

Complaints Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to be able to deal quickly and fairly with any complaint that is directed at Te Hau Awhiowhio o Otangarei Trust, any of its business operations, staff or Trustees. It is the obligation of all staff and Trustees to use their best abilities to prevent formal complaints from being lodged in the first place.

Formal and Informal Complaints

An informal complaint is one that has not been made in writing. **A formal complaint** is one which has been made in writing.

Usually the handling of an informal complaint will determine whether a formal complaint is to be lodged. It is at the informal stage staff should do everything reasonably possible to satisfy the complaint, to avoid the possibility of a formal complaint being lodged. If that has been possible, the complainant should be advised that they may lodge a formal complaint, and they must be advised of the procedure for doing so.

Outcomes

Complaints are usually lodged because someone is unhappy about some aspect of our service. From this point of view, complaints should be regarded as a positive influence, because they require the organisation to examine the way things are done, and to identify deficiencies, shortcomings and/or faults which can be improved.

The desired results of any complaint are that:

- a. the complainant is satisfied the complaint has been dealt with
- b. Operational deficiencies with the organisation are identified and rectified or improved

Time Frame

Complaints must be dealt with as quickly as possible. **The aim is to have all complaints dealt with within 28 days from date of receipt.**

Right to Advocacy Assistance

The Human Rights Act and the Privacy Act protects certain rights to all clients including the right to support.

Complaints Procedure

Introduction

The Te Hau Awhiowhio o Otangarei Trust is committed to seeking resolution to complaints formally or informally. The following procedure will be used to maintain a level of consistency in an effort to achieve an outcome that is deemed fair by all parties concerned.

	Procedure	Done	Date
	INFORMAL		
1.	An informal complaint can be made by discussing the concern with a member of staff. The staff member will do their best to satisfy or resolve the informal complaint without it having to go any further. The complainant will be advised that if they are not satisfied, they may lodge a formal complain in writing.		
	FORMAL		
2.	A formal written complaint should be addressed to the Complaints Officer and should specify: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The date the complaint refers to b. The nature and details of the complaint c. The staff involved d. The complainant may make suggestions as to how the complaint can be resolved. 		
3.	Interim acknowledgment of the complaint will be sent to the complainant advising them of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The procedure to be followed b. How long it is expected to take c. If the investigation is expected to take longer than 28 days, why a longer period is needed d. The services available through independent advocacy services. 		
4.	In the first instance all complaints will be forwarded to the complaints officer		
4.1	In the case of a complaint received against staff the complaints officer will investigate and report to CEO who will determine the next action.		
4.2	In the case of a complaint received against a senior staff member or the organisation the complaint will be referred to the Complaints Officer who will forward this onto the Board Chair		
	investigation and complete the report.		

	Procedure	Done	Date
5.	The Investigation report will be assessed by a panel of 2 people independent of the complaint, made up of Senior Staff and/or Trustees as appropriate. If necessary an additional independent person to be agreed between the parties, may also be appointed to the panel.		
6.	The panel will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decide on and direct the appropriate action to be taken as a result of the review. • Inform the complainant of the result of the review. • Inform the complainant of their right to take the matter further if they are not satisfied with the result. 		
7.	Inform the CEO / Chair of any recommended amendments to internal policies and procedures to be revised. The CEO / Chair will amend internal policies and procedures to implement and promulgate to all staff, the organisation and its Board of Trustee's if required.		

TE HAU AWHIOWHIO O OTANGAREI TRUST

Complaints Procedure Flow Chart

