

Purpose

This policy documents the Organisation's approach in responding to *feedback* and *complaints*.

Policy statement

General

The Organisation will ensure access to policies. The definitions at the end of this policy must be read to support understanding. Where definitions are required, the word/s will be in *italics*.

Feedback and *complaints*, are an asset to the Organisation, providing opportunity to improve the Organisation's products and services. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) reviews all *feedback* and *complaints* and may intervene at any time.

Feedback mechanisms

A range of mechanisms are available for *feedback*. Sites will clearly display how *feedback* can be provided to include websites, Facebook, parent surveys, email, telephone numbers and a 'mailbox' with postcards.

Regional managers

Regional Managers (RMs) are required to collect postcards and any other feedback from services and provide to the CEOs Executive Assistant (EA) quarterly.

Emailed feedback and complaints

Emailed *feedback* and *complaints* are to be sent to customerservice@onetree.org.au and cc'd to the Executive Assistant (EA) and the relevant Executive Director (ED) on the day it is received. The EA will coordinate the response as directed by the CEO.

Protecting complainants

Anyone providing *feedback* or making a *complaint* will be protected against retaliation at work. A *complaint* that is likely to involve performance management, may not be able to remain confidential. If it is believed that a *complaint* has not been responded to fairly, the Board of Directors (Board) can be advised in writing. The Board will make a final decision.

Unavailability of a responsible position

When a position responsible for an action in this policy is not available, the responsibility will automatically go to their line manager.

Reporting obligations

Minor matters

When feedback is related to *minor, or day to day matters* at service or business level, the person receiving the *feedback* can respond without forwarding to the specified email address. **Minor day to day matters** are to be discussed at the next staff meeting and included in the service's *QIP* (as necessary). If the same (or similar) *feedback* occurs three times, it is to be forwarded to customerservice@onetree.org.au. The CEO may request an investigation. See definition of *minor, or day to day matters*.

Feedback received by parents to support the curriculum is not deemed a part of this policy.

Immediately reportable (or serious) feedback or complaints

Anyone becoming aware of *feedback or complaints* that are considered serious must immediately telephone the EA. Serious feedback or complaints include:

- the safety, health or wellbeing of a child has been compromised;
- a law (regulation) has been breached;
- the Organisation's reputation is likely to be impacted; or
- unacceptable conduct or serious misconduct has occurred (see **HR-POL-002 Managing Poor Performance and Unacceptable Conduct Policy**).

The EA will immediately report serious matters to the CEO. The CEO will direct the response. The CEO may assign an ED or respond. If the CEO is not available, the matter is to be referred directly to an ED.

Matters reportable by law

Matters that are reportable by law (regulations) must be reported to the relevant state or territory regulatory authority within 24 hours by a general manager or above.

Reporting feedback or complaints

All other *feedback* and *complaints* must be documented and emailed on the day it is received. No action is to be taken until the EA assigns the matter to the relevant ED.

The EA will report all *feedback* and *complaints* (that are not serious) directly to the responsible ED for the business area. See section: Immediately reportable (or serious) feedback or complaints. The matter may be delegated to an appropriate person, but the ED will ensure the matter is investigated, legal advice sought (when necessary), resolved and the EA updated at least weekly.

Feedback and *complaints* will be investigated at the level warranted based on the seriousness of the matter.

Managing feedback and complaints

Stakeholders providing *feedback* or making a *complaint* are to be listened to respectfully and advised of their option to make a *formal complaint* or to provide *feedback*. Stakeholders will be responded to within one working day. A copy of this policy is to be offered.

The EA will log *feedback* and *complaints* on the **QM-FOR-005 Log of Feedback, Complaints and Grievances Form**. Information is to be transferred to the **QM-FOR-002 Organisation Health Check Form** for the quality management team meeting. All associated documentation will be filed in the central filing system.

Unless otherwise documented in a contract or agreement, all *feedback* and *complaints* investigations will be concluded in 10 working days.

Written formal or serious complaints

Formal or serious *complaints* are to be in writing and include:

- who the *complaint* is from and contact details;
- the service, business area and/or person the *complaint* relates to;
- overview of the *complaint* including dates and times;
- any evidence and/or witnesses; and
- what the person making the *complaint* wants to see happen.

Written responses to *complainants* or to funding bodies must be reviewed by the CEO before being sent. This includes those involving unacceptable conduct or serious misconduct.

