

Feedback and Complaints Policy and Procedures



PURPOSE

VANISH Inc (VANISH) seeks to attain best practice in all the work we do and so all forms of feedback are encouraged. This policy mandates the way in which VANISH receives and responds to feedback and complaints in order to enhance service user satisfaction and provides continuous opportunities to learn and improve our governance and services.

POLICY

VANISH encourages and values all feedback, whether a compliment, suggestion or complaint, from our service users, members, or anyone else outside the organisation, and VANISH volunteers and staff.

VANISH respects the rights of individuals and organisations to make a complaint if we do not meet needs or expectations.

VANISH acknowledges feedback can include comments about whether our office and/or services were welcoming, safe and accessible; if our services met your expectations; whether your rights and privacy were respected; and anything else you wish to tell us.

PROCEDURES

VANISH is committed to ensuring that feedback is received, responded to, recorded and analysed in an accessible, responsive, confidential, fair, efficient and systematic way for the purposes of

- strengthening our organisational processes and governance
- improving the services offered by our organisations
- maintaining and/or improvising our relations with the public on a continuous basis.

As VANISH values all feedback we confirm that all feedback received will be responded to in a respectful manner and all feedback in particular will be managed by appropriately skilled and profession member of staff or, a Committee member.

Lodging feedback / complaints

Feedback and /or complaints can be provided either:

- by calling 03 9328 8611 or 1300 826 474 and speaking to the Manager;
- by completing and returning VANISH's feedback brochure available on the website
- by email to
 - VANISH Manager manager@vanish.org.au or
 - VANISH Chairperson at the VANISH COM email address provided on request.

How is feedback handled?

1. all feedback is carefully considered by the Manager and/or Chair of VANISH

2. all feedback is considered for review and response
3. the feedback is then discussed and considered by the Manager and staff (at VANISH) in terms of how VANISH can improve the services

How you can assist VANISH

VANISH asks that to assist

1. all feedback be given in a respectful manner
2. feedback and complaints in particular be, where possible, in writing

The VANISH Process for handling feedback and complaints is shown in a diagram in Appendix 1

Receipt of the feedback and/or a complaint

- will be acknowledged within 8 working days (most VANISH staff members work part time and the Committee of Management (COM) are part-time volunteers)
- acknowledgement to be via telephone where possible or, in writing as required
- including the relevant name and contact details for person who will handle the feedback or complaint.

Handling of the feedback and/or a complaint

- all feedback, compliments and complaints are entered into the VANISH register
- compliments and suggestions are handled by the a staff team member and the Manager
- complaints are handled by the Manager
- the Manager will decide whether the complaint should be investigated internally or if it is for me referred to the COM for investigation
- Once the complaint has been investigated the report is provided to the Manager and Chair
- Once the Manager and Chair have reviewed the response it can be sent or provided to complainant

Investigation (if required)

- the investigation, if required, will be planned and documented in a timely manner including:
 - definition of what is to be investigated
 - steps of the investigation
 - timeframe of the investigation
 - identification of the resolution sought by complainant
 - consideration as to whether the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) will be informed
- details of the investigation plan will be provided to the complainant in writing and where possible be included in the initial acknowledgement letter
- the investigation will endeavour to clarify the issues and consider options for resolution of the complaint.
- accurate records will be maintained by person handling the complaint this includes ongoing contact notes and written records of any evidence provided
- if the investigation is going to take more than 8 working days (from date of receipt of complaint) complainant will be informed with an explanation as to the reasons for the extended time to resolve the matter. This will be in writing form and, where appropriate, discussed over the phone

- Once investigation has been complete the outcome will be provided in writing to the complainant. Where possible this will be provided within 8 working days of receipt of complaint
- The outcome will be provided in clear, plain English providing comprehensive details of the investigation and reasons for the outcome
- If the complainant is dissatisfied with the resolution offered an interval review of the decision will be offered. To take up this offer the complainant will need to advise VANISH within one month (20 working days) of date of resolution letter.

Any review of the investigation will be done by an independent person not involved in the original complaint and this could be a member of the Committee.

Alternatives offered if complainant remains dissatisfied include:

- An internal review by an independent person,
- Details as to how they can contact Victorian Ombudsman at www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au
- Details as to how they can contact DHHS complaints, integrity and Privacy Unit

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- Code of Conduct Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Protection of Human and Legal Rights and Freedom from Abuse Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy

LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

- Wrongs Act (1958) Section 14J

VERSION CONTROL

Policy No 10	Date	Approved By	Date
Developed	October 2015	COM	25/10/15
Reviewed	May 2017	COM	24/05/17
Minor Edit	January 2018		
To Be Reviewed	April 2020		

Appendix 1: VANISH Feedback, Compliments and Complaints Process

