

POLICY / PROCEDURE

1.8 Complaints Management and Resolution

Policy and Procedure

Version 1 – August, 2022

Purpose of this policy

RDA Carine is committed to creating a safe, fair, inclusive and enjoyable environment for everyone involved with our Association.

RDA Carine invites you to provide feedback so we can resolve any issues and have the opportunity to create a better service.

It is recognised, that on occasions inappropriate behaviours may occur and that a complaints and grievance process is required to resolve complaints or concerns. This policy aims to ensure that complaints and grievances are handled and resolved in an appropriate, fair, transparent, and timely manner.

Responsibilities

This policy applies to all people involved with the activities of RDA Carine, including staff, volunteers, and members. Any person (complainant) may report a complaint about a person, people or organisation bound by this policy.

In the first instance we advise that you try to resolve the complaint with the person that you have the issue with. However, we understand that sometimes this is not possible.

If you wish to make a complaint and you are uncomfortable approaching the person, you can approach a Coach, the RDA Carine Office, the National Office or the RDA Carine Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO).

The responsibility for resolving an informal or formal complaint rests with the RDA Carine Centre Committee if the complaint is at Centre Level. If this is not possible or reasonable, or if the complaint is at National Level, then it will be resolved by the RDA Australia Board.

For further information regarding complaint procedures refer to the [RDA Australia Member Protection Policy](#) which outlines National complaints procedures.

Guiding Principles

- Fairness - RDA will approach all complaints with fairness and impartiality.
- No disadvantage - A person making a complaint will not be disadvantaged by making a complaint.
- Confidentiality - All complaints will maintain the privacy and confidentiality of all persons concerned.
- Timeliness - The resolution of complaints will be completed in a timely manner and in accordance with current policies and procedures.
- Transparency - All complaints and their resolutions will be recorded in the Complaints Register and minuted in the Centre and/or National Board minutes.

Procedure

RDA Carine will deal with complaints on a confidential basis; however, it may be necessary to provide the details of the complaint to the person against whom the complaint has been made. This is to ensure fairness and gives the person against who the complaint was made an opportunity to be heard, this ensures everyone is given procedural fairness.

Support and guidance will be offered to all parties involved in the complaint.

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Before making an official complaint

As a first step you should try to resolve the problem with the person(s) involved. You should only do this if it is safe, reasonable and appropriate to approach the other person(s) and you feel confident and comfortable to discuss the issues with them.

- 1) If this is not reasonable or you are not sure how to handle the problem by yourself, or the problem continues after you tried to approach the person or people involved, you can talk to your Coach, RDA Carine Office or someone on the Centre Committee or the National Office.
- 2) After talking to someone you may decide:
 - that there is no problem;
 - the problem is minor and you do not wish to take the matter further;
 - you may wish to attempt to work out your own resolution (with or without a support person); or
 - you may wish to seek an informal mediated resolution with the help of a third person (such as a mediator).
- 3) If your complaint is not resolved to your satisfaction you may choose to make a formal complaint in writing to the Centre Committee, National EO or seek advice from the Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO). A Complaint Registration Form is available on our website or on request from the RDA Carine Office. (See link below in point 1)

**Acknowledge → Assess → Plan → Investigate → Respond →
Resolve → Record → Improve → Follow up**

1) Acknowledgement of the complaint received

- A complaint may be made in person by phone or in writing or via email.
- A complaint may be made anonymously.
- Any complaint raised will be listened to and taken seriously.
- Any complaint will only be discussed with the appropriate person(s) and kept confidential.
- If a complaint has been received in writing, you will receive an acknowledgement in a timely manner and someone will contact you usually within 3 business days.
- An accurate and detailed record will be made, including your contact details (unless anonymous), the name/details of the person(s) involved and the person(s) you are complaining about, date(s), details of the incident(s), details of any witnesses, etc. You will be asked to fill out the [Complaints Registration Form](#) and sign it if it is a formal complaint.
- The person listening to your complaint will check with you to make sure they understand the complaint and know all the facts. All information and discussion will be recorded promptly and accurately. Sometimes it may be referred to a more appropriate person to follow up with you, depending on the complexity of the complaint.
- You will be informed about the process.
- You will be informed that complaints may be made directly to the NDIS Quality & Safeguarding Commission <https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/about/complaints> or by phoning them on 1800 035 544.

2) Assessment of the complaint

- Your complaint will be forwarded to the relevant person(s) who will be dealing with your complaint. For more complicated complaints, this is usually the Centre Committee or National Board.
- Your complaint will be checked for details such as severity, potential impact, complexity and priority.
- For simple complaints, a response can be expected within 10 business days. For more complex complaints, it may take more than 30 business days to receive a response.

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3) Planning and investigation of the complaint

More complex complaints may require further planning and investigation. This may include:

- supporting documentation;
- statements from witness(es);
- seeking other/additional evidence; and
- seeking a response from the person(s) the complaint is about to ensure procedural fairness and natural justice.

4) Respond

All complaints will be responded to within 3 business days (unless no contact details have been provided) and you will be informed if a response should take longer than that and the estimated time frame of that response.

- You will be kept appropriately informed of the progress of the complaint, including any actions taken, the reasons for any decisions made and options for review of decisions.
- You will be kept appropriately involved in the resolution of the complaint.

5) Resolve and record

- All complaints and resolutions will be recorded in the Complaints Register of each Centre dealing with the complaint and/or the National Association's Complaints Register if relevant.
- All complaints and resolutions will be properly minuted in the Centre Committee and/or Board meeting minutes.
- All sensitive and/or confidential complaints will be excluded from the meeting minutes, but instead recorded in a separate report, usually, but not necessarily, prepared by the Centre Secretary and/or National EO and approved by the committee and/or Board as per usual approval of minutes.
- All steps taken to resolve the complaint and its outcome will be recorded in the minutes or separate report.
- All records will be stored confidentially and kept for a minimum of 7 years.

6) Improve

- The Centre and/or National management will reflect on the complaint and resolution. Are there any concerns? What corrective actions need to be taken now? How well was the complaint handled? What preventative measures can be taken? Is there a pattern? Has it been resolved in the past, how?
- Identify and address potential problems before they become formal grievances.
- Any changes/improvements need to be documented and results monitored.
- Any results need to be reviewed after an agreed time – these decisions need to be documented, including the recommendation to review any policies and procedures.

7) Follow up

- Depending on the type of complaint someone may follow up with you.
- Do you have any further concern? Are you satisfied with the outcome?
- Would you like to provide any further feedback?

8) Still dissatisfied?

- If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you have the right to request information on how to appeal.
- You can either contact the EO of RDA Carine (if the complaint was at Centre level) or the EO of RDA Australia.
- You can also contact the MPIO, who can provide you with more information, including the right to contact the relevant external authority. The MPIO's details are available on our website.

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Definitions

Appeal: A request made to a court of law or to a person in authority or a relevant body to change a previous decision.

Centre Committee: The body of elected members who are responsible for the management of the Centre.

Complain: Express dissatisfaction, state a grievance concerning a particular issue.

Complaint: The act of complaining, a grievance which is a cause of dissatisfaction.

Complainant: Person making the complaint.

EO: Executive Officer.

Grievance: Real or perceived cause for complaint.

MPIO: Member Protection Information Officer.

Connected Policies, Guidelines and Procedures

Available on request or [Click here](#) to review all of RDA Carine Policies, Guideline and Procedures

- Member Protection Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Grievance Procedure

Version One:

Authorised by: RDA Carine Board

Sign off: Ratified by RDA Carine Board in meeting 17/08/2022

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