

## Complaints Policy

### Purpose

Everyone who has a relationship with CTC has the right to expect fair and equitable treatment, and high quality customer service where relevant, and to complain if they consider that this has not occurred.

### Objective

The objective of this policy is to communicate the principles that inform CTC's approach to complaints and the framework within which complaints will be handled.

### Scope

This policy is applicable in the following circumstances:

- A complaint by a client or customer about the actions, inactions or behaviour of a member of staff or management
- A complaint by a member of the public or representative of another organisation about the actions, inactions or behaviour of a member of staff or management
- A complaint by a client or customer about the quality of service provided by CTC
- It does not apply to employee complaints.

### Background

A complaint may be lodged where a customer is dissatisfied with a service, action or decision made by CTC or its staff, by a person who is apparently directly affected by the service or action, or someone acting on their behalf.

However, not every expression of dissatisfaction needs to be handled as a customer complaint including:

- if a person responds adversely when provided with information that they do not agree with or accept
- if a person complains about an issue that does not involve them being directly affected by a service or decision of CTC

Complaints raised by employees or volunteers about any aspect of their employment or engagement are not customer complaints, and are subject to the Employee Complaints Procedure or Grievances Policy. Complaints alleging employee misconduct or corrupt conduct will not be dealt with under this procedure and are subject to relevant Human Resources and Ethical Standards policies.

### Principles

The following principles apply to the way in which CTC will handle all complaints:

#### 1. *Welcoming Complaints*

Taking complaints seriously: We believe that CTC has a responsibility to listen seriously and courteously to complainants, and to ensure that everything possible is done to resolve matters in a sensitive and confidential manner. The person who complains has a right to justice, and a right to have that complaint resolved.

**2. Responsibility**

It is the ultimate responsibility of CTC's General Manager to respond to the complaint and to facilitate its resolution.

**3. No Retribution**

Complainants are assured that there will be no retribution as a result of them submitting a complaint. It is CTC's aim to resolve the complaint with the least possible upset or inconvenience to any person.

**4. Seek Resolution with Respondent**

Complainants will always be encouraged in the first instance to seek to resolve their complaint directly with the person with whom they have the complaint.

**5. Representatives**

Any person involved in the complaints process is welcome to use an independent person (free from conflict of interest) to assist them.

**6. Support to Complain**

The aggrieved party shall be entitled to access an appropriate person to explain the complaint and to have it resolved. If necessary, complainants will be provided with options from which they may receive support to make a complaint.

**7. Speedy Response**

Complaints will be handled quickly within an agreed time frame, and shall be kept informed of progress made towards resolution of their complaint.

**8. Natural Justice**

The resolution of the grievance shall be fair and just. Complainants and respondents can both expect to have full access to natural justice in the handling of the complaint by CTC. The process shall not favour any person.

**9. Access to Information:**

Complainants will have access to information on the complaints management process by the provision of an easy to follow "step by step" procedure which is in plain English. See Complaints Procedure PR-029 and Complaints Form F-0001.

**10. Choice of Action:**

CTC respects that despite having its own procedure for handling complaints, complainants may choose their own alternative course of action. This could include getting advice from a friend, family member, or an advocate, contacting the Anti-Discrimination Commission of Queensland or Qld Police Service, or a legal advisor via a Community Legal Service, the Legal Aid Office, or a private solicitor.

**11. Variety of Mechanisms:**

CTC prefers that complaints are submitted in writing, but this is not essential. Complaints can also be received on audio recording, via email, phone messages, or video, or the person (or his/her advocate) could meet with the General Manager at a specially convened meeting.

## **12. Simple and Confidential:**

The procedure for seeking resolution of the grievance shall be simple and confidential by involving the least number of people possible. Any person who accidentally, or by necessity, is made privy to the grievance shall not divulge any matter concerning it without the prior consent of the person who has the grievance. Complainants will be notified of the outcome of the complaint investigation, to the extent that this can be done without breaching the organisation's confidentiality policies.

## **13. Appeal**

If the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution, they will have 14 days from the date of notification, to lodge an appeal. An appeal must be lodged in writing to the General Manager.

## **14. Conflict of Interest**

If there appears to be a conflict of interest in relation to the complaint, the General Manager will delegate the management of the investigation to a senior officer who does not have any conflict of interest.

## **15. Application of Policy**

If a matter has been referred to the police, this Complaints Policy will apply only to the extent that it does not impede, or potentially impede, the police investigation.

## **Related Documents**

1. Complaints Procedure PR-029
2. Complaint Form FF-0001
3. Record of Complaint Form FF-0002
4. Complaints Register FF-0003

## **Issues, concerns and client feedback**

Clients who don't have a complaint but wish to provide feedback about their 'customer service experience' may do so using CTC's Customer Feedback Form (FF-0806) as per CTC's Customer Feedback Policy (PO-010).

## **Client Evaluation**

At the conclusion of Youth Services, clients will be formally exited from the service and asked to complete a short evaluation form. The aim of the feedback on the form is to help us to identify the things we are doing well and areas where we can improve. An example of the client evaluation form is the YHARS Client Evaluation Form (FF-2634).

## **Host Employer Survey**

CTC undertakes an annual randomized survey of Host Employers, seeking to gain feedback on our performance standards as well as general information about the organisation's profile and effectiveness of its marketing strategy. This is another way in which commentary about the company's level of customer service can be provided.

Relevant policies, procedures and forms are available on our webpage: <http://www.ctcqlld.com.au/about-us/policies/>