

## SS 4.1 Feedback and complaints policy

### **Purpose**

This policy outlines Carpentaria's approach to receiving feedback and responding to complaints, including how to:

- a) respond to and manage all feedback and complaints in a consistent, fair, transparent and timely manner
- b) use feedback and complaints to improve the services that Carpentaria provides and the way in which they are provided.

### **Scope of policy**

This policy applies to all feedback and complaints from participants, families, carers, statutory bodies, stakeholders, employees or members of the public to or about Carpentaria services and employees.

### **Policy statement**

Carpentaria values all feedback from participants and their families or their support networks, employees, stakeholders, other service providers and members of the public.

Carpentaria promotes people's right to speak up and is committed to ensuring that people feel sufficiently confident to express any concerns. Carpentaria is committed to ensuring that all feedback and complaints are acknowledged in three working days and resolution of a complaint is addressed in 21 working days.

All Carpentaria employees are required to:

- Ensure that people understand their rights in relation to feedback and complaints, and their right to an independent support person or advocate if they choose to do so
- Make Carpentaria's feedback and complaints processes accessible, including providing the complainants with appropriate support to enable them to make the complaint (for example, people with a vision-impairment receiving their complaint statement by audio format and supporting the complainant to make the complaint/feedback in a language other than English)

Focus on positive solutions for the participant and consider and share ideas where improvements could be applied more broadly

Respect the independence, control and choices of the participant

Be guided by person-centred approaches and collaborate with the participant and their families, carers or support person(s) to achieve a resolution

Promote a culture where complaints are seen as opportunities for improvement

Support people who use Carpentaria services to provide feedback

Maintain confidentiality of information about the complaint and the person who made it, unless required to disclose under legislation

Safeguard people against retribution or unfavourable treatment if they make a complaint.

Carpentaria's feedback and complaints process will ensure:

**Privacy:** reasonable steps are taken to protect personal information from loss, unauthorised access or use, unauthorised disclosure or any misuse during the complaints process.

**Confidentiality:** information is protected with controls on how and when certain information is used in the organisation and/or disclosed to an outside agency or person.

**Natural justice:** Carpentaria provides all people with a fair hearing when looking into and making decisions about complaints.

- Carpentaria responds to complaints with impartiality and without bias.
- Carpentaria advises people about any improvements made as a result of a feedback and complaints.
- Any participant likely to be affected by a decision made in response to a complaint is given relevant information.
- **Timeliness:** dealing with complaints appropriately and effectively, in the specified time frames.
- Information on how to take a complaint further if needed by contacting the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission.

## **Responsibility for implementation, compliance monitoring, measuring and continual improvement**

**Executives** are responsible for:

Identifying and allocating the management resources needed for an effective and efficient complaints handling process

Promoting awareness of the feedback and complaints process and the need for a person-centred approach throughout the organisation

Communicating to the Board on feedback and/or complaints

Periodically reviewing the feedback and complaints process to ensure that it is maintained effectively and efficiently, and improved continually

Using the evidence based on feedback and complaints in strategic planning, service design and policy development.

**Managers, Coordinators and Team Leaders** are responsible for:

Ensuring that information about the complaints handling process is easily accessible to participants and their families, carers and support person(s)

Informing and referring the participant to an independent advocate or support person if they so choose

Proactively engaging with participants and key stakeholders to prevent and address issues before they escalate into a complaint

Monitoring employee compliance with the requirements of the policy

Maintaining a feedback and complaints register

Ensuring training and information is provided to employees to carry out this policy.

**Existing Carpentaria employees, new or returning employees** or those transferring to a new role in Carpentaria, students on placement and volunteers are responsible for:

Ensuring they are familiar with the requirements of the policy, and have sufficient skills, knowledge and ability to meet the requirements.

Referring the feedback and complaint to the line manager if the matter needs further mediation or requires dispute resolution.

## Related policies and procedures

Person-centred Support Policy  
 Open Disclosure Policy  
 Incident Prevention Policy  
 Management and Reporting of Incidents Policy  
 Incident Monitoring and Review Policy  
 Participant Safeguarding Policy  
 Participant and Family Grievances and Dispute Policy  
 Employee Safety Screening Policy  
 Diversity and Inclusion Policy  
 Employee Learning, Training and Development Policy  
 Management of Employee Performance Policy  
 Whistle-blowers Policy  
 Continuous (Quality) Improvement Policy

Term	Definition
<b>Acknowledgement</b>	Acceptance of the person's right to make a complaint; validating their feelings.
<b>Actions</b>	What is done, by whom and by when. How progress are communicated to the person with a focus upon the future.
<b>Answers</b>	Information about why something was done or not done.
<b>Complainant</b>	Person who makes or raises a complaint.
<b>Complaint</b>	A verbal or written expression of dissatisfaction or concern where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.
<b>Compliment</b>	Expression of praise, encouragement or gratitude about services provided or managed by Carpentaria.
<b>Feedback</b>	Information from participants, carers or members of the public about any action, policy or person in Carpentaria and their experience of it which includes complaints, compliments and suggestions.
<b>Organisational learning</b>	A process of inquiry to understand and if necessary, solve an inconsistency between an expected outcome and an actual outcome.
<b>Suggestion</b>	Expression of an idea for consideration for an alternative approach or improvement to a particular issue.

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