

## Commitment

C&K is committed to effective and efficient complaints management. We recognise that listening to, reviewing and acting upon feedback helps us improve our operations and service quality.

## Guiding Principles

- Complaints will be managed in a prompt, fair, confidential, and effective manner.
- We follow the principles of social and natural justice through inclusive practices that respect and support people from a diverse range of backgrounds including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and people with additional support needs.
- *Australian Standard AS/NZS 10002:2014 Guidelines for complaint management in organisations.*
- *Queensland Ombudsman guidelines for complaint management.*

## Exclusions

This policy does not cover **Whistleblowing Complaints** (*Whistleblower Policy*), **Employee Grievances** (*Employee Grievance Policy*) or **Privacy Complaints** (*Privacy Policy*). Please refer to and follow the relevant policy should your complaint relate to a matter that falls within these policies.

## Definitions

<b>Complainant</b>	Any person or organisation (or their representative) making a complaint.
<b>Complaint</b>	Expression of dissatisfaction made to, or about C&K, related to our products, services, staff or the handling of a complaint, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required.
<b>Feedback</b>	Opinions, comments or expressions of interest or concern, made directly or indirectly, explicitly or implicitly to, or about C&K related to their products, services, staff or the handling of a complaint.

## Enabling complaints

### Customer focussed, visible and accessible

- We encourage a culture of treating complaints as opportunities to improve performance and service.
- We are committed to resolving complaints.
- We will treat complainants with respect and courtesy.
- We will make our complaints management system (CMS) available to all via the C&K website.
- We will assist people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those with visual and hearing impairment and those who cannot read or write, to record a complaint.
- Our CMS will provide the option for you to make an anonymous complaint.

## Managing complaints

### Responsive, objective and confidential

- We will acknowledge your complaint when we receive it.
- We will assess each complaint and assign it an appropriate risk rating and priority.
- Minor complaints raised at a centre level will be addressed by the Director or relevant manager.
- Complaints rated as moderate or high, or where the complaint is unable to be resolved at a centre level, will be escalated to senior management.
- We will assign a case manager to every complaint.
- Where appropriate and practical, we will keep you regularly informed of progress.
- We strive to manage your expectations in an objective, unbiased and equitable manner.
- Personal information relating to the complaint will only be used for the purpose of addressing the complaint and for complaint reporting and analysis.
- If a conflict of interest arises during any investigation or review, this will be declared and addressed.
- We will take reasonable steps to ensure you are not adversely affected because of a complaint made by you.
- Where a complaint relates to our staff, we will always reflect the principles of confidentiality and procedural fairness as per our established employment relationship and duty of care to our employees.

## Legal action

If legal action is taken in relation to the complaint, our complaints management process will be put on hold until the outcome of any proceedings is known.

## Managing expectations

### Educate and empower

- We will provide our employees with training to implement the CMS as it is relevant to their role.
- We will empower employees to manage and escalate complaints as required.

### Case management

- We will appoint a case manager, this may be the Centre Director, their manager, or another senior leader within C&K.
- The case manager is your contact point and will communicate with you about the progress and outcome of any investigation or review.

### Resolution

- We aim to resolve or remedy each complaint.
- We will determine if any actions are required to mediate or resolve the complaint to minimise the risk of it reoccurring.
- We will advise you of the outcome as soon as possible.

### Appeal

- You might disagree with the outcome shared and you have a right to appeal should the resolution or remedy be unacceptable to you.
- We will follow an appeal process and appoint a different case manager to conduct the appeal.

### Aggressive, abusive, or inappropriate behaviour

- We expect all parties to act appropriately, with respect and courtesy.
- We will not tolerate aggressive, abusive, or inappropriate behaviour towards anyone.
- Our employees are entitled to end any conversation that include behaviour that makes them feel harassed or threatened. We will support them to do this.
- We will ensure the health and safety of our employees when responding to complaints.

## Notifications

### Notification to statutory bodies

- Depending on the type and seriousness of your complaint; we may need to notify certain statutory bodies (e.g. Office of ECEC, Queensland Police Service) within a specific timeframe.
- This is required under legislation and is not something that you or C&K can choose not to do.

## Reporting, analysis and continuous improvement

### Reporting and Analysis

- Regular reporting, evaluation and analysis of our CMS will be completed across all areas of C&K for senior management and the C&K Board.
- We acknowledge that learning from complaints is an essential factor of continuous improvement and providing high quality services.
- We aim to minimise the possibility of complaints escalating into ongoing disputes.

- **Refer to Appendix 1 of this procedure for Complaint Management Process**

## References

- Standards Australia (2014). *Australian Standard AS/NZS 10002:2014 Guidelines for complaint management in organisations.*
- The State of Queensland (Office of the Ombudsman) (2006). *Guide to Developing Effective Complaints Management Policies and Procedures.*

## Complaint Management Process

