

## **CatholicCare Clients, Consumer and Carer Complaints Policy and Procedure**

### **Commitment**

CatholicCare is committed to providing a quality service and welcomes opportunities to improve service delivery through feedback from individuals, agencies, groups or a member of the public. CatholicCare takes any form of complaint or grievance seriously.

Any individual or a person advocating on behalf of an individual is able to express dissatisfaction related to CatholicCare services or the process itself, without fear of retribution. Where complaints about staff/ volunteers/ Board Members occur, the principles of natural justice are utilised in the assessment process, except where complaints relate to criminal matters, in these circumstances all such complaints are referred to police and not assessed by the organisation

### **Basis/Standard**

Complaints will be investigated without prejudice or fear of retribution. Confidentiality and privacy will be maintained as are the rights of the complainant. Following complaints, corrective action is taken to address non-conformities in the management system. The complaints process is guided by the relevant program service standards.

### **Procedure**

- Clients/consumers/carers are to be informed regularly about the Complaints process either verbally or through advertising on the website or promotional material.
- CatholicCare has a complaints form which may be used by the agency however individual programs may need to design their own form or guidelines to ensure clear information exchange.
- CatholicCare staff are to inform any individuals that have contact with the service programs at point of entry, during time with the program or upon request, through verbal discussion or program information.
- There is to be a recording in the client file of the information that has been discussed and given out.
- Programs will ensure the information regarding complaints is explained in a way that is clear. Staff will be aware of any and all situations which may hamper communication i.e. language barriers, comprehension, backgrounds.
- It is the complainant's right to have access to an advocate, if this is requested then the program may be required to contact the relevant interpreter or advocacy service to assist the communication.
- When a complaint comes in staff are to use the [Management Response to Complaint Form](#) to complete the complaint information. Both documents are kept together and they are to be both used to complete the complaints process.
- Complaints assessed to be of a serious nature are to be raised at the next scheduled board Meeting to assess the need for any changes in the system or to service delivery and ensure the principles of natural justice are upheld.
- All parties to a complaint have the right to be heard with all the evidence and relevant information considered by the Program Manager or Coordinator.

- The Program Directors/ Managers will maintain a feedback register.
- The feedback register will be reviewed bi-annually by the Program Director to identify if there are any patterns for corrective and preventive actions. The register will not identify individuals.
- The Program Director/ Manager will recognise any complaint and will respond verbally or in writing within 2 working days of receiving the complaint.
- The Director/ Manager will endeavour to resolve any complaint lodged within 28 working days of receiving the complaint or grievance.
- A complainant has the right to bring an advocate of their choosing to an interview and they have the right to change the advocate if not happy.
- Feedback is a standing item at a program and Leadership agenda.
- Feedback procedures will be displayed at the CatholicCare sites with details of CatholicCare's contact details for the Program and CatholicCare. In order to ensure the process is understood programs may need to design their own procedures as appropriate to the consumer group.
- Complaint information will be stored in a secure location in a designated area for each program and will be held separate to their client files..
- If at any stage during the complaint or grievance process the complainant is unhappy with the way their complaint is being handled or are not satisfied with this conclusion, outside parties or organisation maybe used at any time throughout the complaints process.

#### **KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- Complaints/grievances are recorded, followed up within the designated timeframe and without retribution.
- Feedback Registers are used to record feedback and complaints.
- Complaints will be responded to within 2 working days of receiving the complaint
- Complaints will be attempted to be solved within 28 days of receiving the complaint.
- All parties are heard in a complaint.

#### **RELEVANT DOCUMENTATION**

- CatholicCare Non Discrimination Policy
- CatholicCare Privacy Policy and Procedure
- CatholicCare Confidentiality Policy and Procedure
- CatholicCare Human Rights Policy and Procedure
- CatholicCare Code of Ethics and Conduct
- Feedback Register
- Feedback/complaints form
- Service Standards
  - Home and Community Care National Standards
  - National Mental Health Standards
  - Disability Standards
  - FRSP Approval Requirements

- Contract specific clients, consumer and carer complaints policies and procedures where required.

## **RECORDS**

- Complaints Register
- Client files
- Completed complaints form
- Record of corrective and preventive actions



## CATHOLICCARE'S HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT PROCESS

All complaints handled will uphold the values and principles of Consumer Privacy, Dignity and Confidentiality and will be treated in a fair and professional manner. If you have a comment or complaint to make about a program or organisation, there are several ways to have your complaint heard and resolved. All complaints are taken seriously and are welcomed as an opportunity to continually improve the quality of our service delivery. If you lodge a complaint, it will not affect the service you receive from the program or the organisation

You may make a complaint as follows:

**In person** to your worker, the Coordinator or Program Manager.

**By phone** to your worker, the Coordinator or Program Manager.

**In writing** by fax, email or letter to your worker, Coordinator or Program Manager.

You may request at any time a copy of the Feedback/Complaints Register Form from your program to complete.

CatholicCare will recognise any complaint or grievance made and respond verbally or in writing within 2 working days of receiving the complaint.

CatholicCare will attempt to resolve any complaint lodged within 28 working days of receiving the complaint or grievance.

