

Dealing with Complaints

{ EXAMPLE ONLY }

For Example

1. Statement

Everyone in our organisation should be confident that complaints will be dealt with honestly and fairly.

Everyone in our organisation should be confident in reporting inappropriate behaviour around kids.

Everyone in our organisation should report any concerns about the safety or welfare of a child or young person immediately.

2. All complaints should be reported. This includes:

- ▶ Disclosure of abuse.
- ▶ Inappropriate behaviour around kids.
- ▶ Suspicion of abuse or harm to a kid.

3. All complaints must be reported to the Child Safety Contact Person, (person's name) on (mobile number).

A child or young person, or any staff member/volunteer/student can make a complaint, or raise a concern, directly to the Child Safety Contact Person.

4. The Child Safety Contact Person will take the following action:

- ▶ Listen to the person making the complaint and make a record of the complaint using the 'Complaint Record Form'.
- ▶ In NSW make a report to the NSW Department of Community Services in the case of an allegation of child abuse. Inform everyone involved in the complaint of the requirement to make this report.
- ▶ If the complaint involves inappropriate behaviour and a breach of the Code of Conduct, the manager/leader will need to take action in accordance with the internal discipline procedure.

5. NSW Reporting Obligations

Department of Community Services (DoCS)

Any person who has reasonable grounds to believe that a child or young person is at risk of significant harm may report to DoCS.

Phone **132 111** to report child abuse or neglect (24 hour service).

Some people must report if they have reasonable grounds to suspect a child is at risk of significant harm. They are legally 'mandatory reporters' and must report concerns about risk of significant harm to kids to DoCS. A person who is paid to provide the following services and a person (paid or unpaid) who is in a management position in these services are mandatory reporters:

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For Example (continued)

- ▶ Health care (eg: doctors, nurses etc).
 - ▶ Education (eg: teachers).
 - ▶ Children's services (eg: child care centres).
 - ▶ Residential services (eg: refuges).
 - ▶ Law enforcement (eg: police).
- The DoCS website has clear tips about reporting.
Go to: www.community.nsw.gov.au for more information.

NSW Ombudsman

The NSW Ombudsman supervises the complaints process of all state and local government agencies as well as schools, child care centres and agencies providing Out-of-home care. People using these services can complain to the Ombudsman and the Ombudsman can check that the service has handled the complaint properly.

The NSW Ombudsman's 'Complaint Handler's Tool Kit' and 'Child Protection for the Workplace' Guidelines are available at: www.ombo.nsw.gov.au

NSW Commission for Children and Young People

Employers must provide details to the NSW Commission for Children and Young People of any worker, volunteer or student who has been the subject of completed employment proceedings involving:

- ▶ reportable conduct; or
- ▶ acts of violence committed by them in the presence of a child.

Reportable conduct is:

- ▶ any sexual offence or sexual misconduct, committed against, with or in the presence of a child (including a child pornography offence); or
- ▶ any assault, ill treatment or neglect of a child; or
- ▶ any behaviour that causes psychological harm to a child;

whether or not, in any case, with the consent of the child.

(Section 33, Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998)

You do not need to report conduct that is reasonable for the discipline, management and care of children or if it was found the conduct did not occur.

For more information go to: www.kids.nsw.gov.au/check

Dealing with Complaints

Use this template to help develop a complaints policy in your organisation.

Complaints policy for:

.....
(Your Organisation's Name)

1. Statement:

2. All complaints should be reported. This includes:

3. All complaints must be reported to:

4. The Child Safety Contact Person will take the following action:
