

Feedback and Complaint 3.5

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1. What's important to know

Feedback from clients and participants is a key resource in ensuring that services are meeting the needs of the target group/s, and in creating a culture that encourages open and honest communication as part of a process of continuous improvement.

Complaints should be viewed as just as valuable for continuous improvement as positive feedback. Clients and participants have the right to complain about the service they are receiving, or have received, without fear of retribution. All information and feedback from clients, including complaints, can be opportunities to improve the quality of service provided.

1.1 Who does this policy and procedure apply to?

Management Committee members

Staff

Volunteers

Students

Clients

Community Participants

2. Feedback and Complaints Policy

2.1 Policy Principles and Objectives

1. Feedback is a valuable tool for continuous improvement.
2. As a Child Safe Organisation, anyone can utilise our feedback process to address concerns about child safety.
3. Complaints can be a valuable form of feedback.
4. A person making a complaint will not be disadvantaged or precluded from a service.

2.2 What does this mean?

2.3 Feedback

Younity Community Services Ltd. seeks regular feedback from its clients and community participants about the organisation, its services and programs. Feedback is gathered by a number of methods, including compliments and suggestions, individual client feedback, feedback from groups and courses, and generic feedback.

Feedback from clients/participants is a key resource in ensuring that services are meeting the needs of the target group/s, and in creating a culture that encourages open and honest communication as part of a process of continuous improvement.

Opinions about, and level of satisfaction with, either the organisation as a whole or a particular service provided by the organisation, are regularly sought from clients. If desired, feedback may be provided anonymously, but wherever possible, feedback should be acknowledged.

Clients will be supported to provide feedback through standardised measures and processes and as part of Individual Plans.

2.3.1 Compliments and Suggestions

Community members are encouraged to provide information, compliments and suggestions which can help improve the quality of service delivery.

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2.3.2 Individual Client Feedback

Evaluation and feedback are gathered from all clients at the conclusion of service delivery, and at regular times throughout their contact with the organisation. Informal or formal evaluation can be included in community engagement programs to assist with the development and improvement of community events and programs.

2.3.3 Feedback from Groups and Courses

Evaluation and feedback are gathered from all participants at the conclusion of each course or group offered. The Client Feedback Group Form is adapted for this use.

2.3.4 Generic Feedback

Feedback regarding the organisation as a whole is gathered from clients, participants, community members and service providers by means of widely distributed questionnaires.

2.4 Feedback regarding Child Safety

YOUNITY is a child safe organisation and as such we will receive any information pertaining to the safety of children either in our services, related to our service or within the community.

Community members, clients, participants, workers, volunteers and management committee members are encouraged to utilise the feedback process to address any concerns about child safety.

2.5 Complaints

A complaint is any statement that something is unsatisfactory or unacceptable. YOUNITY recognises the importance of complaints in improving the way it delivers its services. YOUNITY is committed to providing a safe environment in which clients/participants are able to make a complaint, and to ensuring that the complaints process is fair and culturally sensitive to the needs of individual clients/participants. YOUNITY will treat all complaints seriously.

The confidentiality of the complainant will be maintained at all times, except in circumstances where there is an immediate threat to the complainant or to a person being accused, or as required by legislation. Any client/participant making a complaint will not be treated differently or disadvantaged as a result of lodging a complaint. YOUNITY will not discontinue or reduce services or take any retaliatory action in relation to a person who has made a complaint or who has made a complaint on their behalf.

It is essential that clients understand the complaints process. A consistent, confidential, fair and non-discriminatory process for handling client complaints is an essential component of high-

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quality service delivery. Information relating to the Client Complaint Procedure is available in accessible locations and is included in the Client *Charter of Rights and Responsibilities*.

Clients/participants and participants may register a complaint in a variety of ways: verbally, over the telephone, or in writing. All complaints will be treated professionally and consistently.

YOUNITY recognises the need for some clients to be supported during the complaints process, and will assist them by recommending external agencies/advocate groups that can provide professional advice and support.

YOUNITY will inform clients of their right to access an external complaints agency in relation to the complaint against YOUNITY. YOUNITY will also inform the client of appeals procedures.

