



SECTION 6: DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS

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In this section we explain the process for dealing with feedback, positive and constructive from clients/user groups. We also look at the complaints process for employees in relation to the Committee as employers.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FOR MEMBERS/CLIENTS

All Community organisations need complaints procedures for their users. Ideally complaints will be resolved between the parties without involving others. However a written procedure for the resolution of complaints made against employees of the organisation or of the organisation itself is essential.

The Complaints procedure should be displayed on the wall of your organisation and written copies available to anyone who requests it.

The procedure should state:

- The client has a right to complain
- Any complaints will be taken seriously
- Both parties in the complaints procedure will be given a full and fair hearing
- There is a system in place to deal with complaints that must be followed
- An independent mediator can be called in if needed
- Confidentiality of the complaint will be maintained. Only the parties involved and the designated Committee/Managers will be notified.

Complaint Procedure for Users of the Downtown Community Centre

This procedure is to be worked through step by step. At the completion of each step, if both parties are satisfied the procedure can be ended.

If parties are not satisfied continue to the next step.

At any point of intervention, all parties have the right to have their Supervisors and/or advocate and/or whanau/family support present.

The complaint will remain confidential to the parties involved.

This grievance procedure will be exercised in a way that will ensure any person/organisation complaining has the opportunity to be heard and treated fairly.

Step 1. Approach the person/organisation directly about the problem.

Step 2. If not satisfied:

Give a written description of the grievance to the Chairperson of the Downtown Community Centre's Committee.

The Chairperson will notify the person/organisation making the complaint that the complaint has been received.

This written grievance is a private document and will be seen only by the Committee, the independent mediator and the person/organisation the complaint is directed at.

Step 3. The Committee will read and discuss the complaint at their next meeting.

Step 4. The person/organisation complained about will be notified of the complaint and will be given an opportunity to read the written complaint and respond to the Committee.

If the Committee is unable to resolve the complaint at this stage, it will move to Step 5.

- Step 5.** The Committee will bring in an independent mediator to enable both the person/organisation making the complaint and the person/organisation the complaint is against to be heard. The person/organisation making the complaint will be given two dates to choose from, and the meeting will take place within two weeks of the Committee meeting.
- Step 6.** If mediation is not successful, three members of the Committee, including the Chairperson, will meet with both parties together with an independent mediator as facilitator. From this meeting the three Committee members will make a final decision and direct any action to take place. This meeting will happen within two weeks of the previous meeting. Again, the person/organisation making the complaint will be able to have two dates to choose from for the meeting.
- Step 7.** The three members will report the decision to the Committee, the person/organisation making the complaint and the person/organisation complained against within one week of the previous meeting.

FEEDBACK FORM

Having a feedback form or comments form can be an easy and effective way to get feedback from the users of the Community Centre


You could set up a Comments/Suggestions box where people can write down their feedback, suggestions or concerns in an anonymous and non-threatening way.

Below are some sample feedback forms, which you can photocopy and cut.



COMMUNITY CENTRE FEEDBACK FORM

Please write any comments or suggestions you have about the Community Centre, its programmes and facilities.

 _____


Date: _____

Please leave your name and contact details if you would like speak to us.

**Thank you.
Your feedback is appreciated**

COMMUNITY CENTRE FEEDBACK FORM

Please write any comments or suggestions you have about the Community Centre, its programmes and facilities.

 _____

Date: _____

Please leave your name and contact details if you would like speak to us.

**Thank you.
Your feedback is appreciated**

PERSONAL GRIEVANCES AND DISPUTES PROCEDURES FOR EMPLOYEES

This is an essential requirement of every employment contract.

The Employment Contracts Act sets out three stages for resolving personal grievances:

- a) The employer and employee should discuss the grievance or dispute
- b) If the problem is not resolved the employee should give the employer a written statement of the grievance or dispute. The employer should give the employee a written statement of his or her view of the dispute
- c) If the problem is unable to be resolved the employee or employer can apply to the Employment Tribunal for help.



For an example of a Personal Grievance and Disputes procedure refer to the Employment Contract example on Page 57



For more information Contact:

Employment Relations Infoline 0800 800 863