



Participant Complaints & Grievances Policy

EDGE Community Services is committed to handling and resolving participant complaints in a confidential, fair and timely manner.

EDGE Community Services supports the right of every participant to lodge a grievance if they believe a decision; behaviour or action affecting their involvement in EDGE Community Services.

We aim to resolve problems and grievances promptly and as close to the source as possible. When necessary, EDGE Community Services will escalate a grievance to the next higher level of authority for more discussion and resolution, and continue escalating it to the level above until it is resolved. Managers will do their utmost to action grievances objectively, discreetly and promptly.

Types of Complaints

The participant Complaints & Grievance Policy was developed keeping in mind the potential issues below.

Service delivery complaints

- dissatisfaction with service provision
- accuracy and timeliness of information
- communication breakdown
- cultural issues
- stress and fatigue
- incidents of conflict
- inappropriate behaviour of staff or other participants
- poor maintenance of facilities and equipment
- participant abuse, harassment, discrimination and neglect
- breach in participant confidentiality.



Complaints of potentially criminal nature:

- If the complaint has criminal implications, such as fraud or abuse, then the Police should be notified immediately.

The complaint process:

All participants of the service have the right to have any issues or concerns raised and listened to by the staff at EDGE Community Services.

- The participant should try to resolve the grievance as close to the source as possible. This can be informal and verbal. At this stage, every possible effort should be made to settle a grievance before the formal grievance process starts. If the matter still can't be resolved, the process continues and becomes formal
- To start the formal grievance the complainants must fully describe their grievance in writing, with dates and locations wherever possible and how they have already tried to settle the grievance. In circumstances where this is not possible, a verbal description (recorded by a worker) is appropriate.
- The person(s) against whom the grievance/complaint is made should be given the full details of the allegation(s) against them. They should have the opportunity and a reasonable time to respond before the process continues
- If the grievance still can't be resolved, refer the matter to the most senior manager for consideration and a final decision.
- If the matter still cannot be resolved, it may then need to be referred to a mutually agreed independent person or body or mediation, conciliation or where both parties agree, arbitration Advise the participant that they may submit the complaint in writing. See *Participant Complaint Form*.
- Follow the process for written complaints below.
- **Record complaint in the *Participant Complaint Log*.**



Anonymous complaints

- Some participants may wish to remain anonymous in making their complaint. Within the extent of the law and where possible, this should be respected and the complaint investigated.

Responding to complaints

- All participant complaints should aim to handle and resolve every complaint immediately, wherever possible, using the following process:

Written complaints

- All complaints of a serious nature, e.g. corruption, fraud, harassment, etc. should be submitted in writing and referred to the Manager for investigation
- Upon receiving a written complaint, the Manager should aim to provide a response within ten (10) working days.

The response may include the following:

- confirmation that the complaint has been received and the matter is being investigated
- an understanding of the complaint
- suggested actions for resolving the complaint
- complaint process, including the estimated timeframe for resolution
- participant satisfaction and right to appeal
- contact name and number.

Investigation

Depending on the circumstances, it may be necessary to conduct an investigation into incidents and/or allegations.

This may involve:

- collecting relevant data
- interviewing the relevant participants and employee



- interviewing relevant witnesses, such as participants, employee's co-workers or supervisors

Appeals and seeking outside assistance

- If the complaint cannot be resolved internally, an option could be to seek support from the Dispute Resolution Branch of the Department of Justice and Attorney General.

Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria
Level 4
456 Lonsdale Street
Melbourne Vic 3000
Ph: 1300 372 888
Website: <http://www.disputes.vic.gov.au>

- If the complaint still cannot be resolved, the participant should be informed that they have the right to make a complaint to the Office of the Ombudsmen.

Victorian Ombudsmen
Level 2, 570 Bourke Street
Melbourne Vic 3000
Tel: 03 9613 6222
Toll Free (Regional): 1800 806 314
TTY: 133 677 then 03 9613 6222
Email: ombudvic@ombudsman.vic.gov.au
Website: <http://www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au>

- If the complaint is directly related to the service provider and cannot be resolved internally. The participant can contact the Disability Services Commissioner.

Disability Service Commissioner
Level 30/570 Bourke Street
Melbourne Vic 3000
Toll Free: 1800 677 342
TTY: 1300 726 563
Email: complaints@odsc.vic.gov.au
Website: <http://www.relayservice.gov.au>

Document Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• File Location: Google Drive/Policies and Procedures / policies / EDGE Policy – Participant Complaints and Grievance
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	Policy
Corresponding Procedures	
Corresponding Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• EDGE Community Services Participant Complaint Form• EDGE Community Services Participant Complaints Log
Referenced Documents, Legislation & Acts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Standards - NDIS Commission Quality and Safeguards Commission Practice Standards Core Module• Rules and Guidelines - NDIS Incident Management and Reportable Incident Rules 2018 and NDIS• Complaints Management and Resolution Rules 2018• Disability Services Act 1986