

**POL 0065****Compliments and Complaints Management Policy**

Responsibilities and Delegations	
The Policy Applies To	Committee of Management Administration Staff Support Workers Program Managers, Program Developer, Assistant Program Manager Senior Management Assistant Executive Director Executive Director
Specific Responsibilities	Administration Staff Support Workers Program Managers, Program Developer, Assistant Program Manager Senior Management Assistant Executive Director Executive Director
Policy Approval	Committee of Management (Aurora Support Services)

Policy Context – this policy relates to :	
Standards	NDIS Practice Standards Core Module 2, Provider Governance and Operation Management - Feedback and Complaints Management
Legislation	National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 National Disability Insurance Scheme (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018 NDIS Code of Conduct NDIS Practice Standards National Disability Services Zero Tolerance Framework and Positive Behaviour Support Principles NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986
Contractual Obligations	NDIS Terms of Business Aurora Support Services Individual Participant Agreements Continuity of Support Program Funding Agreement Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
Organisational Related Policies / Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Decision Making and Choice PolicyPerformance Management PolicyParticipation and Inclusion PolicyCommunication PolicyCompliments and Complaints (Easy English) PolicyInternal Workplace Investigation Procedure
Organisational Related Forms / Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Compliments and Complaints Management RegisterNDIS How to Make a Complaint (in brochure stand)Participant Information PackStaff Information Pack

**POL 0065****Compliments and Complaints Management Policy****Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to establish methods and mechanisms that facilitate all stakeholders of the organisation to provide feedback, including compliments and complaints, and to ensure that all feedback is actioned and responded to appropriately and fairly.

Policy Statement

Aurora Support Services is committed to providing quality supports for our participants and their families, to providing a positive and supportive working environment for our staff, and to having a positive impact within our community. An important part of doing this is listening to what people have to say about our services.

Aurora Support Services welcomes feedback from our stakeholders, and recognises this as an important instrument for the continuous improvement of our organisation and the support that we provide. All feedback – whether it be positive or negative – is an opportunity for improvement.

All parties have a right to give feedback without fear of negative repercussions. Aurora Support Services will take all reasonable steps to protect the privacy of people who make a complaint, and to ensure that **no-one will be adversely affected as a result of making a complaint, or a complaint being made on their behalf.**

Aurora Support Services commits to dealing with complaints promptly and fairly and in a manner that respects the rights of both complainants and respondents. Responding to and resolving complaints will be given a high priority within the organisation.

In regards to seeking and receiving feedback, Aurora Support Services will do the following:

- Maintain positive attitudes towards feedback, including compliments and complaints
- Actively seek feedback about our services from our participants, families and staff
- Ensure that participants and families are provided with information about how to give feedback about the organisation, including information in a format that is easily understood, as well as information about external complaint pathways and advocacy support
- Treat every person who provides feedback with respect
- Reinforce the organisation's ongoing commitment to quality service delivery, and the important role that feedback plays in this
- Address and investigate where necessary to do so, all issues or concerns relating to all employees, including senior management
- Record all feedback, and engage in data analysis to identify and explore trends that highlight opportunities to improve service delivery and management of compliments and complaints
- Continue training and development to ensure staff members are trained in the relevant processes for both making and receiving complaints and compliments
- Maintain an effective compliments and complaints management processes as part of a robust quality improvement framework

Procedure**Providing Feedback**

Aurora Support Services embraces a “no wrong door” approach to providing feedback. This means that

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people can provide us with feedback in whichever way they feel comfortable to do so, including (but not limited to):

- In person, by speaking to a staff member that they trust (or for staff members, by speaking to their Line Manager or another member of Management staff with whom they feel comfortable)
- By phone
- In a letter or by email
- In a response to an annual survey sent by the organization
- By completing the online Feedback Form (link to be made available via email signatures, website, and QR codes) - <https://forms.office.com/r/AHwSbST7aB> (full version) or <https://forms.office.com/r/zNxr4vLkZE> (easy read version) - available/open at all times.

Where the mode of communication allows, people can choose to submit feedback anonymously. This can, however, limit the effectiveness of the organisation's response to the feedback.

When someone chooses not to provide their name, it means that it is challenging and/or not possible to:

- Acknowledge or thank the person for their feedback
- Contact the person for more information or to clarify details of their feedback
- Identify a specific incident or person to which the feedback relates, in order to follow up effectively
- Identify patterns or trends across feedback received by the organisation
- Inform the person of what actions have been taken in response to their feedback

Responding to Feedback

Aurora Support Services will make every effort to ensure that all feedback is acknowledged and that all people who provide feedback receive an appropriate response. The exception to this is when a person has provided feedback anonymously, and is therefore not able to be contacted.