Clients of programs funded by the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women may wish to take their complaint to the Department and will be given information at the time of making their complaint. This will include information about the Department's complaints process and the relevant contact details within the Department.

If the complainant alleges serious discrimination or sexual harassment by a worker or volunteer, The Director will advise the complainant that they have the right to lodge a complaint with the Anti-Discrimination Commission of Queensland (Tel: 1300 130 670). If the complaint relates to other illegal activity the client may choose to report it to the police.

The Management Committee will be informed on all complaints received.

2.6 Planning and Review

All feedback and complaints are collated and analysed, and the results presented to the Management Committee in order to:

- improve services by informing the planning and evaluation process
- ensure that the organisation is offering services to all eligible clients
- inform any evaluation/s required by funding bodies

2.7 Related Documents you can use

- 1.10 Organisational Performance Management

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3. Policy Feedback and Review

3.1 Have you got questions or feedback about this policy?

YOUNITY encourages consultation and we would love to know your thoughts on this policy. You should also contact us if you have any questions which this policy does not cover. Send your questions or feedback to manager@Younity.org.au.

3.2 Policy Approval and Review

Approval Authority	Management Committee
Manager responsible for compliance, monitoring and review	Directorship
Next Review Date	Jul 2022

4. Feedback Procedure

4.1.1 Compliments and Suggestions

1. If receiving the complaint or suggestion verbally, the worker should thank the person for their feedback and ask them if they would be willing to put their feedback down in writing.
2. Provide a Compliment or Suggestion Form.
3. Explain where to leave or submit their form when they are finished or collect the form from them when they are finished.

4.1.2 Evaluation and feedback of a client experience

At the end of service delivery or at regular times throughout the client experience:

1. Ask the client if they would offer their feedback about their client experience to support YOUNITY to continue to improve and support effective programs.
2. Provide a Client Feedback Form which has been adapted for the program.
3. Collect the form from the client when completed.
4. Thank the client for their feedback.

4.1.3 Evaluation and feedback of a group experience

At the end of a group delivery:

1. Ask the group if they would offer their feedback about their experience to support YOUNITY to continue to improve and support effective programs.
2. Provide an adapted Feedback (Group) Form which has been adapted for the program.
3. Collect the form when completed.
4. Thank the group for their feedback.

4.1.4 Evaluation and feedback of the organisation

At regular intervals:

1. Adapt the Feedback about YOUNITY Form to align with the evaluation goals and specific areas of interest.
2. Distribute the questionnaire widely.
3. It might be beneficial to promote the questionnaire on social media or to support uptake by offering a raffle type prize or other incentive.
4. Set a cut-off date and process for collection.

4.1.5 Analyse feedback

1. Collect evaluation and feedback forms either at the end of the program delivery or at regular times throughout the year.
2. Input responses into a spreadsheet.

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3. Run quantitative analysis (including averages (mean, median, or mode), number of respondents,
4. Run qualitative analysis (theme and frequency).
5. Produce a summary of results.

4.2 Responsibilities

4.2.1 Staff

You will:

- Collect feedback from clients/participants.

4.2.2 Directorship

You will:

- Schedule evaluate and feedback for the whole organisation.
- Analyse feedback
- Present feedback reports to the Management Committee.

4.3 Related Documents you can use

- 3.5.1f Client Feedback
- 3.5.4f Compliment or Suggestion
- 3.5.2f Feedback (Group)
- 3.5.3f Feedback about YOUNITY

