



Complaints Management Procedure

This process describes our procedure about complaints made to Off to Great Places as a support provider, not complaints about the NDIS.

Complaints are important as they help us identify issues and improve our services. All workers are trained in the complaint process and in providing participants information on the complaints process. Information on how to make a complaint is provided:

- When participants start new supports or services
- At any time upon request

Step 1: Receive complaint

Before submitting a complaint, we encourage the participant or representative to talk to the person they have a concern with. If this does not help to fix the problem, we encourage the person to submit a complaint.

If the complaint is regarding the NDIA itself, in its management of the NDIS, we will encourage the participant to provide their complaint directly to the NDIA at feedback@ndis.gov.au or 1800 800 110. If the agency's response is unsatisfactory, a complaint can be lodged to the Commonwealth Ombudsman via the online form or phone 1300 362 072.

If we become aware someone wants to make a complaint, we:

- ensure appropriate support and assistance is provided to any person who wishes to make a complaint
- ensure that the complainant or participant affected by the complaint know they can take their complaint to the Commissioner, if they wish.

If a participant wants advice or support to make a complaint, we will suggest they contact an external advocate or the NDIS Complaints Commissioner.



Participants, their family/guardian or advocate, are able to make complaints directly to the commissioner about a provider's services or conduct. If you make a complaint to the commissioner about our conduct or services, we are prepared to:

- work with the commissioner by providing information, advice and assistance
- where possible and appropriate, work towards a mutually agreed resolution with the participant affected by the issue.

Step 2: Record complaint

Complaints are recorded within the client database. The format of the software helps to guide staff and contractors to attain the required information. The system also automatically alerts administration and management of the complaint, who will record the complaint in the Complaints Register.

When a complaint is received, we will:

- Acknowledge and assess the complaint in a fair and timely manner
- Provide the complainant expected time frames for actions
- Take appropriate action in relation to the issues raised in the complaint
- Keep accurate details of the complaint
- Take reasonable steps so complainants, or participants affected by the complaint, are not adversely affected as a result of making a complaint
- Ensure that information provided in the complaint is kept confidential

We are required to keep accurate information of complaints received, including decisions made, actions taken and eventual outcomes. Our records of complaints must be kept for 7 years from the date of the complaint. Our complaints record:

- Enable reviews of any complaints received
- Assist in identifying any systemic issues raised
- Allow us to respond to the Commissioner, if required
- Are stored securely and accessible only by the people handling complaints.



Next step

If standard – Step 3

If serious and requiring referral – Step 4

Step 3: Resolve complaint

When resolving complaints, we:

- Involve the participant affected during the resolution process
- Keep the participant affected informed during the resolution process
- Inform the participant affected on the reasons for any decisions made
- Provide the participant affected options for redress or review In order to resolve the complaint, we may:
- Conduct an initial assessment of the complaint to review the issues, relevant parties, check associated policies if complaint is against an individual, and rate the overall severity of the complaint
- Investigate the complaint by collecting all relevant information, standards/procedures/policies and identifying disputed facts, inconsistencies, reliability, gaps in information, systemic and performance factors

Our formal response to the complaint will:

- Be based on evidence and informed by the NDIS (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018 and NDIS Terms of Business – Complaints
- Make findings and recommendations to address any system, process or practitioner issues
- Clearly communicate the outcome and integrate recommendations into quality improvement systems

Next step: Follow up complaint (Step 5)

Step 4: Refer complaint

If a complainant (the person making the complaint) is not satisfied with the way a complaint has been handled, they can take their complaint to the NDIS Complaints Commissioner.



Complaints can also be made directly to the Commissioner. When a complaint is received by the Commissioner, the Commissioner may:

- Take no further action, such as when:
 - The complaint was not valid
 - There wasn't enough information provided
 - The complaint or issue has been resolved, or in the process of being resolved
 - The complaint was withdrawn
 - The complaint was referred to another agency or body
- Provide assistance or advice to the complainant or participant affected by the issue and the provider
- Start a resolution process, which may:
 - Require the provider to try and resolve the issue
 - Request the related parties resolve through conciliation
 - Require the provider to take remedial action to resolve the complaint or issue
 - Involve other action as deemed appropriate by the Commissioner
- Arrange an inquiry:
 - If there are concerns regarding the issues connected to the complaint
 - If there are concerns regarding a series of complaints

While we are careful to keep all complaints confidential, disclosure of complaints related to serious incidents may need reporting to third parties as required by law. This includes any complaints related to a child at risk, criminal activity, or a reportable incident.

Complaints to the Commissioner may be referred to other agencies or bodies if needed. This could include any complaints relating to:

- Non-compliance with the NDIS code of conduct
- Inappropriate or unauthorised use of restrictive practice
- Employee screening issues (e.g. if an employee of Off to Great Places was found to have criminal history)
- Incidents relevant to other bodies (police, consumer affairs agencies or other regulatory bodies).