For compliments, the most relevant staff member (in most cases this will be the person to whom the feedback is provided) will respond to the person who has provided the compliment, acknowledging and thanking them, and confirming that we will share the compliment with relevant staff members. Compliments should be passed on to the relevant Program Manager and/or Line Manager, to be recorded and actioned.

For complaints, the relevant Program Manager or Senior Manager will contact the person who has made the complaint to acknowledge and thank them for their feedback and to discuss the complaint process and/or actions to be taken in response their complaint.

Support workers who receive feedback from participants, family members, or members of the community are encouraged to receive this feedback and provide an initial response – acknowledging what the person has said, thanking them for their time and feedback, and informing them that you will pass on what they've said – and to pass the complaint on to their Program Manager for actioning and recording.

Informal Approaches to Resolving Differences

Aurora Support Services encourages an informal approach to resolving differences, in the first instance. This means speaking directly to the person with whom you have a concern.

Sometimes people don't realise that a particular behaviour is not appreciated, and a discussion between the parties involved may resolve any misunderstandings and prevent the situation from escalating.

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Where someone finds another person's actions or behaviour to be unacceptable, the organisation encourages the following:

- Speak to the person directly. Tell the person that you don't like the behaviour in question, and that you want it to stop
- Speak to the person in private. Don't confront someone in front of others
- Don't involve others
- Always speak respectfully to others
- Listen to what the other person has to say

If you feel that you cannot speak to the person directly, or if the unwelcome behaviour continues, you may then wish to proceed to lodging a formal complaint.

The Formal Complaint Process

Where informal measures of resolving differences are unsuccessful or not appropriate, a formal approach to lodging a complaint may be required.

Participants, families and Support Workers are encouraged to speak to the relevant Program Manager for their service to lodge a complaint. However:

- Where a person's feedback is in relation to their Program Manager, they are encouraged to speak to the relevant Service Director for their site.
- Where participants or families may feel more comfortable speaking with a support worker to provide their feedback, they are welcome to do so. Support workers are encouraged to receive this feedback and provide an initial response and to pass the complaint on to their Program Manager for actioning and recording.
- Program Managers, Administrative Team members and Director Staff should speak to their Line Manager to make a complaint, or where this is not appropriate, to the next most senior member of staff.

Community members are not expected to be aware of the organisational structure, and as such, may make a complaint to any member of staff. As above, support workers are encouraged to provide an initial response to the person, and to pass the complaint on to their Program Manager for further action.

To ensure that complaints are made in a person's own words, people are encouraged wherever possible to submit complaints in writing. A person receiving a complaint may assist the person to put their complaint in writing, by writing down what they have to say, and confirming with them that what has been written is correct.

Staff members are encouraged to use the organisation's *Lodgement of Complaint Form* (Appendix 1) to submit their complaints to their Line Manager.

Where possible and relevant, people should include in their complaint:

- Specific details of the complaint
- Dates and times of events relevant to the complaint
- The names and titles of any other people involved, including any witnesses
- Copies of any documents related to the complaint
- What outcome the person is seeking from their complaint (what can be done to make it better?)

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Following receipt of a complaint, the relevant Manager within the organisation will take on the role of *Complaint Case Manager* and is responsible for implementing the complaint process. They will provide the complainant with a written *Acknowledgement of Lodgement of a Complaint*. They will determine the most appropriate actions required in response to the complaint. This may include interviewing witnesses and/or carrying out further investigation.

Where a complaint or feedback includes an allegation which is better addressed using the *Internal Workplace Investigation* Procedure – that is, an allegation of sexual misconduct, bullying, abuse, assault, theft or other behaviour of a similarly serious nature – the relevant Manager will make the determination to do so, and whether the Internal Workplace Investigation Procedure is best implemented alongside or in place of the Formal Complaint Process outlined here.

Where a complaint has been made about a staff member, the person's Line Manager will:

- Provide them with the details of the complaint about them. This will be deidentified where relevant to do so, to protect the confidentiality of the complainant.
- Conduct an interview with the person to ascertain their point of view. The person may choose to bring a support person to this interview, if they wish to.
- Invite the person to respond in writing, using the *Response to Complaint* form (Appendix 2).

After receiving written reports from both the complainant and the respondent, and conducting any further investigation that they deem necessary, the Complaint Case Manager will determine the most appropriate course of action, using the *Complaint Outcome/Action Plan* Template (Appendix 3). This person is responsible for conducting follow-ups to ensure that the relevant actions are completed. When the actions are complete, the Complaint Case Manager then determines whether it is appropriate to sign the complaint off as "Resolved" or for identifying further actions still required.

