



Complaints Handling Policy

Aim

The Infants' Home actively encourages feedback and is committed to quality improvement. We recognise that The Infants' Home engages with many stakeholders – families, clients, customers, partners, donors, community members and beyond – who may seek to raise a concern or complaint.

The Infants' Home recognises that complaints should be managed fairly, efficiently, and effectively.

Scope

This policy applies to services provided by The Infants Home.

While this is an overarching policy, for complaints relating to our family day care or long day care services more specific information about the complaints handling process is addressed in the related service-level policies:

- Family Day Care – *Grievances and Complaints Policy*
- Centre Based Care – *Grievances and Complaints for Families Policy*

This policy does not apply to staff grievances. For staff complaints please see:

- The Infants Home *Grievance Handling Policy*

All other grievances and complaints will be managed following this policy. This includes, but is not limited to, complaints regarding our events, fundraising, governance, learning/training programs, playgroups, postnatal services, our records search service and other services we provide alone or in partnership, and our handling of matters under the National Redress System. OR and our handling of direct personal response processes.

Key Terms

Feedback	Information about what is working well including compliments and praise.
Complaint	Dissatisfaction with any aspect of The Infants' Home's service provision.
Complainant	The party making the complaint.

Policy

The Infants' Home will:

- address each complaint with integrity and in an equitable, objective, and unbiased manner.
- ensure that the person handling a complaint is different from any staff member whose conduct or service is being complained about.
- provide a safe environment for making complaints and take all reasonable steps to ensure that people making complaints are not adversely affected because a complaint has been made by them or on their behalf.
- manage complaints confidentially (as per relevant legislation)
- inform the complainant of the complaints handling process
- regularly review the complaints management system and complaint data and implement appropriate system changes arising from these reviews.
- report to the Regulatory Authority any complaints which allege a breach of the legislation, or which allege that the safety, health or wellbeing of a child is being compromised.
- accept anonymous complaints however investigation and resolution may be limited if insufficient information is provided.

Procedure



1. Frontline resolution

We aim to resolve complaints at the first level, the frontline. Wherever possible staff will be adequately equipped to respond to complaints, including being given appropriate authority, training and supervision. The Infants' Home encourages the resolving of any grievances through discussion and open dialogue between the relevant parties. Most complaints can be resolved at the frontline.

2. Escalate complaint

If the parties involved are dissatisfied or unable to resolve the complaint at the frontline, the complaint can be escalated to the relevant manager. The manager will endeavour to address and resolve concerns. If the complaint cannot be resolved by the manager or the complainant remains dissatisfied, a formal complaint can be lodged with The Infants' Home's Chief Executive Officer.

3. Receipt of complaints

The complainant is invited to send their complaint in writing to The Infants' Home CEO via email at (ceo@theinfantshome.org.au). The complaint should detail the following:

- The complainant's contact details
- The issues of concern
- The outcome desired
- Any other relevant information

The CEO will acknowledge receipt of each complaint promptly.

4. Assessment

After acknowledging receipt of the complaint, the CEO will determine how the complaint will best be managed. This may involve consideration of:

- How serious, complicated or urgent the complaint is
- Whether the complaint raises concerns about people's health and safety
- How the complainant is being affected
- Whether the complainant's desired outcomes are viable
- Whether the complaint should be managed under a different policy (e.g. service-specific complaints policy)
- Who may need to be involved in investigating or addressing the complaint (e.g. Manager, Leadership Team, Human Resources team, Board of Directors)
- Whether the complaint is outside the scope of our organisation or requires the involvement of third parties.

Depending on the nature and complexity of the complaint, it may be possible at this stage to resolve the complaint directly. The CEO will determine whether the complaint can be resolved or requires further investigation.

5. Investigation

If the complaint warrants an investigation, the CEO (or delegate) will investigate the claims made in the complaint. This may involve communicating directly with the people involved, gathering documentation, making enquiries, seeking external advice (if required). The complainant will be kept up to date on our progress, particularly if there are any delays.

6. Outcome and Closure

Following consideration of the complaint and any investigation into the issues raised, the CEO (or delegate) will contact the complainant and advise:

- The outcome of the complaint
- The reason(s) for our decision
- The remedy or resolution(s) that we have proposed or put in place, and
- Any options for review that may be available to the complainant, such as an internal review, external review or appeal.

Records Keeping

The Infants' Home will keep comprehensive records about:

- The complaint
- How the complaint was managed
- The outcome(s) of the complaint
- Any records related to the complaint (e.g. file notes, correspondence)
- Any outstanding actions that need to be followed up.

All complaints will be recorded in The Infants' Home's risk management software to ensure that outcomes are properly implemented, monitored, and reported as necessary.

Alternative avenues for dealing with complaints

Complainants will be informed about any internal or external review options available to them including the escalation of the complaint to any relevant Ombudsman or oversight bodies.

Related documents

- *Whistleblower policy*
- *Grievance Handling Policy (Staff)*
- *Grievances and Complaints Policy (Family Day Care)*
- *Grievances and Complaints for Families Policy (Centre Based Care)*
- *National Redress Scheme Procedures*

Statutory Legislation and Considerations

- [Children \(Education and Care Services National Law Application\) Act 2010](#)
- [Education and Care Services National Regulations 2017](#)
- [NSW Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998](#)
- [National Redress Scheme](#)
- [Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 \(NSW\)](#)
- [Charitable Fundraising Regulation 2021 \(NSW\)](#)
- [Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 \(Cth\)](#)

Sources

- NSW Ombudsman (2004) *Effective Complaint Handling*

Date Effective: September 2021

Authorisation and Review

Date to be Reviewed	Date Reviewed	Authorised By	Approval Date	Comments
	September 2021	E Robinson		Policy created
September 2023				