiality of Complainants is maintained and Complainants suffer no loss of service because of their Complaint.

Where Complaints involve individual Staff members, those Staff are not to be advised of the identity of the Complainant, unless the Complainant provides their consent for disclosure of their identity and/or details of their Complaint.

4.6. Additional Support for Complainants

When a Complainant has special needs, including but not limited to a person with a disability, you must assist them to lodge their Complaint.

If the Complainant is from a non-English speaking background and has difficulty understanding English, assistance through a translating and interpreting service should be arranged.

Complainants of an Aboriginal or refugee background should be offered access to appropriate support.

If the Complainant is elderly and/or disabled and requires support, assistance should be arranged through Ageing, Disability and Home Care.

5. MONITORING AND ASSURANCE

This Policy will be available via the intranet, and on request for those that do not have intranet access.

To ensure adequate monitoring and assurance of the Policy, the Policy Owner will monitor and review this Policy every two years.

6. VERSION CONTROL

The Executive Assistant will ensure that following a review of a policy, version numbers are updated and obsolete versions are archived.

RELATED DOCUMENTS:

Complaints & Compliments Register

RELEVANT LEGISLATION, REGULATIONS AND STANDARDS:

Aged Care Act 1997 (Cth)

Aged Care Quality Standards

Australian Service Excellence Standards

REVISIONS

The following revisions have been made to this document.

DATE	REVISION	DESCRIPTION
25/02/2011	Version 1	Initial document prepared and adopted.
19/08/2015	Version 2	Initial document reviewed, updated and transferred to new policy template
25/03/2020	Version 3	Document updated with new review date to allow full review as part of improved Policy Framework
28/10/2021	Version 4	Policy reviewed, updated and transferred to new policy template