In the event that a complaint is dealt with at a local level (i.e. not requiring a full internal investigation or action from an external body), the complaint process will be deemed to be completed, and all hard-copy documentation relating to the complaint will be placed in a locked area of the Executive Director's office. Letters of *Finalisation of Complaint* will be forwarded to the complainant, and respondent where necessary.

Where a solution cannot be reached, or the person is unsatisfied with the outcome of their complaint, they or the Complaint Case Manager may choose to refer their complaint to a more senior member of staff, as per the flow chart below.

Recording of Feedback

All feedback will be recorded on the organisation's *Compliments and Complaints Register*. To protect the privacy of complainants, access to the Compliments and Complaints Register is limited to Directors. As such, Program Managers should inform their relevant Service Director of feedback that they have received and actioned, for inclusion in the Compliments and Complaints Register. This register records the details of the feedback and any relevant follow-up actions including investigation and external reporting requirements, where these are deemed necessary and/or appropriate.

The Compliments and Complaints Register is reviewed at 6-weekly Quality Meetings with a view to identify organisational trends, areas of success and opportunities for improvement, and is reported on to the Committee of Management bi-monthly.

Informing People of Complaint Pathways

Aurora Support Services makes every effort to ensure that participants are aware of their right to give feedback, and of the complaint pathways.

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Some of the means by which this is done include:

- Including information about complaints in participant information packs, given to participants at intake and when service agreements renew
- “Making a Complaint at Aurora” Posters (Appendix 4) displayed in participant spaces, in an Easy Read format
- Complaint information included in the quarterly *FYI Newsletter*, sent to all contacts of the organisation and available via Facebook and the organisation’s website.
- A ‘provide feedback here’ link available in all staff members’ email signatures, via the organisation’s website and accessible by QR codes displayed at sites; available in both a standard and an Easy Read version.

Staff members also receive training at induction in responding to complaints, and a yearly refresher training.

Advocacy Support

Participants have the right to access support from an advocate to provide feedback, if they wish.

Participants can contact People with Disability Australia for advocacy support.

People with Disability Australia

Phone – 1800 422 015

Website - <https://pwd.org.au/get-help/individual-advocacy/>

Or participants can contact the following organisations or access their ‘Find an Advocate’ databases to find an access an advocate of their choosing:

Victorian Advocacy League for Individuals with Disability (VALID)

Phone – (03) 9416 4003

Website – <https://valid.org.au/resources-and-media/resources/list-victorian-advocacy-organisations/>

Disability Advocacy Resource Unit (DARU)

Phone – (03) 9639 5807

Website – <https://www.daru.org.au/organisation-type/individual-advocacy>

Disability Advocacy Network Australia (DANA)

