

Policy: CLAN Grievance and Dispute Resolution Policy

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1. Introduction

CLAN is committed to provide a positive environment where all participants are able to constructively work together to achieve outcomes to improve the health and well-being of children with non-communicable diseases. Risk assessments for CLAN activities will assess any potential causes of conflict and plan how these may be prevented.

CLAN encourages its employees and volunteers to resolve any issues or concerns that they may have at the earliest opportunity with their immediate supervisor. The preferred process involves employees and volunteers being able to resolve issues to their satisfaction internally, without feeling they have to refer to external organisations or authorities for assistance.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide an avenue through which staff, volunteers, others and their managers, can resolve grievances or disputes as they arise.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all Committee members, staff, volunteers and partner organizations of CLAN in whilst in the delivery of CLAN programs.

4. Definitions

Term	Definition
Grievance	A real or imagined cause for complaint, especially unfair treatment.
Dispute resolution	The process of resolving disputes between parties.

5. Policy

Open communication and feedback are regarded as essential elements of a satisfying and productive work environment.

CLAN will establish mechanisms to promote fast and efficient resolution of workplace issues. Employees and volunteers should feel comfortable with discussing issues with their manager or supervisor in accordance with the procedures outlined below.

All formal avenues for handling of grievances will be fully documented and the employee or volunteer's wishes will be taken into account in the determination of appropriate steps and actions.

No employee will be intimidated or unfairly treated in any respect if they utilise this policy to resolve an issue.

Staff, volunteers and others are to attempt to resolve any issues through their immediate supervisor and through internal processes at the earliest opportunity.

6. Procedures

The Committee is to:

- I. Identify, prevent and address potential problems before they become formal grievances
- II. Be aware of, and commit to the principles of communicating and information sharing with their employees and volunteers
- III. Give consideration to the ramifications for the individual, as well as the organisation in general in all decisions relating to employment practices
- IV. Handle any grievance or dispute in the most appropriate manner at the earliest opportunity
- V. Ensure all employees and volunteers are treated fairly and without fear of intimidation.
- VI. Ensure all managers, supervisors, employees, volunteers and others are aware of their obligations and responsibilities in relation to communication and information sharing
- VII. Provide ongoing support and guidance to all staff, volunteers and others in relation to employment and communication issues
- VIII. Ensure all managers, supervisors, employees, volunteers and others are aware of their obligations and responsibilities in relation to handling grievances
- IX. Ensure any grievance that comes to the attention of managers or supervisors is handled in the most appropriate manner at the earliest opportunity.

7. Employment and engagement practices

CLAN's Executive Committee should be aware of the possible ramifications of their actions when dealing with employee/volunteer issues. They must ensure that all employees/volunteers are treated with fairness, equality and respect. If there are any doubts, or queries in relation to how to deal with a particular set of circumstances, the CLAN Committee should seek advice at the earliest opportunity.

Where a grievance or dispute has been brought to the Executive Committee's attention, they should assess whether the employee/volunteer involved is covered by an Award or Agreement, and if so should refer to that document for grievance procedures. If the employee/volunteer involved is not covered by such a document, the guidelines below should be followed.

8. Grievances and Dispute Resolution

An employee or volunteer who considers that they have a dispute or grievance should raise the matter with their immediate supervisor as a first step towards resolution. The two parties should discuss the matter openly and work together to achieve a desired outcome. A written statement of the grievance or dispute may be requested prior to implementing resolution procedures.

The manager or supervisor should check for clarification of the issue to ensure they fully understand the aggrieved person's concern. Managers should follow the standard procedure of offering the employee/volunteer the opportunity to have an independent witness at the discussion, ensuring they follow the steps outlined below:

- I. If more than one person is present, establish the role of each person
- II. Outline the process that is to be followed
- III. Inform the parties that any information obtained in the conduct of the review is confidential
- IV. Listen to the aggrieved person and endeavour to diagnose the problem
- V. Take accurate and detailed notes of all conversations (including dates, people involved) and attach any supporting documentation.
- VI. If deemed necessary, provide the employee/volunteers with a written summary of the meeting and clarification of the next steps to be taken.

The Manager must ensure that the manner in which the meeting is conducted will be conducive to maintaining positive working relationships, and will provide a fair, objective and independent analysis of the situation. All parties are to maintain complete confidentiality at all times.

If the matter is not resolved and the employee/volunteer wishes to pursue it, the issue should be raised for discussion by the CLAN Committee. Again, the matter is to be discussed openly and objectively with management to ensure it is fully understood. Minutes of the discussion, response to the person with the grievance/dispute, and outcome/s are to be documented.

If the grievance/dispute is one of a confidential or serious nature involving the Employee or Volunteer's Manager, the complainant may discuss the issue directly with the CLAN Executive. Grievances should be recorded as per complaints in the Complaint Management Register.

In a situation where a grievance/dispute is not resolved, a person requesting a formal resolution must do so in writing. CLAN may appoint an external investigator to undertake a formal investigation and resolution process. Where a dispute occurs, an arbitrator may determine decisions and consequences for each party. Where the possibility of one party being in danger to themselves, external professional assistance will be sought.

CLAN will review procedures undertaken for each grievance and outcomes for managing any further grievances or disputes.

Reference

National Childcare Accreditation Council Inc. (NCAC), Managing Complaints

Associated Policies

Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct Policy

Complaint Management Policy

Human Resources Policy

Work Health & Safety Policy