

Complaints Management Policy

Purpose of this policy

This policy aims to provide an accessible, responsive and timely complaints management process. The OzHelp Foundation affirms that people have a right to question and influence decisions made and services provided by the Foundation. OzHelp takes complaints seriously and manages them in a timely, transparent and meaningful way. The complaint management process will inform the identification and implementation of systemic improvements for OzHelp.

Application of this policy

This policy applies to complaints received by OzHelp from individuals or organisations external to Ozhelp. It does not apply to:

- minor issues raised with staff during normal client interaction
- matters currently being dealt with or previously dealt with by an external complaints agency, tribunal or court
- matters involving employment or employee conduct raised by employees of the organisation or funded services.

Principles

OzHelp's complaints management is governed by the following principles:

- complaints are best handled promptly and as close to the source as possible
- complaints will be handled objectively and confidentially and complainants will not suffer any reprisals from making a complaint
- complainants will be treated in accordance with OzHelp's Code of Conduct
- complainants will be treated with respect and will be provided with clear explanations of the OzHelp's decisions and actions taken
- complaints will where appropriate, inform the continuous improvement of the OzHelp's policies, procedures and practices, and the results and value of services.

Visibility and access

Information about the complaints management system is readily available to the public.

Complaints

Complaints can be made by providing OzHelp with details of the complaint, and any supporting evidence and information via:

email to ceo@ozhelp.org.au;
writing to: Privacy Officer, OzHelp, PO Box 1655, Fyshwick ACT 2609
telephone: (02) 6251 4166
fax: (02) 6251 4366
online via <https://ozhelp.org.au/feedback/>

Ozhelp will assist people who wish to make a complaint.

Responsiveness

Allegations of suspected harm or risk of harm to a client of OzHelp, or possible victims of crime, will be actioned immediately by urgent referral or reporting to the relevant agency and to the CEO.

Allegations that constitute a public interest disclosure about a substantial and specific danger to the health or safety of a person with disability will be dealt with in accordance with OzHelp WHS Policy and Code of Conduct.

All complaints will be acknowledged and responded to as soon as practicable.

Complaints will be dealt with in a timely manner and complainants will be kept informed about the progress of their complaint and anticipated timeframes.

Assessment and Action

Complaints are managed by the Privacy Officer, who will review the issue and allocate it to the appropriate executive staff member for action. The executive will investigate the complaint and take the appropriate action. In the first instance, resolution of complaints will be attempted at the local level where the service is delivered.

The investigation and action process will be transparent, open and confidential.

Depending on the circumstances, the appropriate action may include clarification, explanation, or legal or disciplinary action. If deemed necessary and appropriate, an objective, appropriately qualified, external party may be called upon to assist in resolution of the issue. A summary of the issue, action and process will be written by the executive staff member.

The executive will provide a response to the complainant (via the Privacy Officer) explaining what action will be taken to resolve the issue.

Throughout the process OzHelp will keep OzHelp's lawyer, insurer, auditor and Employure informed.

However, if the complaint is not able to be resolved locally, it may be escalated to the CEO.

If the complaint is about the CEO, the matter will be referred to the Ozhelp foundation Board Chair.

If the complainant is not satisfied with OzHelp's response, the complainant may discuss the concerns with or complain to the Australian Privacy Commissioner via www.oaic.gov.au

Review

At the conclusion of a complaint management or decision making process, an internal review may also be requested. The internal review will be conducted by the CEO.

Outcome and System improvement

In order to provide meaningful feedback on the outcome of a complaint, OzHelp will clearly explain the outcome, the reasons for the outcome and the factors considered in the decision making process.

The complaint management process will ensure that the identified issues inform the identification and implementation of systemic improvements.

Monitoring effectiveness and reporting

OzHelp is committed to continually improving its services and will monitor agreed system improvements resulting from the review of complaints.

Roles and Responsibilities

CEO is responsible for:

- maintaining a system that deals effectively with complaints referring matters to an external agency for action where appropriate

Executive Staff and Team Leaders are responsible for:

- local implementation of the complaints policy and procedure
- ensuring the complaints process is effectively administered
- providing complaints data as requested, to enable identification and analysis of significant issues and trends
- ensuring ongoing continuous improvement of service delivery through trends and issues identified

Other relevant guidelines and policies

OzHelp online feedback form - <https://ozhelp.org.au/feedback/>
OzHelp Privacy Policy - <https://ozhelp.org.au/privacy-policy/>
Australian Privacy Commissioner - www.oaic.gov.au