

WWILD – SVP Association Inc.

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

COMPLAINTS AND DISPUTES

REVIEWED MAY 2022

NEXT REVIEW DUE MAY 2024

WWILD encourages and assists clients/service users, their supporters and family members, members of the community, volunteers, students and employees, to exercise their right to raise, and have resolved, any complaints or disputes they may have regarding the agency and its services in a timely manner. WWILD emphatically upholds the right of clients/service users, their supporters and family members, members of the community, volunteers and employees to raise complaints without fear of retributive action.

PROCEDURE

- WWILD recognises that clients/service users may not come forward with a complaint and accordingly WWILD workers are required to bring forward to the Manager any situations that could legitimately lead to a complaint.
- Complaints can occur on two levels and can result in different courses of action.
- A Level A complaint may consist of an expression of dissatisfaction and may be addressed fairly immediately by the worker or in consultation with others. If appropriate, this may be noted on the client's file when the complaint is related to a client or their experience. The manager should be notified of this kind of complaint to allow for the monitoring of trends.
- A Level B complaint can't be resolved straight away and requires escalation to the manager for investigation and/or response/resolution. These complaints must be recorded in the complaints register. The manager should inform the management committee of Level B complaints to allow the committee to maintain an oversight of common issues or trends that service users or other stakeholders may be raising.
- Due to the nature of their disability, WWILD recognises that some clients may need an advocate to provide support to raise and/or process complaints. Clients/service users are provided with information and support to access an independent support person of their choice to assist them through the complaints process.
- WWILD will not tolerate retributive action resulting from a complaint. Clients/service users and their significant others, volunteers, employees, students and management committee members should have no fear of retributive action in raising complaints. Workers should help communicate this to clients and their significant others through reinforcing their right to make a complaint.
- WWILD has a complaints management process provided in appropriate formats throughout the WWILD office that is accessible and transparent.
- WWILD will ensure that complaints are acknowledged within two working days and that the complainant is given feedback regarding the resolution process and outcome.

- WWILD will use complaints to consider whether improvements within the service are necessary through taking complete complaints to team meetings for reflection and learning, this is recorded in the Complaints register.
- Client supporters, family members, members of the community, volunteers and employees are able to follow the same complaints process that is available to clients if they are raising a complaint about any aspect of the service or staff members.
- The complainant can talk about their complaint:
 - To any worker at the service that they trust who will then support them to make complaint to the Manager, either verbally or written;
 - To a family member, friend or advocate to support them to make complaint to the Manager;
 - To the Manager directly;
 - To the Chairperson of the Management Committee;
 - Directly to the department responsible for the funding of the program or other relevant authority.
- The Manager will:
 - Provide a written copy of the complaints client information sheet at the earliest possible opportunity;
 - Discuss the complaint with complainant and make appropriate recording of the discussion;
 - Investigate the complaint and provide information to the service user about how the complaint is progressing;
 - Consider if human rights have been engaged in regards to the content of the complaint, whether any limitations on the human rights of the complainant, and if those limitations were reasonable and justified in the circumstances;
 - Maintain a record of the complaint and the action that is taken to resolve the complaint in the *Complaints Register*;
 - Aim to resolve the complaint with the 45 day limit under the Human Rights Act 2019;
 - If the complaint is in relation to a privacy breach, advise the complainant if they are not satisfied with the response they can refer their concerns to the Queensland Office of the Information Commissioner.
- If the complainant is unhappy with the Manager's resolution of the complaint, the complainant can take that complaint to the Chair of the Management Committee or to the department responsible for funding of the program or relevant authority.
- Complaints should come directly to the Chairperson of the Management Committee if:
 - It is a complaint about another Committee Member;
 - It is a complaint about the Manager of WWILD.
- If the complaint is referred to the Chair of the Management Committee by either the Manager or the complainant, a Complaints Committee will be formed to:
 - Consider the written complaint/representation
 - Make appropriate investigations
 - Deliver a written recommendation to Management Committee within one month of receiving the complaint.
 - The recommendation will be advisory in nature and the Management Committee will notify complainant of determination.
- Appeals Process: If the complainant is dissatisfied with how the process has been followed and or process outcome they can,

- Raise issues with the Chairperson of the Management Committee
- Request the Management Committee to call a Special General Meeting of the Organisation
- Contact the Department of Child Safety Youth and Women
- Contact the Department of Justice and Attorney-General

WWILD-SVP Association Inc. Complaints Sub-Committee:

Comprises of:

- Two members from the Management Committee of WWILD-SVP Association Inc.
- One staff member of WWILD-SVP Association Inc.

The Complaints Committee acting as a sub-committee of WWILD-SVP Association Inc. may co-opt specialist persons as required.

References:

Human Services Quality Framework

<https://www.communities.qld.gov.au/resources/dcdss/industry-partners/funding-grants/hsqf/framework.pdf>

Disability Services Act 1992 & Disability Services Bill 2006

<http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/>

ATTACHMENTS

1. Complaints Checklist
2. Chairperson's Information Sheet
3. Complaints Flow Chart / Client Complaints Procedure Information sheet
4. Critical Incidents and Complaints Register