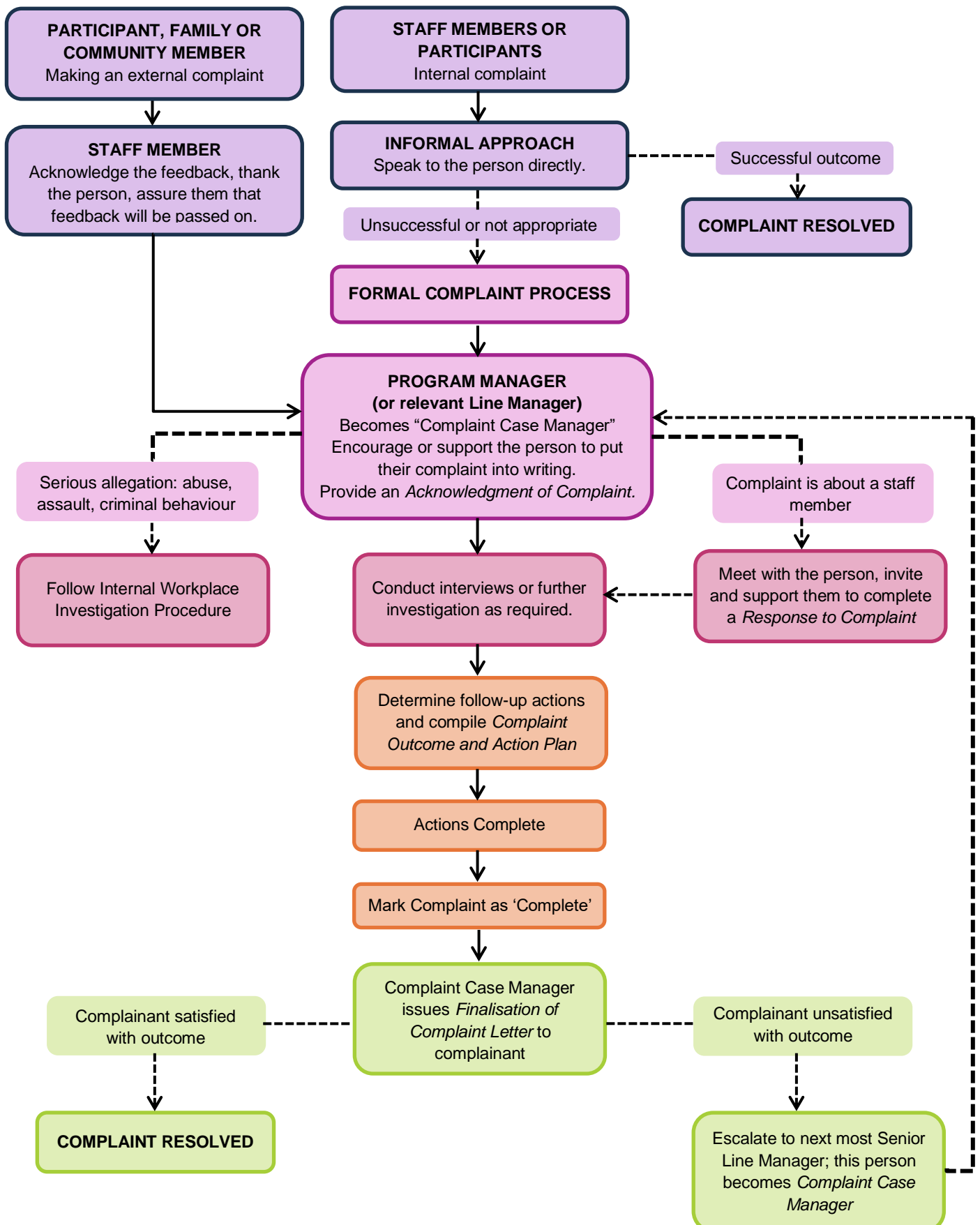
Website – <https://www.dana.org.au/find-an-advocate/>

Continuous Improvement

The Services Director/s are responsible for reviewing and updating this policy on a two yearly basis. However, if at any time the legislative, policy or funding environment is so altered that the policy is no longer appropriate in its current form, the policy will be reviewed immediately and amended accordingly.

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Appendix 1

LODGEMENT OF COMPLAINT

This form is to be used in line with the organisations *Compliments and Complaints Management Policy*. Aurora Support Services is committed to dealing with complaints promptly and fairly and in a manner that respects the rights of both complainants and respondents.

NAME:

Please provide a statement giving specific details of your complaint including:

- Specific details of your complaint
- Dates and times of events relevant to your complaint
- The names and title of any other people involved, including any witnesses
- Copies of any documents related to your complaint
- What outcome you are seeking from your complaint

STATEMENT

If insufficient space, please write on a separate sheet, sign, date and attach to this form

Signature:

Date:

Form Received By:

Date:

Appendix 2

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RESPONSE TO COMPLAINT

Date:

Persons present:

Response from the person about whom a complaint has been made:

RESPONSE

If insufficient space, please write on a separate sheet, sign, date and attach to this form

Signature:

Date:

Appendix 3

COMPLAINT OUTCOME / ACTION PLAN

- ☐ No action required
- ☐ Mediation between parties
- ☐ Addressed via Performance Management Policy
- ☐ Referred to external counselling – may apply to one or both parties

Actions Implemented:

Date	Action	Signature of Manager

Complaint resolved: Yes ☐ No ☐

Signature of Complaint Case Manager:

Date	Action	Signature of Manager



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Appendix 4: Poster for display in program rooms – add photos of relevant people for each site

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MAKING A COMPLAINT AT AURORA



IF I AM NOT HAPPY ABOUT SOMETHING AT AURORA



I CAN TELL SOMEONE AND MAKE A COMPLAINT



IN A PHONE CALL



IN A LETTER OR EMAIL



USING MY PHONE

I CAN SPEAK TO:



MY SUPPORT WORKERS



MY PROGRAM MANAGER(S)



A DIRECTOR



AN ADVOCATE OR SOMEONE I TRUST CAN HELP ME



NDIS Quality
and Safeguards
Commission

I CAN ALSO SPEAK TO THE NDIS ABOUT AURORA
www.ndiscommission.gov.au