You have the right to bring an advocate of your choice to the interview.

You may request a copy of the CatholicCare Complaints policy and procedure.

Staff and volunteers are to comply with the Agency's Code of Ethics throughout the feedback process, including respect of privacy and confidentiality. When investigating complaints CatholicCare will maintain the confidentiality of all persons involved in the investigation. Your identity will not be revealed to anyone apart from the complainant or respondent, representatives or advocates, or to witnesses where information from witnesses is sought. If you require non-disclosure to the respondent or representatives or advocates, then it may not be possible to fully investigate your complaint.

It is your right to have access to an interpreter or advocate, if you decide on this option then CatholicCare can either arrange for one to be present or you may make your own arrangements. Please see the attached page for advocate contacts.

### Advocates List

A list of advocates and their services specifically related to supporting consumers, clients and carers through complaints are included below:

#### ADACAS

Individual advocacy for people with disabilities, people who are ageing and their carers.

Suite 207 Block C, Canberra Technology Park

Phillip Ave, Watson ACT 2602

Ph: (02) 6242 5060

#### Public Advocate

Represents the interests and protects the rights of adults with a disability and children before courts, tribunals and with service providers and facilitates service co-ordination where complex service needs exist.

Lvl 3, Moore St

Canberra City

Canberra ACT 2601

Ph: (02) 6207 0707

#### Youth in the City

Provides a safe recreational drop-in space with a variety of programs for people from 12-25 years of age, including free meals. Provides; information, referral, advocacy and support, internet cafe, case management, education outreach, family support and an alternate education program.

Crn Scotts Crossing and Currong St

Canberra

ACT 2601

Phone: 6232 2444

#### Advocacy for Inclusion

Providing individual and systemic advocacy to improve life for people who have a disability. ACT member agency of the National Council on Intellectual Disability.

Pearce Community Centre

Bld 3 Collett Pl

Pearce

ACT 2607

Phone: 6286 9422

#### YWCA of Canberra

Offers a variety of community services including: medium term housing for families in crisis, community development worker for ACT Housing tenants, youth services (outreach and centre-based), personal support, health information, advocacy, emergency relief, needle and syringe program and childcare (full and part time, occasional and family day care). Runs personal and professional development courses for women. As a Registered Training Organisation, offers various accredited and non-accredited training.

Lvl 1 71-73 London Cirt

Canberra

ACT 2601

Phone: 6239 6878

### Welfare Rights and Legal Service

Provides free legal advice, information and advocacy in private and public tenancy, Centrelink benefits and legal aid appeals for people on low incomes. Night Time Legal Advice Service - one off advice and referral on all areas of the law,

Havelock House

Gould St Turner

Canberra

ACT 2612

Phone: 6247 2177



## **COMPLAINTS REGISTER FORM**

This form is designed to assist you with lodging a formal complaint against CatholicCare as an organisation or the individual programs. Please complete this form and forward it to the address below.

By completing this form you are consenting to have an auditor view this complaint as part of CatholicCare's ongoing accreditation process. The auditor will respect your privacy and the viewing will be based on process not content.

Please note if this complaint is deemed as having a duty of care or mandatory reporting aspect then the program manager will determine the best course of action. If required you may view CatholicCare's Duty of Care or Mandatory Reporting policies.

**THE COMPLAINTS REGISTER IS REVIEWED EVERY 6 MONTHS BY THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR AND/OR THE CEO**

Name of the person making the complaint.	
Contact Number:	Date: / /
Address (Optional):	
Complaint received by:	Date: / /

What is your complaint about? (Attach extra pages as necessary)

Have you discussed this with your worker, case manager or the coordinator?

Yes

No

If **NO**, Please state the reasons:

If **Yes**, what was the response?

What would be your preferred outcome? (Attach extra pages as necessary)

How do you believe your complaint could be resolved? (Attach extra pages as necessary)

Do you require this complaint to be kept confidential?  
Yes  No

Please note: If you require confidentiality from other parties involved in this complaint then it may not be possible to fully investigate the issue.

CatholicCare Canberra will investigate any complaint and will report back to you within 48 working hours of receiving your complaint. If you are unhappy with the results of this process you may lodge a further complaint with the CEO of CatholicCare on 02 6295 4304.

<b>Signed:</b>	
<b>Consumer / Complainant:</b>	<b>Date:</b> / /
<b>Advocate:</b>	<b>Date:</b> / /
<b>Interpreter:</b>	<b>Date:</b> / /

## Staff Checklist

Have you:

- Reassured the complainant that all complaints are treated confidentially and that they will suffer no loss of services because they made a complaint
- Explained the complaints procedure
- Reminded the complainant that they have the right to use an advocate of their choice and refer them to the appropriate advocacy services.
- Thanked the complainant for their complaint, and explained that complaints are valuable in helping to maintain and improve the service

**Signed:**

**Staff Member:**

**Date:**    /    /

**Please nominate the manager that this form is to go to on the envelope and this form should be forwarded to:**

CatholicCare Canberra  
Program Name  
Attn: Manager  
PO Box 3167  
Manuka  
ACT 2603