



Complaints & Feedback Handling Procedure

Version 1.0 — Approved by the Management Committee

1. Purpose

This procedure ensures that all complaints and feedback received by Magnetic Island Community Care Association Inc. (MI Care) are managed:

- promptly
- respectfully
- fairly
- transparently
- in accordance with natural justice
- in compliance with the MI Care Constitution and relevant legislation

It provides a clear pathway for resolving concerns about MI Care's services, decisions, volunteers, staff, or operations.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to:

- members
- volunteers
- participants
- carers, family members, and advocates
- members of the public interacting with MI Care

It covers:

- complaints about MI Care's services
- complaints about decisions or actions of the Management Committee
- complaints about volunteers or staff
- administrative errors
- feedback (positive, negative, or neutral)

It does NOT cover interpersonal disputes between individuals.

Those matters must follow the Grievance Procedure (Rules 12–12E).

3. Definitions

Complaint — an expression of dissatisfaction about MI Care’s services, decisions, actions, or behaviour of volunteers or staff.

Feedback — comments, suggestions, compliments, or concerns that do not require formal investigation.

Complainant — the person making the complaint.

Local Resolution — resolving a complaint quickly and informally at the point it arises.

Formal Complaint — a written complaint requiring investigation and a formal response.

4. Principles

MI Care manages complaints and feedback according to the following principles:

- **Respect and dignity** — all people are treated fairly and without judgement.
- **Accessibility** — anyone may make a complaint, with support if needed.
- **No disadvantage** — complainants are not penalised for raising concerns.
- **Confidentiality** — information is shared only on a need-to-know basis.
- **Natural justice** — all parties have the right to be heard.
- **Timeliness** — complaints are addressed promptly.
- **Transparency** — decisions are explained clearly.
- **Continuous improvement** — complaints inform service improvement.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Administrative Assistant

- Receives complaints and feedback.
- Assists complainants to put concerns in writing if needed.
- Logs complaints in the Complaints Register.
- Supports the Secretary and Committee with documentation.

5.2 Secretary

- Oversees the complaints process.
- Ensures timeframes are met.
- Maintains the Complaints Register.
- Issues written acknowledgements and outcomes.
- Ensures confidentiality and secure record-keeping.

5.3 President

- Oversees complex or serious complaints.
- Ensures natural justice is upheld.
- Ensures the Committee is informed of systemic issues.

5.4 Management Committee

- Investigates formal complaints.
- Makes decisions on outcomes and remedies.
- Ensures compliance with the Constitution and legislation.

6. Complaints & Feedback Handling Workflow

6.1 Step 1 — Receiving a Complaint or Feedback

Complaints may be received:

- verbally
- in writing
- by email
- through an advocate
- through a support person

The Administrative Assistant must:

- listen respectfully
- thank the person for raising the concern
- record the details
- offer assistance to put the complaint in writing if needed

Anonymous complaints may be accepted but may limit the ability to investigate.

6.2 Step 2 — Local Resolution (where appropriate)

Where the issue is minor and can be resolved quickly:

- the Administrative Assistant or relevant volunteer may attempt to resolve it immediately
- the complainant must be asked if they are satisfied with the outcome
- the issue must still be logged for quality improvement

Examples suitable for local resolution:

- booking errors
- misunderstandings
- minor service delays

- simple communication issues

If the complainant is not satisfied, or the matter is serious, it must proceed to formal complaint.

6.3 Step 3 — Formal Complaint

A complaint becomes formal when:

- it is put in writing, or
- it involves serious allegations, or
- local resolution is not appropriate

The Secretary must:

1. Acknowledge the complaint in writing within 5 business days
2. Record it in the Complaints Register
3. Notify the President
4. Refer the matter to the Management Committee for investigation

6.4 Step 4 — Investigation

The Management Committee must:

- review all relevant information
- speak with involved parties
- ensure natural justice
- maintain confidentiality
- avoid conflicts of interest

If a Committee member is the subject of the complaint, they must:

- declare a conflict of interest
- leave the room during discussion and decision-making

The Committee may seek external advice if required.

6.5 Step 5 — Decision and Outcome

The Committee must decide:

- whether the complaint is substantiated, partially substantiated, or unsubstantiated
- what actions or remedies are required
- whether any policy or procedural changes are needed

Possible outcomes include:

- apology
- explanation
- service improvement
- training or supervision
- administrative correction
- disciplinary action (in accordance with Rules 18–19)

6.6 Step 6 — Communicating the Outcome

The Secretary must provide the complainant with a written outcome that includes:

- a summary of the issue
- steps taken to investigate
- the decision
- reasons for the decision
- any actions taken
- information about appeal rights

Timeframe: within 30 days unless otherwise advised.

6.7 Step 7 — Appeals

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may:

- request an internal review by the President, or
- request the matter be considered by the full Management Committee

If the complaint relates to membership termination or disciplinary action, the appeal process in Rule 19 applies.

7. Serious Complaints

The following must be escalated immediately to the President:

- allegations of bullying, harassment, discrimination, or abuse
- threats to safety
- serious misconduct by volunteers or Committee members
- breaches of law
- matters involving vulnerable persons
- complaints that may require mandatory reporting

The President must determine whether external authorities must be notified.

8. Confidentiality and Privacy

All complaints must be handled confidentially.

Information may only be shared with:

- those directly involved in resolving the complaint
- the Management Committee (as required)
- external authorities (if legally required)

Records must be stored securely for 7 years.

9. No Victimisation

MI Care strictly prohibits:

- retaliation
- disadvantage
- exclusion
- intimidation

against any person who makes a complaint or provides information.

Breaches may result in disciplinary action.

10. Complaints Register

The Secretary maintains a secure register including:

- date received
- complainant name (or anonymous)
- nature of complaint
- steps taken
- outcome
- date closed
- any systemic issues identified

The Committee reviews the register quarterly to identify trends.

11. Continuous Improvement

Complaints and feedback are used to:

- improve services
- strengthen procedures
- identify training needs
- reduce risk
- enhance member experience

The Committee must review systemic issues and implement improvements.

12. Review

This procedure must be reviewed:

- annually
- after any serious complaint
- when legislation or the Constitution changes

Updates require Management Committee approval.