



Policy name:	Member Complaint Policy ("this Policy")
Type:	Association Policy
Category:	Members
Responsible Officer(s):	Secretary and President
First issued:	October 2025
Last reviewed:	16 December 2025
Next review due:	November 2026

Approved by: Committee of Spirits Victoria Association	Date Approved: 16 December 2025
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This policy aims to ensure that all Members of Spirits Victoria Association ("SVA") have a clear process for making complaints and when they are involved in a complaint are treated fairly, by providing a straightforward process for dealing with complaints such as poor or unfair treatment, fraudulent or illegal conduct, non-compliance with SVA policies, conflict of interest, bullying, discrimination, sexual harassment and victimisation.

The Constitution of SVA contains a Grievance Procedure in Division 3 of Part 3. This Policy is consistent with those requirements.

Our complaints procedure is:

- Impartial: both sides have a chance to tell their side of the story.
- Timely: all complaints will be dealt with as quickly as possible.
- Confidential: information will only be shared with parties involved.
- Fair: you will not be victimised for making a complaint.

This Policy applies to Members making a complaint about:

1. Staff of SVA
2. Members of SVA
3. Committee and Sub-Committee members of SVA
4. Performance of SVA
5. A decision made by SVA staff
6. The Committee of SVA.

Step One

Where appropriate the Member complainant can try and sort out the issue informally with the person involved. This step is specified in the Constitution and requires an attempt to resolve the dispute within 14 days. It is recommended for minor issues that can be resolved informally between the parties. In some instances, such as complaints about a staff member it will be appropriate for an 'observer' or support person to be present.

Step Two

If the issue cannot be sorted out informally, a formal complaint may be lodged by the Member. Details of the complaint must be produced in writing including full details of the issue, alleged incident/s, time, place, who was involved and any other relevant information. For each of the following types of complaints, please provide your formal complaint to the appropriate SVA person. Complaints about:

1. Staff of SVA – to the staff members' manager or if it is a manager to the President.
2. Members of SVA – to the Committee Secretary.
3. Specific Committee members of SVA – to the Secretary or the President.
4. Performance of SVA - to the Secretary or the President.
5. The Committee of SVA - to the Secretary or the President.

Step Three

A full examination of the complaint will be conducted by an SVA representative or referred to an external independent party, where appropriate, and may include the following actions:

- interview the alleged perpetrator in relation to the details of the complaint
- require the alleged perpetrator to provide a response to the allegations
- further investigate the matter including taking evidence or witness statements from other parties including parties nominated by the alleged perpetrator in defending the matter

Step Four

On completing their examination of the matter, the person conducting the investigation will make recommendations regarding a resolution, but it remains for the parties to the dispute to agree to the resolution. Only after this recommended resolution has been rejected can the next step commence.

Step Five

Rule 26 of the Constitution for SVA requires the parties of an unresolved dispute to either agree to the appointment of a mediator, and if such an appointment cannot be agreed, the SVA committee will appoint a mediator to assist the parties to negotiate an acceptable outcome.

Step Six

Rule 28 of the Constitution of SVA deals with disputes that are unable to achieve a resolution after mediation.

All documentation associated with complaints and investigations of discrimination or harassment will be handled strictly in accordance with the relevant privacy legislation.