



KOORLINY ARTS CENTRE INC COMPLAINTS POLICY

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This policy is intended to ensure that staff, management, and Board of Koorliny Arts Centre Inc (KAC) handle complaints fairly, efficiently, and effectively.

The complaint management policy is intended to:

- enable KAC to respond to issues raised by complainants in a timely manner, and
- provide information that can be used by KAC to deliver quality improvements in products, services, staff, and complaint handling.

1.2 Organisational commitment

KAC expects Staff at all levels to be committed to fair, effective and efficient complaint handling. The following table outlines the nature of the commitment expected from Staff and the way that commitment should be implemented.

Who	Commitment	How
Board of Management	Promote a culture that values complaints and their effective resolution	<p>Provide adequate support and direction to key Staff responsible for handling complaints.</p> <p>Regularly review reports about complaint trends and issues arising from complaints.</p> <p>Encourage all Staff to be alert to complaints and assist those responsible for handling complaints to resolve them promptly.</p> <p>Encourage Staff to make recommendations for system improvements.</p> <p>Recognise good complaint handling by Staff.</p> <p>Support recommendations for improvements arising from the analysis of complaint data.</p>

General Manager	Establish and manage KACs complaint management system.	<p>Provide regular reports to KAC Board of Management on issues arising from complaint handling work.</p> <p>Ensure recommendations arising out of complaint data analysis are implemented where appropriate.</p> <p>Recruit, train and empower Staff to resolve complaints promptly and in accordance with KAC's policies and procedures.</p> <p>Encourage Staff managing complaints to provide suggestions on ways to improve the organisation's complaint management system.</p> <p>Encourage all Staff to be alert to complaints and assist those responsible for handling complaints to resolve them promptly.</p> <p>Recognise and reward good complaint handling by Staff.</p> <p>Ensure that appropriate records of every complaint are kept.</p> <p>Ensure that complaints are brought to a satisfactory closure.</p>
All Staff	Demonstrate exemplary complaint handling practices, and an understanding of KAC's complaint handling procedures	<p>Treat all people with respect, including people who make complaints.</p> <p>Assist people to make a complaint, if needed.</p> <p>Be aware of KAC's complaint handling policies and procedures.</p> <p>Comply with this policy and its associated procedures.</p> <p>Keep informed about best practice in complaint handling.</p> <p>Provide feedback to management on issues arising from complaints.</p> <p>Provide suggestions to management on ways to improve the organisation's complaints management system.</p> <p>Implement changes arising from individual complaints and from the analysis and evaluation of complaint data as directed by management.</p> <p>Ensure that the appropriate the appropriate record of each complaint is completed.</p>

2. Terms and Definitions

Complaint

Expression of dissatisfaction made to or about KAC, its products, services, staff, or the handling of a complaint where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required.

A complaint covered by this Policy does not include:

- staff grievances [see Employee Handbook]
- code of conduct complaints [see Employee Handbook]
- reports of problems or wrongdoing merely intended to bring a problem to KACs notice with no expectation of a response [see definition of 'feedback' below], and
- service requests [see definition of 'service request' below],

Complaint management system

All policies, procedures, practices, staff, hardware, and software used by KAC in the management of complaints.

Dispute

An unresolved complaint escalated either within or outside of the organisation.

Feedback

Opinions, comments and expressions of interest or concern, made directly or indirectly, explicitly, or implicitly, to or about KAC, about its products, services, or complaint handling where a response is not explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required.

Service request

- requests for approval
- requests for action
- routine inquiries about the organisation's business
- requests for the provision of services and assistance
- reports of failure to comply with laws regulated by the organisation
- requests for explanation of policies, procedures, and decisions.

Grievance

A clear, formal written statement by an individual staff member about another staff member or a work-related problem.

Policy

A statement of instruction that sets out how KAC should fulfil its vision, mission, and goals.

Procedure

A statement or instruction that sets out how policies will be implemented and by whom.

3. Guiding principles



3.1 Facilitate complaints

People focus

KAC is committed to seeking and receiving feedback and complaints about its services, systems, practices, procedures, products, and complaint handling.

Any concerns raised in feedback or complaints will be dealt with within a reasonable time frame.

People making complaints will be:

- provided with information about KAC's complaint handling process
- provided with multiples and accessible ways to make complaints
- listened to, treated with respect by staff and actively involved in the complaint process where possible and appropriate, and
- provided with reasons for any decision/s and any options for redress or review.

Anonymous complaints

KAC accept anonymous complaints and will carry out an investigation of the issues raised where there is enough information provided.

Accessibility

KAC will ensure that information about how and where complaints may be made to or about them is well publicised. They will ensure that systems to manage complaints are easily understood and accessible to everyone, particularly people who may require assistance.

If a person prefers or needs another person or organisation to assist or represent them in the making and/or resolution of their complaint, KAC will communicate with them through their representative if this is their wish. Anyone may represent a person wishing to make a complaint with their consent (e.g., advocate, family member, legal or community representative, member of Parliament, another organisation).

