

23. CLIENT COMPLAINTS Vol. 5 SPD&E

23.1 Preamble

Karabi is committed to the delivery of a range of quality services, which are responsive and relevant to the needs of the targeted population groups.

It is within this context, continuous improvement of service delivery is stimulated through the availability of a client complaints procedure. This feedback provides Karabi with valuable information about how the service is perceived and how the client experiences services, along with the opportunity for clients to raise and resolve issues or grievances.

Karabi further recognises that clients may be able to resolve minor issues with a staff member without invoking a formal grievance procedure. Where clients are able to speak directly to the relevant staff member and feel satisfied with the resolution, there should be no need to investigate a formal grievance procedure.

Karabi will support clients in the process of making a complaint, including the right of the client to have an advocate involved in the process. Therefore, staff will actively promote the availability of a complaints and grievance procedure by providing all clients with written information on service standards and client grievance procedures during client intake.

Karabi is committed to ensuring that any complaints we receive are handled in a way that is responsive, fair and courteous and that respects the privacy of the person making the complaint. We also undertake to make sure that we provide reasons for any decisions we make in relation to complaints we receive. The client's permission should be obtained prior to any information being given to other parties which it may be desirable to involve in order to satisfactorily resolve the complaint.

It is a person's right to make a complaint or to voice any concerns they may have with services from Karabi without fear of losing the service or experiencing any other recriminations.

23.2 Policy

A complaint is "expression of dissatisfaction made to or about an organisation, related to its products, services, staff or the handling of a complaint, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required."

Guidelines for complaint management in organisations, Australian/New Zealand Standard 10002:2014

Complaints forms are available in each of our 3 centres foyers, on our website or you can ask for one in person. Complaints can also be made verbally and a staff member can transfer this to a written complaints form. Written complaints can be given to a staff member or given anonymously through our Complaints/Feedback secure boxes in each centre foyer.

Complaints are an agenda item at the relevant meetings of Karabi - staff, team, volunteer. All complaints are then tabled at Management meetings until resolved.

Once a complaint is received Karabi will assess the type of complaint and appropriate level of intervention required, as per the approach table below, to resolve the issue and implement a strategy to do so.

23.3 Approach

The client grievance procedure requires the Staff member to take details of the client's complaint verbally and if client chooses in writing. The staff member will identify if a Level 1, 2 or 3 resolution is to be adopted.

Level	Actions	Time Frame for Resolution	Responsibility for Dealing with Complaint
1	<p>A. Complaints that can be quickly resolved to the satisfaction of both parties</p> <p>B. If the complaint is directed at the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), the client may elect to go straight to the Management Committee (MC)</p>	3 working days	<input type="checkbox"/> Frontline Worker receiving complaint <input type="checkbox"/> Supervisor of volunteer receiving complaint <input type="checkbox"/> MC, If complaint about CEO
2	<p>A. Complaints, which nominate dissatisfaction with the service provided by a worker and are those complaints that were not able to be resolved through a Level 1 intervention</p> <p>B. Following a Level 1 intervention that may not be resolved and may require facilitating a meeting between the client and the worker</p> <p>C. The CEO will be responsible for documenting and resolving issues at this level in consultation with the MC</p> <p>D. If the complaint is directed at the CEO, the client may elect to go straight to the MC</p>	5 working days	<input type="checkbox"/> CEO <input type="checkbox"/> MC, If complaint about CEO
3	<p>A. Complaints of a serious nature and may include: harassment, unprofessional conduct, abuse, mistreatment, infringement of rights, illegal activities, etc.</p> <p>B. This level of grievance procedure process demands a substantial investigation, and will only be dealt with by the CEO</p> <p>C. Level 3 complaints may also include those conflicts not dealt with satisfactorily through the Level 2 process and grievances of any nature, which relate to the CEO</p> <p>D. If the complaint is directed at the CEO, the client may elect to go straight to the MC</p>	7 working days	<input type="checkbox"/> CEO <input type="checkbox"/> MC, If complaint about CEO
4	<p>A. Any complaint, which remains unresolved after a Level 3 intervention, is referred to the MC.</p> <p>B. The MC will be provided with full documentation, which will include the initial complaint received, subsequent actions taken and the final recommendation from the CEO (or delegate)</p>	10 working days	<input type="checkbox"/> MC
5	<p>A. Any complaint remaining unresolved after a Level 4 Intervention, is referred to an external review or mediation, as seen in 23.5 External agencies</p> <p>B. External referrals include processes for conciliation, seeking a legal remedy, or to a review body such as the NSW Ombudsman - as guided in "Best Practice Complaint Handling Workbook" from the Fairwork Ombudsman</p>	As needed	<input type="checkbox"/> CEO <input type="checkbox"/> MC <input type="checkbox"/> Agreed External Party