Step 5: Follow up complaint

After the complaint is resolved, follow up with the complainant to check that resolution actions are effective.

Next Step: Review complaint

Step 6: Review complaint

Review the complaint, including:

- The cause
- The resolution
- Follow up feedback
- Lessons learned

Directors will regularly review the Complaints Register.

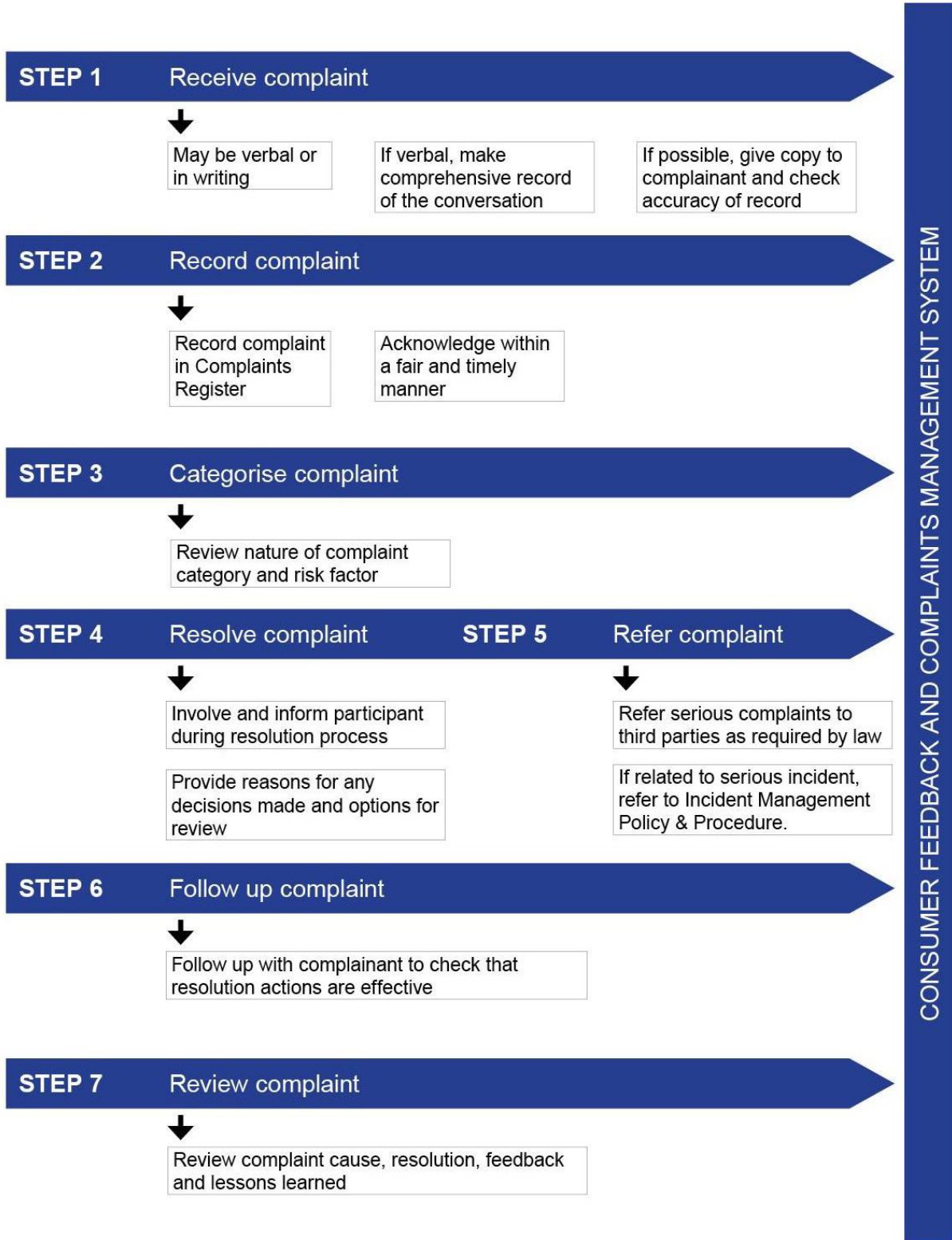
Next Step: End of process

End of process

Key management personnel should review complaints on an ongoing basis to identify organisational opportunities for improvement. This includes reviewing individual complaints as well as looking for complaint trends in order to identify opportunities for systemic improvements, including improvements to the complaints process.



Complaints Management Flow Chart





Date	Complainant	Issue	How was Complaint Made	Details of Complaint	Risk Rating (x/10)	Investigator	Actions Completed	Closed Out (Date and Initials)



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