

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, collaborators, 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 CEO
- by completing and returning VANISH's feedback form available on the website
- by email to
 - VANISH CEO manager@vanish.org.au or
 - VANISH Chairperson vanishexec@vanish.org.au

All feedback is:

- carefully considered by the CEO and/or Chair of VANISH
- considered for review and response
- discussed and considered by the CEO and staff in terms of how VANISH can improve the services, or by the Chair if the complaint is about or relating to the CEO

We ask that you:

- give feedback in a respectful manner
- provide your feedback in writing where possible

The VANISH process for handling feedback and complaints is detailed below and shown in a diagram in Appendix 1

Receipt of the feedback and/or a complaint will:

- be acknowledged within eight working days by telephone or in writing
- include the name and contact details of 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 a staff team member and the CEO
- complaints are handled by the CEO who will decide whether it should be investigated internally or be referred to the COM for investigation
- once the complaint has been investigated a report is provided to the CEO and Chair
- after the CEO and Chair review the response it will be sent or provided to complainant.

Investigation (if required)

- if an investigation is required, it will be planned and documented in a timely manner including:
 - definition of what is to be investigated
 - plan (steps and timeframe) for the investigation
 - identification of the resolution sought by complainant
 - consideration as to whether the relevant government agency 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
- accurate records will be maintained by the 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 eight working days the complainant will be informed with an explanation as to the reasons for the extended time required. This will be in writing and, where appropriate, discussed over the phone
- once the investigation has been completed the outcome will be provided to the complainant in writing. This will be provided in clear, plain English providing details of the investigation and reasons for the outcome
- if the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome, 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 is not satisfied 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 the Department of Justice and Community Safety

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	Manager	
Reviewed	January 2023	COM	22/02/2023
Next Review	January 2025		

Appendix 1: VANISH Feedback, Compliments and Complaints Process

