



Related Policies

Child Protection

Child Protection (ACT) - Responding to Complaints Against Employees

Child Protection (NSW) - Responding to Allegations of Reportable Conduct and Allegations of Misconduct that May Involve Reportable Conduct Made Against Employees

Complaints

Grievance and Dispute Handling

Legal Responsibilities and Authority

Sexual Harassment

Purpose

This policy describes the role of CEO Human Resources Complaint Contact Officers when receiving a complaint from a person and managing resolution of the issue.

Policy

The Catholic Education Office takes seriously its responsibility to address all complaints, protecting the rights of all parties involved and seek a solution that is in the best interests of all involved.

The CEO Human Resources Complaint Contact Officers are aware of and work within legislation when managing complaints. This legislation includes but is not limited to:

- *Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998 (NSW)*
- *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)*
- *Children and Young People Act 1999 (ACT)*
- *Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986*
- *Ombudsman Act 1974 (NSW)*
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984*

Complaint Contact Officers accept complaints in a verbal or written form as well as anonymous complaints. All complaints will be addressed sensitively, openly and in a timely manner. Procedural fairness demands that the person about whom the complaint is made is provided with information about the complaint and is afforded the right to respond. The Complaint Contact Officer will foster a commitment to resolving the issue cooperatively and with genuine effort by all those directly involved.

Definitions

Nil

Procedures

1. All complaints are taken seriously and without prejudice. The CEO Human Resources Officer responsible for the region would, in the first instance, be responsible for receiving and managing the complaint. Human Resources Officers consult with appropriate colleagues for specific advice such as that relating to Child Protection, Industrial Relations, or Harassment. The CEO Complaint Contact Officer is required to be impartial. If there is a conflict of interest, another Complaint Contact Officer may be assigned to manage the complaint.
 - 1.1. Complaint Contact Officers accept verbal, written and anonymous complaints. Clarification may be sought about the details of the complaint. The Complaint Contact Officer will complete a Complaints Intake form (Attachment A)
 - 1.2. Complaint Contact Officer:
 - forms an action plan, including information about people to be contacted, witnesses to be interviewed and a risk assessment of the situation;
 - establishes a confidential complaint file. In certain circumstances, the complaint may be lodged on an existing file;
 - provides an outline of the nature of the complaint and the action plan to the Head of Human Resources.
 - 1.3. Procedures that are followed should reflect the nature of the complaint. Some matters may be referred to the school for resolution. Some matters require notification to other authorities such as the NSW Ombudsman, the Department of Community Service, the Department of Family Services (ACT) or the Police.
 - When managing child protection complaints, the Complaint Contact Officer will follow the procedures outlined in the relevant policy (ACT or NSW).
 - When matters are referred to the school for resolution, the Complaint Contact Officer will provide advice about management of the complaint.
 - When matters are referred to the Police, the Complaint Contact Officer will follow all instructions given by the Police Officer responsible for the case.
 - 1.4. The person about whom the complaint has been made is notified and provided with opportunities to respond to the complaint including identifying witnesses who may be able to support claims.
 - 1.5. Confidentiality is an important aspect of any complaint resolution process and protects the interests of all involved. The Complaint Contact Officer will work to ensure that all parties understand and respect the need for confidentiality.
 - An identified support person should be nominated for each party.
 - The Complaint Contact Officer may also refer the parties to Centacare for counselling support.
 - 1.6. The Complaint Contact Officer will conduct an appropriate inquiry, which may involve conducting interviews with the person about whom the complaint was made and the complainant and any witnesses. Records of interviews should be signed and dated.
 - 1.7. All documentation relating to the complaint including statements, records of interviews, notes and emails are stored securely on the confidential file established for the complaint.

Complaints Contact Officers

- 1.8. When a resolution has been reached, letters of closure are sent to the complainant and the person about whom the complaint was made.
 - The complainant will be informed that the matter has been resolved.
 - The person about whom the complaint was made will be informed of the findings and outcomes of the process.
2. The Head of Human Resources is notified of all complaints and provided with up to date information about an inquiry. Final decisions about the complaint will be determined in consultation with the Head of Human Resources.
3. Mediation or conflict resolution may be required to assist the parties involved in returning to a workable, professional relationship. The Complaint Contact Officer would not ordinarily be the mediator. This role may be filled by another CEO Human Resources Officer.

References

Nil

Forms

Nil

Approved by:	CEO Heads of Division
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CEO Contact Officer:	Head of Human Resources