No charge

Complaining to KAC is free.

3.2 Respond to complaints

Early resolution

Where possible, complaints will be resolved at first contact with Koorliny Arts Centre Staff.

Responsiveness

KAC will promptly acknowledge receipt of complaints.

KAC will assess and prioritise complaints in accordance with the urgency and/or seriousness of the issues raised. If a matter concerns an immediate risk to safety or security, the response will be immediate and will be escalated appropriately.

KAC are committed to managing people's expectations, and will inform them as soon as possible, of the following:

- the complaints process
- the expected time frames for actions
- the progress of the complaint and reasons for any delay
- their likely involvement in the process, and
- the possible or likely outcome of their complaint.

KAC will advise people as soon as possible when they are unable to deal with any part of their complaint and provide advice about where such issues and/or complaints may be directed (if known and appropriate).

KAC will also advise people as soon as possible when they are unable to meet time frames for responding to their complaint and the reason for any delay.

Objectivity and fairness

KAC will address each complaint with integrity and in an equitable, objective, and unbiased manner.

KAC will ensure that the person handling a complaint is different from any staff member about whose conduct or service is the subject of complaint.

Conflicts of interests, whether actual or perceived, will be managed responsibly. In particular, internal reviews of how a complaint was managed will be conducted by a person other than the original decision maker.

Responding flexibly

KAC Staff is empowered to resolve complaints promptly and with as little formality as possible. KAC will adopt flexible approaches to service delivery and problem solving to enhance accessibility for people making complaints and/or their representatives.

KAC will assess each complaint on its merits and involve people making complaints and/or their representative in the process as far as possible.

Confidentiality

KAC will protect the identity of people making complaints where this is practical and appropriate.

Personal information that identifies individuals will only be disclosed or used by the KAC as permitted under the relevant privacy laws, secrecy provisions and any relevant confidentiality obligations.

3.3 Manage the parties to a complaint

Complaints involving multiple agencies

Where a complaint involves multiple organisations, KAC will work with the other organisations where possible; to ensure that communication with the person making a complaint and/or their representative is clear and coordinated.

Subject to privacy and confidentiality considerations, communication and information sharing between the parties will also be organised to facilitate a timely response to the complaint.

Where a complaint involves multiple areas within the organisation, responsibility for communicating with the person making the complaint and/or their representative will also be coordinated.

Where KAC services are contracted out, KAC expects contracted service providers to have an accessible and comprehensive complaint management system. KAC takes seriously any complaints not only about the actions of its Staff but also the actions of service providers.

Complaints involving multiple parties

When similar complaints are made by related parties, KAC will try to arrange to communicate with a single representative of the group.

Empowerment of Staff

All Staff managing complaints are empowered to implement the complaint management system as relevant to their role and responsibilities.

Staff is encouraged to provide feedback on the effectiveness and efficiency of all aspects of the complaint management system.

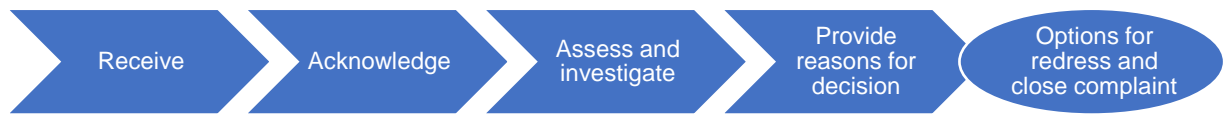
Managing unreasonable conduct by people making complaints

KAC are committed to being accessible and responsive to all people who approach them with feedback or complaints. At the same time, success depends on:

- the ability to do work and perform functions in the most effective and efficient way possible
- the health, safety, and security of KAC Staff, and
- the ability of KAC to allocate resources fairly across all complaints received.

When people behave unreasonably in their dealings with KAC, their conduct can significantly affect the progress and efficiency of their work. As a result, KAC will take proactive and decisive action to manage any conduct that negatively and unreasonably affects them and will support its Staff to do the same in accordance with this Policy.

4. Complaint management system



4.1 Introduction

When responding to complaints, Staff should act in accordance with the complaint handling procedures as well as any other internal documents providing guidance on the management of complaints. Staff should also consider any relevant legislation and/or regulations when responding to complaints and feedback.

The five key stages in the complaint management system are set out below.

4.2 Receipt of complaints

Unless the complaint has been resolved at the outset, KAC will record the complaint and its supporting information. KAC will also assign a unique identifier to the complaint file.

The record of the complaint will document:

- the contact information of the person making a complaint
- issues raised by the person making a complaint and the outcome/s they want
- any other relevant information and
- any additional support required by the person making a complaint.

4.3 Acknowledgement of complaints

KAC will acknowledge receipt of each complaint promptly, and preferably within three (3) working days.

Consideration will be given to the most appropriate medium (e.g., email, letter) for communicating with the person making a complaint.

