

Related Policies

Complaints
Child Protection
Grievance and Dispute Handling
Legal Responsibilities and Authority
Sexual Harassment

Purpose

This policy describes the role of the Catholic Education Office (CEO) when receiving and managing complaints.

This policy is also designed as a template for Archdiocesan schools to develop school based policy and procedures in respect of complaint intake and management.

Policy

The CEO manages complaints in a professional, timely manner with regard to the principles of transparency, confidentiality and procedural fairness.

The CEO contact officer for complaints is the Head of Directorate Services.

Complaints are received in written or verbal forms with serious complaints being required in writing to ensure the complaint is recorded accurately.

The Head of Directorate Services advises the Director of the complaint and a decision is taken as to who in the CEO will investigate the complaint on behalf of the Director.

This policy does not apply to child protection complaints. Child protection complaints are managed by the Head of Human Resource Services and are subject to NSW/ACT policies and relevant Acts.

Definitions

Complaint

An expression of dissatisfaction made to an organisation relating to its staff and/or services and/or products where a response is either requested or implied.

Complainant

The person (s) who makes a complaint.

Procedures

The CEO staff member appointed to investigate the complaint (now referred to as the investigating officer) will be responsible for managing the complaint on behalf of the Director. The investigating officer receives and documents accurately all relevant information in the context of an action plan. As appropriate, the investigating officer consults with colleagues for specific advice e.g. that relating to Employment Relations or Harassment.

The action plan developed by the investigating officer includes, but is not limited to:

- Relevant information about persons involved and those to be interviewed
- Establishing a confidential complaint file in TRIM to store securely all relevant details e.g. faxes, emails, interview records, and statements
- A risk assessment of relevant matters associated with the complaint.

The investigating officer provides the Director with a complaint outline and the action plan.

Procedures for investigation reflect the nature and gravitas of the complaint. Some matters may be referred to a school for resolution while others matters may require notification to other authorities such as the Police.

When complaints are referred to the school for resolution, the investigating officer provides school personnel with appropriate advice.

When complaints are referred to the Police, the investigating officer will follow and document the instructions given by the Police Officer(s) responsible for the case.

The person(s) about whom the complaint is made is notified of the relevant complaint details and provided with the opportunity to respond.

The investigating officer informs and requests of all parties, the need to observe confidentiality in the complaint resolution process, including that applying to the support person that parties may nominate.

The investigating officer may refer parties for counselling support should the situation warrant.

In conducting the complaint inquiry, the investigating officer conducts and records interviews with relevant parties as appropriate.

When a resolution is reached, letters of closure including findings as appropriate are sent from the Director/Director's nominee to the relevant parties.

The Director is informed of all complaints and is informed of up to date information, including TRIM references, relating to the investigation.

In certain instances, complaint resolution may require a mediation and/or conflict resolution support process. The investigating officer would not ordinarily be the officer who would facilitate these processes.

References

Nil

Forms

Nil

| | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Approved By: | Service Area Leadership Team |
| Issuing Service Area: | Directorate Services |
| Implementation Date: | August 2012 |
| Policy Revision Date: | June 2014 |
| CEO Contact Officer: | Head of Directorate Services |
| TRIM Record Number: | R116086 |