

## Objective

This policy outlines Cafs approach to receiving feedback and managing complaints, and provides guidance to Cafs employees, and people who wish to make a complaint.

The purpose of this policy is:

- To establish principles which govern Cafs' response to feedback including complaints, compliments and suggestions for improvement.
- To ensure that procedures are in place through which the people we support and members of the community can communicate complaints or feedback regarding any aspect of Cafs' services, functioning or operations.
- To ensure the procedures and supports are in place to enable Cafs to address all complaints and feedback proactively, effectively and sensitively.
- To ensure all feedback is actively encouraged and recorded with the aim of learning and continual improvement of the organisation.
- To ensure that all Cafs staff and stakeholders are aware of and understand the key requirements of this policy and its associated and related procedures.

## Scope

This policy relates to the management of complaints and feedback about the provision of services by Cafs made to or about employees, the Board, CEO, volunteers, students and contractors/suppliers.

In scope are complaints raised by Cafs clients or their families and representatives, visitors, carers, advocates, statutory or regulatory bodies, government and external agencies, stakeholders, staff, suppliers or members of the public.

Matters out of scope for this policy are complaints relating to staff grievances and the Cafs Whistleblower Policy (addresses the disclosure by or for a witness, of actual or suspected wrongdoing in an organisation that reveals fraud, corruption, illegal activities, gross mismanagement, malpractice or any serious wrongdoing).

This policy applies to everyone mentioned herein including:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders;
- LGBTIQ+
- People of different race, ethnicity, cultural background
- People of all abilities;
- People of all religions or religious beliefs.

## Policy Statement

Cafs complaints and feedback management system is part of a quality culture that sees the complaint and feedback as an opportunity for improvement. Cafs is committed to being open and responsive to any complaints or feedback made by the people we support, their representatives or other members of the community and stakeholders. We will seek an outcome to a complaint that is satisfactory to all parties and will endeavour to incorporate suggestions for improvement into service development and quality improvement programs.

Our approach to complaints starts with people's rights under the:

- Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities
- Charter for Children in Out of Home Care

All clients have the right to report complaints and feedback, either through Cafs' existing channels or through external complaints authorities, e.g. Department of Health & Human Services, NDIS Quality & Safeguards Commission, Health Services Commissioner, Victorian Ombudsman.

Cafs actively seeks feedback from service users to determine the suitability of services, identify service improvements, identify potential new service lines, etc.

## Policy Commitment

Cafs are committed to the following key principles for managing complaints:

- No retribution will result from a complaint being made
- Cafs accepts anonymous complaints and will carry out a confidential investigation of the issues raised where there is enough information provided
- A person making a complaint can be supported or represented by an advocate, family member, community or legal representative, or another organisation etc.
- Responsive and effective complaints resolution and management process and information provided about internal and external complaint resolution avenues and advocacy services available.
- During the handling of a complaint, we will aim to keep regular contact with the person and/or person's representative
- Cafs aims to ensure all feedback is acknowledged within two (2) business days or sooner (this includes compliments).
- Cafs aims for the resolution of complaints to occur as soon as possible within a one month of receiving the complaint. Exceptions to this may include where an external complaint review body or law enforcement authority may be involved.
- All feedback (complaints, compliments and suggestions) information regarding the reporting, investigation, follow up and communication of matters shall be kept securely on RiskMan
- Complaints concerning the CEO or the Board are dealt with the same as other complaints, except they are referred to the Board President/Vice President.
- Complaints concerning the Board President are to be referred to the Board Vice President.

- Cafs will take proactive and decisive action to manage any unreasonable, difficult or abusive conduct by people making complaints, personal abuse however is never acceptable. We will support our staff through challenging complaints.
- Cafs will ensure all staff, management and volunteers receive information on complaints handling as part of their induction and ongoing learning opportunities as required.

### More Information

Definitions for this policy can be found in the [Cafs Definitions and Acronyms Manual](#).

Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 is a Victorian law that sets out the basic rights, freedoms and responsibilities of all people in Victoria. It is about the relationship between government and the people it serves. The Charter requires public authorities, such as Victorian state and local government departments and agencies, and people delivering services on behalf of government, to act consistently with the human rights in the Charter.

Charter for Children in Out of Home Care

The Charter has been especially prepared for children who can't live with their parents and are in out-of-home care. It lists what children can expect from all those people who look after them and work with them when they are in our care.