

Policy Title:	Complaints Policy and Procedure
Reviewed By:	STEGH Foundation Governance & Nominating Committee
Approved By:	STEGH Foundation Board of Directors
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Mission Statement: To partner with the community to support our Hospital in the delivery of an excellent patient care experience.

Vision Statement: To inspire a lifetime of philanthropic support for our Hospital.

Values: Integrity, Leadership, Community, Results

POLICY STATEMENT

The St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital Foundation (the 'Foundation') adheres to the highest standards of personal and professional conduct. There may however, be concerns or complaints about or related to the Foundation. We believe that the right to express concerns and complaints is an inherent right of our donors and stakeholders and the Foundation is committed to a process which is timely, fair, and respectful.

The purpose of this Complaints Procedure is to register, process and manage concerns about the Foundation on its policies, programs, or activities in a transparent and effective manner. An important objective of this procedure is to learn from experience and continually improve the manner in which the Foundation interacts with its donors, community and other stakeholders.

The Foundation is committed to providing accessible services to all individuals. This policy and its related processes are available in alternative formats upon request, in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

The purpose of an effective complaints procedure is to ensure all complaints are resolved in a timely fashion and efficiently. The review of complaints shall be fair, impartial, and respectful to all parties. The information gained from complaints shall be used to inform and improve policies, procedures, and customer service within the Foundation.

DEFINITIONS

Complaint: an expression of dissatisfaction from the Foundation's external stakeholders, including donors and volunteers, about the service, actions, or lack of action by the Foundation as an organization or a staff member or volunteer acting on behalf of the Foundation.

Examples of complaints include but are not limited to:

- Perceived failure to do something agreed upon;
- Failure to observe policy or procedures;
- Error made by a staff member/volunteer; or
- Unfair or discourteous actions/statements by a staff member/volunteer.

PROCEDURE

1.0 The Foundation shall respond to all complaints and make every reasonable effort to investigate and respond as soon as possible. A complaint can only be taken into consideration when it includes the following:

- Full name of complainant
- Organization/affiliation (if any)
- Appropriate detail of the concern/issue to demonstrate that the complaint is made in good faith
- Recommendations to address concern/issue (optional).

1.1 It is necessary to the complaints process that factual issues be distinguished from comment or opinion.

1.2 Anonymously submitted concerns or complaints will not be accepted to the complaint process.

1.3 All complaints are treated as confidential and communication regarding the complaint will remain between the appropriate Foundation representative and the complainant(s)

1.4 Any complaints received in regards to St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital ("STEGH") are considered a STEGH matter and will be referred to the appropriate department within the Hospital.

2.0 Complaint Receipt and Handling

2.1 A complaint may be received verbally (by phone or in person) or in writing (by mail, fax, email).

2.2 The staff member receiving the complaint should immediately acknowledge to the complainant that the complaint has been received and will be acted on either by him/herself or transferred to another person who can resolve it expeditiously.

- 2.2.1** If a timeframe for action can be determined, that should be included in the acknowledgement.
- 2.2.2** Basic contact information including: name, phone number, email address, date of receipt and a copy of the complaint should immediately be sent to the Executive Assistant & Operations Officer for tracking purposes.
- 2.3** An employee or volunteer who receives a complaint that cannot be or is not resolved immediately should determine the proper person to handle it.
 - 2.3.1** This will generally be the person who has the primary relationship with the complainant or has the specific knowledge that is needed to resolve the problem.
 - 2.3.2** It is the responsibility of the person who receives the complaint to either resolve it or transfer it to another person who can resolve it expeditiously.
 - 2.3.3** If the complaint is transferred, the recipient must acknowledge to the transferor that he/she has received it and will act on it.
 - 2.3.3.1** The Executive Assistant & Operations Officer will be informed of any transfers, so that the complaint resolution status can be properly tracked and reported.

3.0 Resolving the Complaint

- 3.1** Every effort should be made to resolve complaints received in a timely fashion.
 - 3.1.1** When receiving a verbal complaint, staff should listen and seek to understand the complaint, and may attempt to resolve it expeditiously.
 - 3.1.2** Such complaints should be acknowledged in writing immediately and staff should attempt to resolve the matter within 15 business days.
 - 3.1.3** A summary of the verbal complaint and any resolution shall be sent to the Executive Assistant & Operations Officer for tracking and recording purposes.
 - 3.1.4** Complaints received in writing that are not addressed to a specific staff member, and complaints not immediately resolved, should be referred to the President & CEO.
- 3.2** Where a complaint cannot be or is not resolved as above, it should be escalated to the President & CEO who is then responsible for the complaint and resolution.
 - 3.2.1** The Executive Assistant & Operations Officer shall serve as a resource to the President & CEO and the Foundation in the investigation, resolution and reporting of all complaints.

3.2.2 If the complaint is about the President & CEO, it shall be referred to the Chair of the Board.

3.3 A complainant shall be kept informed of the status of their complaint.

3.3.1 Every attempt should be made to resolve escalated complaints within an additional 10 business days so that all complaints are resolved within 25 business days of having been received.

4.0 Documenting the Complaint

4.1 Information about complaints must be recorded including a description of the complaint, who handled it, what was done to resolve the complaint, timeframe, and a description of the resolution or transfer.

4.2 It is the responsibility of the person resolving or transferring the complaint to submit this information to the Executive Assistant & Operations Officer as soon as possible after the complaint has been resolved or transferred.

4.3 The Executive Assistant & Operations Officer is responsible for compiling and maintaining a complaints tracking worksheet.

4.3.1 The worksheet will be reviewed, not less than annually, by the Executive Assistant & Operations Officer and the President & CEO to determine whether there are recurring or patterns of complaints.

4.3.2 If necessary, further action shall be taken to determine whether there are systemic or process issues with a view to addressing and eliminating such recurring complaints.

5.0 Reports to Executive Committee and Board

5.1 A summary of the complaints received, including number and type, will be reported to the Foundation's Executive Committee and Board not less than annually.

REVIEW

The Complaints Policy will be reviewed annually.

In the interim, the Complaints Policy may be revised or rescinded if the Board deems necessary.

If this Policy is revised or rescinded, all secondary documents will be reviewed as soon as reasonably possible in order to ensure they comply with the revised policy or, in turn, are rescinded.

REFERENCES

Code of Conduct – Staff

Fundraising Practices Policy

Gift Acceptance Policy

Imagine Canada. Standards Program for Canada's Charities & Nonprofits

Volunteer Canada. The Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement.

Volunteer Engagement Policy

Workplace Harassment Prevention and Resolution Policy