Important Note: Where a complaint involves allegations of a criminal nature, the client will be immediately informed that the matter will be reported to the relevant authorities for investigation. The client will be offered support during this process, including referral for legal advice and assistance.

23.4 Procedures

If a client indicates dissatisfaction with any part of a service they have/have not received from Karabi, the following procedure will be followed by Karabi:

1. Advise the client of their right to proceed with a formal complaint and provide the client with written information about how to do this
2. Advise the client of their right to have an advocate to assist them with this process
3. The staff member will identify, with the client, the type of complaint and appropriate level of intervention required i.e. Level 1, 2 and 3. A copy of the Complaint Record will be supplied to both the client and the CEO
4. Level 1 complaints will be dealt with by the worker receiving the complaint, the frontline worker, to resolve complaints at first contact where possible. Serious complex complaints must be referred straight to Level 2.
5. Frontline workers are required to record/document the complaint on complaint form. If a complaint is received by a volunteer, the volunteer is required to notify their Supervisor who will deal with the complaint as the Frontline Worker.
6. If the Frontline Worker cannot resolve the complaint, or the complainant is not happy with the outcome/resolution, they will forward it to the CEO requesting further intervention. A copy of the complaint form with all actions taken is to be given to the CEO at this time.
7. The staff member will advise the client their complaint will be responded to within 3 working days -This may simply mean arranging an appointment to gain additional information
8. The frontline worker will inform the complainant of the decision and their right to request a review.
9. If the Frontline worker is unable to resolve the complaint they will advise the complainant they are referring it to level 2 to be resolved by the CEO.
10. For a Level 2 complaint the staff member will advise the client that Karabi will aim to resolve the complaint within 7 working days of agency notification
11. The result of any further actions//meetings/resolutions between the client and Karabi will be fully recorded on the original Client Grievance Record and a copy of such documentation will be made available to the complainant
12. On completion of the grievance procedure, all relevant documentation will be supplied to the CEO for confidential filing. The complainant will be notified of the decision and their right to request a review.
13. All complaints from Level One to Level 4 will be recorded on the Complaints register. The register will identify the issue, the action taken, whether there were systemic concerns and the action taken to address them, and whether the handling of individual complaints complied with Karabi's complaint handling policy and procedures.

23.5 External Agencies

Anti-Discrimination Board (NSW)

Level 4, 175 Castlereagh Street, Sydney 2000

Telephone: 9268 5555

Fax: 9268 5500

TTY: 9268 5522

NSW Ombudsman

Level 24, 580 George Street

Sydney NSW 2000

Telephone: 9286 1000 Toll Free: 1800 451 524

Fax: 92832911

TTY: 9264 8050

The Aged-Care Rights Service (TARS)

TARS is an advocacy service for residents and consumers of aged care services.

Telephone: 9281 3600

NDIS Quality & Safeguards Commission

Telephone: 1800 035 544

TTY: 133677

Website: <https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/participants/complaints>

23.6 Confidentiality of Complaints

As far as possible, the information pertaining to a client who has lodged a complaint, and the details of that complaint, should be kept confidential amongst workers directly concerned with its resolution. The client's permission should be obtained prior to any information being given to other parties deemed necessary to satisfactorily resolve the complaint.

Appendix: *Please see*

Appendix 8: Client Complaints form

Appendix 9: Register of Complaints

Appendix 10: Letter: Opportunity to participate and contribute to the review of the P & P