

COMPLAINTS & APPEALS PROCESS

In accordance with the MI Care Constitution

MI Care is committed to ensuring that all members, volunteers, and participants feel safe, respected, and heard. Complaints are welcomed as opportunities for learning, improvement, and strengthening community trust.

This process applies to:

- Complaints about MI Care services or activities
- Complaints about volunteers or Committee members
- Complaints about decisions made by the Committee
- Appeals relating to membership rejection or termination

This process is free, fair, accessible, and confidential.

1. PRINCIPLES

MI Care's Complaints & Appeals Process is guided by:

- Dignity and respect
- Fairness and natural justice
- Timely resolution
- Transparency and accountability
- Safety and wellbeing of older people
- Cultural and environmental respect
- No disadvantage for raising a concern

No person will be penalised, excluded, or treated differently for making a complaint.

2. WHO MAY MAKE A COMPLAINT

A complaint may be made by:

- A member
- A volunteer
- A participant in MI Care activities
- A family member or advocate (with permission)

Complaints may be made:

- In writing (preferred)

- Verbally to the Administrative Assistant or a Committee member
- By email
- Through an advocate or support person

MI Care will assist anyone who needs help to make a complaint.

3. SERIOUS COMPLAINTS

A serious complaint includes allegations involving:

- Misconduct
- Safety risks
- Harassment, bullying, or discrimination
- Breaches of MI Care's Code of Conduct
- Threats to wellbeing or dignity

Serious complaints may proceed directly to Step 2.

4. STEP 1 — LOCAL RESOLUTION (WITHIN 14 DAYS)

Where appropriate, concerns should first be raised directly with the person or area involved.

The Administrative Assistant or re volunteer will:

- Listen respectfully
- Clarify the concern
- Seek to resolve the issue promptly
- Record the concern and outcome

Local concerns should be acknowledged within 3 days.

If resolved, no further action is required.

If unresolved or serious, the matter proceeds to Step 2.

5. STEP 2 — FORMAL COMPLAINT TO THE COMMITTEE

A formal complaint must be submitted in writing to the Secretary and must include:

- The nature of the complaint
- Relevant dates, people, or events
- Any steps already taken to resolve the matter
- The outcome sought

The Secretary must acknowledge receipt within 7 days.

The Committee will:

- Review the complaint at its next meeting (or earlier if urgent)
- Ensure all parties have a fair opportunity to respond
- Seek additional information if required
- Make a decision based on fairness, evidence, and MI Care’s values

A written outcome must be provided within 30 days.

If the complaint involves a Committee member, they must not participate in the decision.

Anonymous complaints will be considered where sufficient information is provided to allow investigation.

6. STEP 3 — FORMAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

This section incorporates the mandatory elements of the Queensland Model Rules.

If the complaint is not resolved at Step 2, the complainant (the “aggrieved party”) may initiate the grievance procedure by giving written notice to:

- The other party to the dispute, and
- The Committee

6.1 Attempt to Resolve (14 Days)

Both parties must make a genuine effort to resolve the dispute within 14 days.

6.2 Request for Mediation (Within 21 Days)

If unresolved, the aggrieved party may request mediation.

The Committee must arrange mediation within 14 days, unless the dispute falls under exclusions in the Act (e.g., frivolous, vexatious, or linked to disciplinary action already underway).

6.3 Appointment of Mediator

The mediator may be:

- A mutually agreed person, or
- A person appointed by the Committee (for member-to-member disputes), or
- An accredited mediator or a mediator appointed by a Dispute Resolution Centre (for disputes involving the Committee or the Association)

6.4 Conduct of Mediation

The mediator must:

- Allow each party to be heard
- Act fairly and impartially
- Not act as an adjudicator
- Aim to complete mediation within 28 days

Parties may have a representative or support person.

6.5 Outcome

If mediation resolves the dispute, the agreement is recorded.
If not resolved, parties may seek resolution under the Act or at law.

7. DISCIPLINARY DECISIONS & APPEALS

This section applies to:

- Termination of membership
- Rejection of membership applications
- Disciplinary actions taken under the Constitution

7.1 Right to Appeal

A person whose membership is rejected or terminated may appeal by giving written notice to the Secretary within 30 days of receiving the decision.

7.2 Appeal Meeting

The Secretary must call a general meeting to decide the appeal within 3 months.

At the meeting:

- The appellant must be given a full and fair opportunity to present their case
- The Committee must be given a fair opportunity to explain its decision
- Members present will vote by simple majority
- The decision is final

If the appeal is unsuccessful, any membership fee paid must be refunded.

8. CONFIDENTIALITY

All complaints, grievances, and appeals will be handled with strict confidentiality.

Information will only be shared with:

- Those directly involved in resolving the matter
- Mediators (if applicable)
- Authorities where required by law

Records will be securely stored for a minimum of 7 years.

9. NO VICTIMISATION

MI Care strictly prohibits:

- Retaliation
 - Bullying
 - Exclusion
 - Negative treatment
- ... against any person who makes a complaint or participates in a grievance or appeal.

Any person involved in a complaint must not participate in decision-making about that complaint.

10. RECORD KEEPING

MI Care will maintain accurate records of:

- Complaints received
- Actions taken
- Mediation outcomes
- Appeal decisions

These records support continuous improvement in MI Care's services and governance.

11. REVIEW OF THIS PROCESS

This Complaints & Appeals Process will be reviewed:

- Every two years, or
- When legislation changes, or
- When the Committee identifies a need

Members will be notified of any updates.