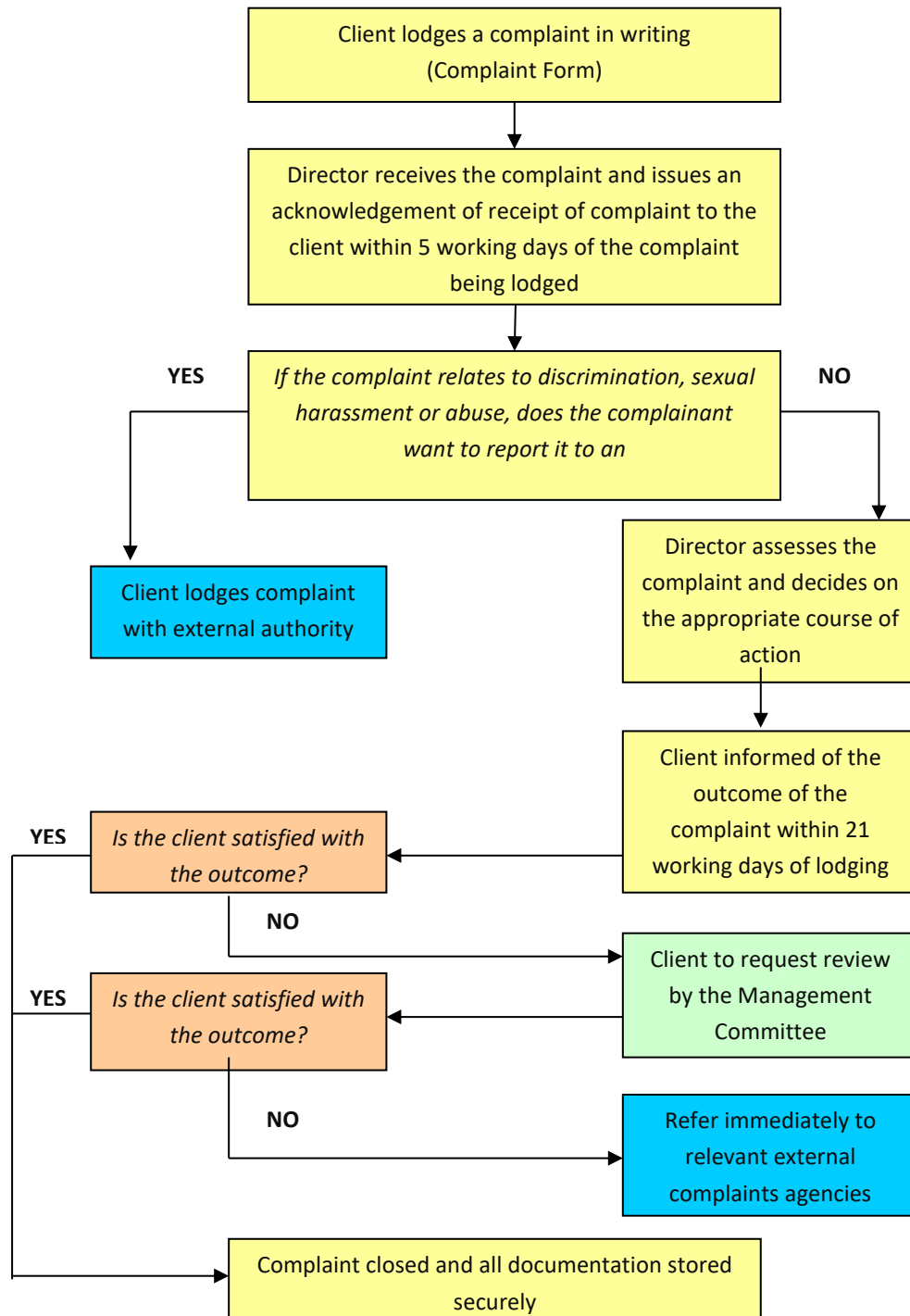
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5. Complaints Procedure

Clients may register a complaint in a variety of ways: verbally, over the telephone, or in writing. All complaints will be treated professionally and consistently.

5.1.1 Complaints

FLOW CHART: FORMAL COMPLAINT HANDLING PROCESS



3.5 Feedback and Complaint

1. If a staff member or volunteer receives a verbal complaint and cannot resolve it immediately, it is to be referred to The Director.
 - a. The Director may be able to resolve the matter informally.
 - b. If this cannot be done the complainant is to be given the option of proceeding to a formal (written) complaints process.
2. If the client decides to proceed to a formal complaint, The Director will ask the client/participant to complete a Complaint Form, and will:
 - a. Reassure the complainant that all complaints are treated confidentially and that they will suffer no loss of service because they have made a complaint.
 - b. Explain the complaints procedure.
 - c. Remind the complainant that they have the right to use an advocate of their choice, and refer them to appropriate client advocacy services.
3. The Director will acknowledge receipt of the written complaint to the client/participant within 5 working days of receipt of the written complaint.
4. If the written complaint is of a serious nature, or is about The Director, The Director will inform the President of the Management Committee immediately.
5. In assessing and responding to complaints, The Director will
 - a. act fairly and justly, and
 - b. ensure that the process remains transparent.
 - c. The following questions should guide The Director in deciding what actions are to be taken to respond to the complaint:
 - i. *What is the nature of the complaint?*
 1. Is it about dissatisfaction with the organisation's services?
 2. Is it about the treatment that the client/participant has received from staff/volunteers?
 3. Is it about discrimination, harassment or abuse?
 - ii. *Who is involved?*
 1. Is the complaint about a staff or volunteer?
 2. Is the complaint about another client/participant?
 3. Is the complaint about The Director or the Management Committee?
 4. Is the complaint about an external contractor?
 - iii. *Is there sufficient information to make a fair judgment about what happened?*
 1. When was the complaint made in relation to when the incident actually occurred?
 2. Where did the incident take place?

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3. Where there any witnesses?
4. Were the parties involved, in a clear physical and psychological state free from any alcohol, drug or medical influences when the incident occurred?
6. If the complainant alleges serious discrimination or sexual harassment by a worker or volunteer, The Director will advise the complainant that they have the right to lodge a complaint with
 - a. the Anti-Discrimination Commission of Queensland (Tel: 1300 130 670).
 - b. the police, if the complaint relates to other illegal activity
7. If the Director needs additional information beyond what is on the complaint form, further clarification is to be sought from the complainant.
 - a. This information should be recorded in writing.
 - b. The Director will decide the course of action based on the information provided.
 - c. It is preferable that grievances are resolved by negotiation and discussion between the parties, in particular by facilitated discussion between the person making the complaint and the person against whom the complaint has been made.
8. The Director will contact the complainant within 21 working days of receiving the written complaint to discuss what action is proposed/has been taken, and will seek feedback on the complainant's satisfaction with the action.

5.1.2 Appeal

1. If the complaint is not resolved to the complainant's satisfaction, the complainant may request a review of the complaint by the Management Committee.
 - a. The Management Committee will take all steps possible to address the complaint.
 - b. The complainant will be kept fully informed of the process towards resolution.
2. If the complaint is about The Director or the Management Committee, the Management Committee itself will address the complaint, following steps 3-6 above.
3. If, after following the above process, the complaint remains unresolved, the client is to be advised that s/he may take the complaint to an external authority, such as
 - a. the Anti-Discrimination Commission of Queensland (Tel: 1300 130 670),
 - b. the Human Rights Commission (Tel: 1300 656 419) or
 - c. the Queensland Department of Communities.
4. If a complaint against a staff member, volunteer or Management Committee member requires disciplinary action, the relevant procedures, such as Discipline Procedure or Sexual Harassment Procedure, will be followed.
5. The complaints process, including the actions taken by the organisation to respond to the complaint, must be recorded by The Director and stored securely in the Client Complaints file.

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- a. All documents must be kept for the period stated in the Archiving and Disposal Procedure.
 - b. Where relevant, knowledge gained through the complaints procedure will be used to improve service delivery within the organisation through the Planning and Evaluation Procedure.
6. The complainant may withdraw the complaint in writing to The Director at any time. The Director will seek to ensure that the complainant is satisfied with the decision to withdraw the complaint and, where appropriate, refer them to counselling or support services.

5.2 Responsibilities

5.2.1 Directorship

You will:

- Investigate and manage the response process to complaints.
- Report complaint to the Management Committee

5.3 Related Documents you can use

- 3.5.5f Complaint

3.5 Feedback and Complaint

6. Procedures Feedback and Review

6.1 Have you got questions or feedback about these procedures?

Getting the job done right is a joint effort. If you have any questions about what to do in relation to these procedures please contact YOUNITY Directorship.

The way we do things will need to change over time to adjust to changes in the workplace and community. Before adjusting any procedures please submit your feedback to info@younity.org.au and gain the relevant approval. Please send any general feedback about these procedures and processes here too.

6.2 Procedures Approval and Review

Approval Authority	Directorship
Manager responsible for compliance, monitoring and review	Directorship
Next Review Date	Jul 2022

Quality Control

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