4.4 Initial assessment and addressing of complaints

Initial assessment

After acknowledging receipt of the complaint, KAC will confirm whether the issue/s raised in the complaint is/are within its control. KAC will also consider the outcome/s sought by the person making a complaint and, where there is more than one issue raised, determine whether each issue needs to be separately addressed.

When determining how a complaint will be managed, KAC will consider:

- How serious, complicated, or urgent the complaint is
- Whether the complaint raises concerns about people's health and safety
- How the person making the complaint is being affected
- The risks involved if resolution of the complaint is delayed, and
- Whether a resolution requires the involvement of other organisations.

Addressing complaints

After assessing the complaint, KAC will consider how to manage it. To manage a complaint, KAC may:

- Give the person making a complaint information or an explanation
- Gather information from the product, person, or area that the complaint is about, or
- Investigate the claims made in the complaint.

KAC will keep the person making the complaint up to date on progress, particularly if there are any delays. They will also communicate the outcome of the complaint using the most appropriate medium.

4.5 Providing reasons for decisions

Following consideration of the complaint and any investigation into the issues raised, KAC will contact the person making the complaint and advise them:

- the outcome of the complaint and any action taken
- the reason/s for the decision
- the remedy or resolution/s that has/have been proposed or put in place, and
- any options for review that may be available to the complainant, such as an internal review, external review, or appeal.

4.6 Closing the complaint, record keeping, redress and review

KAC will keep comprehensive records about:

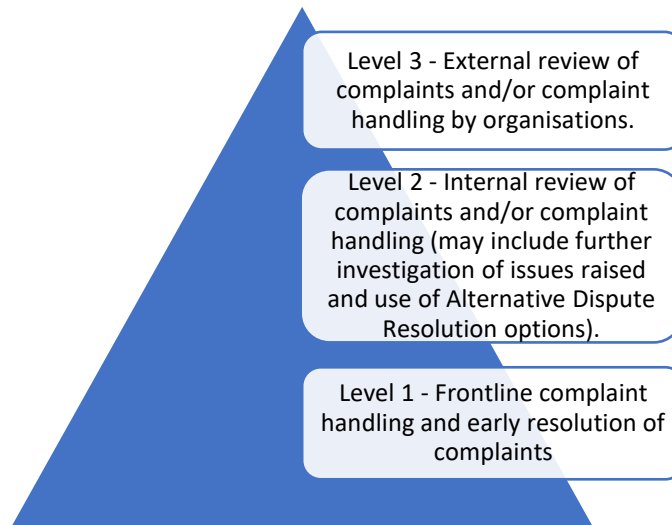
- How the complaint was managed
- The outcome/s of the complaint (including whether it or any aspect of it was substantiated, any recommendations made to address problems identified and any decisions made on those recommendations), and
- Any outstanding actions that need to be followed up.

KAC will ensure that outcomes are properly implemented, monitored, and reported to senior management and/or the Board of Management.

4.7 Alternative avenues for dealing with complaints

KAC will inform people who make complaints to or about the organisation about any internal or external review options available to them (including any relevant Ombudsman or oversight bodies).

4.8 The three levels of complaint handling



KAC aims to resolve complaints at the first level, the frontline. Wherever possible, Staff will be adequately equipped to respond to complaints, including being given appropriate authority, training, and supervision.

Where this is not possible, KAC may decide to escalate the complaint to a more senior officer within the organisation. This second level of complaint handling will provide for the following internal mechanisms:

- assessment and possible investigation of the complaint and decision/s already made, and/or
- facilitated resolution (where a person not connected with the complaint reviews the matter and attempts to find an outcome acceptable to the relevant parties).

Where a person making a complaint is dissatisfied with the outcome of KACs review of their complaint, they may seek an external review of the decision (by the Ombudsman for example).

5. Accountability and learning

5.1 Analysis and evaluation of complaints

KAC will ensure that complaints are recorded in a systematic way so that information can be easily retrieved for reporting and analysis.

Regular reports will be run on:

- the number of complaints received
- the outcome of complaints, including matters resolved at the frontline
- issues arising from complaints
- systemic issues identified, and
- the number of requests received for internal review of the complaint handling.

Regular analysis of these reports will be undertaken to monitor trends, measure the quality of customer service and make improvements.

Both reports and their analysis will be provided to KAC's Board of Management and senior management for review.

5.2 Monitoring of the complaint management system

KAC will continually monitor the complaint management system to:

- ensure its effectiveness in responding to and resolving complaints, and
- identify and correct deficiencies in the operation of the system.

5.3 Continuous improvement

KAC is committed to improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the complaint management system. To this end, it will:

- support the making of and appropriate resolution of complaints
- implement best practices in complaint handling
- recognise and reward exemplary complaint handling by Staff
- regularly review the complaints management system and complaint data, and
- implement appropriate system changes arising out of analysis of complaints data and continual monitoring of the system.