

Kensington Neighbourhood House

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Introduction

The Kensington Neighbourhood House is committed to being open and responsive to any complaints received by house users and members of the community. It will at all times seek an outcome to a complaint which is satisfactory to all parties.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to:

- Ensure the existence of a procedure through which clients and members of the community can community any complaints regarding the Kensington Neighbourhood House's programs and services, functioning or operations.
- Enable Kensington Neighbourhood House to benefit from all complaints ensuring that they are recorded, considered, resolved and monitored.
- Establish the principles that govern the Kensington Neighbourhood House's response to complaints.
- Ensure that house users and members of the community are aware of the content of this policy and procedure.

Policy

The Kensington Neighbourhood House will:

- Maintain a formal complaints procedure to ensure that all complaints are responded to in a timely and impartial fashion.
- Ensure that all suggestions for improvement and complaints are recorded, considered and retained for process improvement purposes.
- Encourage those who have a complaint in relation to services or to the actions of one of its staff members or volunteers to express this through the formal complaints procedure.
- Ensure that the complainant is informed of his or her right to have a support person or advocate present to assist or represent them during the formal complaints procedure. Formal complains can be written or verbal. If verbal, the assisting staff member will document the complaint and either the complainant or assisting staff member must sign the document.
- Address all complaints in a confidential manner. Action to resolve the complaint will commence within two working days of the complaint being made. Only the people directly involved in making, investigating or resolving a complaint will have access to information about it.
- Ensure that the complaint investigation is impartial. No assumptions will be made nor any action taken until all relevant information has been collected and considered.
- Ensure that any complaint is free of repercussions for the complainant. Management will take all necessary steps to ensure that no victimisation occurs against anyone who makes a complaint.

The Kensington Neighbourhood House recognises the rights of individuals to approach an external agency if the formal complaints procedure has not resolved the issued to their satisfaction.

Procedure

1. Recording and Responding to Complaints

- 1.1 The Kensington Neighbourhood House invites individuals to submit complaints regarding any aspect of the organisation's operations.
- 1.2 It is anticipated that most complaints raised will be resolved informally between the complainant and staff involved. If a satisfactory resolution fails to be reached, the following procedure applies.
- 1.3 The Manager is the main point to which complaints should be directed, however, complaints may be received by any staff member.
- 1.4 As soon as possible after the receipt of a complaint, the staff member who has been informed of the complaint should complete a Complaint Form.
- 1.5 If a member of staff other than the Manager receives the complaint, this form should be forwarded directly to the Manager.
- 1.6 The Manager will log the complaint on the Complaints Register and nominate a person to address the complaint, if it is more appropriate that someone other than the manager address it.
- 1.7 Action to resolve the complaint will commence within two working days of the complaint being made (this includes contacting the complainant). A satisfactory course of action will be decided upon between the staff member and the complainant within five working days of the complaint being made.
- 1.8 The complainant should be informed of his or her right to have a support person or advocate present to assist or represent them during this process.
- 1.9 Once action has been taken, the staff member responsible for the action will complete the Complaint Form detailing the action taken and its outcome. The completed form will be signed off by the Manager and filed In the Complaints Register. The Complaints Register is a digital file saved on the shared drive and is password protected for privacy.
- 1.10 If the issue remains unresolved, the complaint will be referred to the Board for consideration and resolution.
- 1.11 If the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution proposed by the Board, the individual may wish to approach an external agency such as:
 - Consumer Affairs Victoria
 - Office of Public Advocate
 - Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission.The Board will make available contact details of these agencies as required.

2. Monitoring Complaints for Process Improvement

The Manager will analyse all Complaint Forms to identify potential changes in systems and processes that will minimise future complaints.

Related Documents

Complaints Form

Approved by Board of Management: December 2015

Proposed Review Date: December 2018