

## COMPLAINTS HANDLING

### 1. Introduction

Christian Women Communicating Intl in Australia (CWCI Australia) is committed to efficient, effective and ethical programs and services that serve our clients. CWCI Australia understands the value of an effective complaints policy and procedure in improving services and uncovering wrongdoing.

### 2. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure CWCI Australia handles complaints efficiently, effectively and ethically. This policy provides guidance to the Board, Staff and Members responding to complaints.

### 3. Definitions

- (1) Board: National Management Board
- (2) Staff: Employees of CWCI Intl in Australia Incorporated
- (3) Member/s: Members of CWCI Intl in Australia Incorporated
- (4) People accessing programmes or services: Attendees at CWCI Australia Events, KYB Groups and Safaris.

### 4. Scope

- (1) This Policy applies to complaints made by people accessing programmes or services of CWCI Australia.
- (2) This policy does not apply to complaints made by the Board, Staff and Members. More appropriate avenues for these individuals to raise a concern or complaint can be found in CWCI Australia's other policies and procedures.

### 5. Complaint handling process

- (1) In summary, CWCI Australia's complaints handling procedure involves the following steps:
  - (a) Facilitation of complaints;
  - (b) Receiving complaints;
  - (c) Assessing complaints;
  - (d) Responding to complaints; and
  - (e) Learning from complaints.
- (2) At all times CWCI Australia, its Board, Staff and Members should apply this procedure in good faith, prioritising early resolution, accessibility and responsiveness.
- (3) When applying this procedure, the CWCI Australia President and Board should also consider whether there may be legislation or regulations or other CWCI Australia policies applicable to the particular complaint – for example, complaints involving a failure to protect children.

## **6. Facilitation of complaints**

- (1) The Board will ensure that the making of complaints is facilitated within CWCI Australia by:
  - (a) providing people making complaints with information about CWCI Australia's complaint handling process;
  - (b) setting time frames for complaint responses;
  - (c) ensuring no detriment to people making complaints;
  - (d) allowing for anonymous complaints and confidential investigations if appropriate;
  - (e) ensuring information about the complaint procedure is publicly available on CWCI Australia's website - [www.cwciaus.org.au](http://www.cwciaus.org.au); and
  - (f) not charging a fee for complaints.
- (2) The Board will communicate the complaints procedure to the public and people making complaints through a publicly available Complaints Handling Procedure document.

## **7. Receiving complaints**

- (1) When a complaint is received, CWCI Australia will:
  - (a) provide the person making a complaint with the Complaint Handling Procedure;
  - (b) acknowledge the complaint;
  - (c) advise of expected timeframes; and
  - (d) explain next steps.
- (2) All complaints must be recorded and documented upon receipt.

## **8. Assessing complaints**

- (1) Complaints will be assessed after acknowledgement.
- (2) The complaint will first be assessed to establish the desired outcome sought by the person making the complaint, and whether the issue/s raised in the complaint are within CWCI Australia's control.
- (3) If the matter is within CWCI Australia's control, consideration will be given to how the complaint can be managed, with reference to:
  - (a) the seriousness and urgency of the complaint;
  - (b) any identifiable risks to CWCI Australia, its Board members, staff, general members or people accessing programs or services;
  - (c) whether further investigation is required; and
  - (d) what would (or could) be involved in resolving the complaint.
- (4) CWCI Australia will keep the complainant informed throughout this process.

## **9. Responding to complaints**

- (1) After a complaint is assessed and/or investigated, CWCI Australia will determine an outcome and communicate to the person making the complaint:
  - (a) the outcome of the complaint and any action taken;
  - (b) the reason/s for the outcome;
  - (c) the remedy, resolutions or fixes that have been put in place; and
  - (d) options for review of the outcome.

## 10. Complaints connected to third party programs

- (1) CWCI Australia pursues its charitable purposes in part through collaborating with a third party or third parties to deliver programs overseas.
- (2) CWCI Australia is required by the ACNC External Conduct Standards (ECS) to consider and monitor complaints made to, about and by third parties collaborating with CWCI Australia outside of Australia.
- (3) As part of its External Conduct Standards risk assessment, the Board must determine what level of oversight it requires in relation to these complaints, with reference to matters including the:
  - (a) level of risk associated with the operations;
  - (b) relationship with the third party;
  - (c) complaint handling procedures within the third party; and
  - (d) consequences of a complaint about overseas operations not being acted upon.
- (4) The Board must consider whether it is appropriate to:
  - (a) impose complaint handling obligations on third parties through a Memorandum of Understanding or other agreement;
  - (b) offer training to third parties on complaint management;
  - (c) require third parties to produce a complaint management policy or procedure (or provide one for them to adopt); and/or
  - (d) establish a mechanism for any participants of a third party to make a complaint directly to CWCI Australia;
- (5) CWCI Australia may require a third party to report to CWCI Australia on any complaints received by the third party.

## 11. Record keeping

- (1) CWCI Australia will keep records about:
  - (a) Complaints received,
  - (b) The outcome of the complaint; and
  - (c) Outstanding actions to be followed up.

The Board must review records of complaints on an annual basis.

## 12. Authorisation

This policy was adopted by resolution of the CWCI Australia National Management Board.

Approved by National Management Board	Scheduled Review Date
29 July 2022	July 2025