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| **Insert name of organisation** |
| **Dispute Resolution for Employees and Volunteers Policy Template** |

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| Policy number: Date adopted: |
| Authorised by: |
| Date last reviewed: | Reviewed by **Insert name of officer, position title** | Date of next review: |

Refer to Section 6 below for information on the process for policy review.

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| **Policy context:** This policy relates to: |
| Legislation or other requirements | **Insert legislation that applies** |
| Other standards | **Insert other accreditation systems that apply** |
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***1. Purpose: Why do we have a dispute resolution for employees and volunteers policy?***

Employers have a responsibility to provide their employees and volunteers with appropriate ways to resolve complaints and disputes involving them. As an employer, we need effective ways to resolve disputes with and between our employees and volunteers, and to minimise the adverse effects on the employees and volunteers concerned and on clients and others in the organisation. As far as possible, we also need to ensure a positive outcome for any complaint or dispute.

Effective guidelines for how we provide opportunities for resolving any problems employees or volunteers may have, and how we deal with concerns about performance or conduct, will assist us to act fairly and maximise the likelihood of positive resolutions to these issues.

***2. Scope***

This policy will apply to all staff and volunteers of the organisation.

***3. Policy statement: Our commitment***

**Insert organisation name** is committed to providing our employees and volunteers with appropriate opportunities to resolve disputes and have their concerns heard. Specifically, we will:

* + - follow the principles of procedural fairness in the structure and operation of the dispute resolution process for employees and volunteers
	+ notify the employee or volunteer of the outcome of their complaint
	+ take the outcomes of complaints by those working in the service into account in planning improvements to the future management and support of employees and volunteers.

***4. Procedures***

*4.1 Dispute resolution for employees and volunteers*

We follow these steps when a complaint is made by an employee or volunteer, or in circumstances where a manager (or the board/management committee) has serious concerns, or has received allegations, about the performance or conduct of an employee or volunteer:

* registering the complaint
* investigating the complaint
* review at a higher level of authority
* formal external procedure (where relevant)
* using dispute resolution to inform employee and volunteer training and development and management processes.

*Step 1: Registering the complaint*

A complaint from or about an employee or volunteer is registered immediately it is received and acknowledged in writing in a minimum of seven days.

If the matter is an allegation or concern about the employee or volunteer, they will be informed in writing within seven days of the matter coming to the attention of their manager.

*Step 2: Investigating the complaint*

Each registered complaint will be investigated and assessed in this way:

* **Describe the exact procedure you follow. Who is delegated to deal with the matter? What records are kept? What form do records and written advice take? What advice is given to the employee or volunteer about support, advocacy, representation and independent observers? How and when will you involve an employer organisation? Which employer organisations are you a member of? Which union are your employees members of? What is the timeframe for reaching resolution? What options are there to resolve a matter?**

The matter is considered finalised:

* if the employee or volunteer is satisfied with the response to a complaint they have made, or
* in the case of allegations or concerns about an employee or volunteer, if the manager is satisfied that all appropriate issues have been investigated and resolved.

In each case, the final outcome is recorded in the individual’s file record and the statistical summary.

*Step 3: Review at a higher level of authority*

When the employee or volunteer is not satisfied with theinvestigation and proposed resolution of their complaint or of allegations against them, they can seek a further review of the matter at a higher level within the organisation.

**Describe what will be done to review the response to the complaint. Who is delegated to deal with the matter? What records will be kept (individual employee's/volunteer's file record documenting the process and the outcome, and including all correspondence and reasons for decisions)? When and how will the employee/volunteer be informed in writing of the outcome?**

*Step 4: Formal external procedure*

A formal external complaints procedure may follow Step 3 if the employee or volunteer is still not satisfied. The opportunities may include:

* **List these and specify where and how these processes can be arranged**

*Step 5. Using dispute resolution to inform employee and volunteer training and development and management processes*

Information about employee and volunteer complaints/disputes will be kept in:

* a disputes folder within the employee’s or volunteer’s file **State how long this will remain on the file**
* an employee or volunteer disputes register **State how anonymity will be assured**

We use what we learn from the employee or volunteer dispute resolution process to inform training and development opportunities, all employee and volunteer management processes, and other client and governance policies and processes as relevant.

**State how you do this, and who is responsible**

***5. Other related policies and procedures***

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| **Documents related to this policy** |
| Related policies | **List related policies** |
| Forms or other organisational documents | **List other organisational documents** |

***6. Review processes***

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| Policy review frequency: **Indicate how often this policy will be reviewed** | Responsibility for review: **Indicate who will review this policy** |
| Review process: **Describe how the policy will be reviewed** |
| Documentation and communication: **Describe how the policy decisions will be documented and communicated** |

***Refer to section 6 of the dispute resolution for employees and volunteers policy template guide for examples to consider when completing this section.***