Parent, staff (or customer) satisfaction surveys

Feedback collated from parent, staff (or customer) satisfaction surveys are to be emailed to customerservice@onetree.org.au to be lodged on the **QM-FOR-005 Log of Feedback, Complaints and Grievances Form**. Information is to be transferred to the **QM-FOR-002 Organisation Health Check Form** for the next quality management team meeting. The collated parent satisfaction surveys are to be filed by the EA in the central filing system.

Organisational Health Checks

Staff will be invited to complete an **QM-FOR-011 Operational Issues Feedback Form** to provide general *feedback* about issues they consider need to be addressed at least quarterly. These forms are to be emailed to customerservice@onetree.org.au. The EA will update the information onto the **QM-FOR-002 Organisation Health Check Form** for the next quality management team meeting with assistance from reception or administration staff. Human resources will be required to update the **QM-FOR-002 Organisation Health Check Form** with information from exit surveys at the EAs request.

One Tree Defence Childcare Unit (OTDCU)

Feedback and *complaints* relating to OTDCU will be managed in accordance with this policy and any additional requirements specified in the Defence Childcare Program Services (DCP) contract and statement of work section 9.5 Annex 3. This includes *feedback* and *complaints* that the Commonwealth Representative receives directly.

The Commonwealth Representative will be notified of any *OTDCU notifiable matter* and or serious complaints within 24 hours by a general manager or above assigned the task by the ED. All other feedback and complaints will be presented at scheduled meetings in accordance with the DCP contract.

Reporting requirements

In accordance with 2.3-GOV Governance and Management policy.

Legislation compliance

Refer to QM-SS-001 Regulations and Legislation Register Spreadsheet.

Implementation

The Organisation will:

- ensure there are a range of feedback mechanisms available to Stakeholders; and
- use feedback and complaints to continuously improve performance and manage risks.

The CEO will:

- ensure feedback and complaints are responded to in accordance with this policy and intervene as required;
- review all written responses before being sent;
- delegate responsibility for responding to feedback and complaints; and
- review the **QM-FOR-005 Log of Feedback, Complaints and Grievances** weekly to remain informed of negative feedback and complaints.

The quality management team will:

- review the **QM-FOR-002 Organisation Health Check Form** quarterly to identify unresolved or persistent issues that could be a potential risk to the Organisation or that identify quality issues;
- include matters on the risk register or quality management team QIP (as required); and
- action matters as required.

The executive directors will:

- work in accordance with this policy;
- ensure the EA is provided all feedback and complaints;
- be responsible for being the first point of contact for complainants when assigned by the EA;
- contact the complainant within one working day;
- deescalate matters wherever possible;
- ensure matters that are reportable by law (regulations) are reported to the relevant state or territory regulatory authority within 24 hours by a general manager of above;
- be responsible for investigations related to this policy (including delegating to the appropriate personnel);
- ensure legal advice has been sought (i.e. CCI or Fairwork);
- review (and edit) written responses before providing to the CEO;
- ensure matters are finalised within 10 working days; and

- ensure reports are provided to the EA in a timely manner.

All staff will:

- work in accordance with this policy;
- seek advice from the EA if in doubt of the process;
- deescalate complaints or negative feedback by actively listening;
- advise the complainant that the matter will be forwarded to the CEO's EA;
- advise the complainant they will be contacted in one working day;
- document feedback received and email to customerservice@onetree.org.au and cc their ED and the EA on the day it is received; and
- complete and submit a **QM-FOR-011 Operational Issues Feedback Form** to inform the **QM-FOR-002 Organisation Health Check Form** when they have feedback that could improve the Organisation (when requested).

The EA will:

- check customerservice@onetree.org.au for any feedback or complaints on a daily basis;
- determine (or seek advice) as to whether the feedback or complaints should be forwarded to the CEO or an ED and action in accordance with this policy;
- follow the direction of the CEO in making contact with the complainant within one working day;
- ask the complainant:
 - if they wish to make a formal complaint (and advise them of the requirements);
 - as to their expectations in terms of an outcome; and
 - if they would like a copy of this policy.
- advise the complainant of the process and timeline;
- collect and collate the information required and complete the **QM-FOR-005 Log of Feedback, Complaints and Grievances Form** quarterly to provide to the quality management team meetings;
- update the **QM-FOR-005 Log of Feedback, Complaints and Grievances Form** (at least weekly);
- ensure the feedback, complaints and grievances are transferred to the **QM-FOR-002 Organisation Health Check Form** quarterly to provide to the quality management team meetings (with assistance from reception, administration staff and human resources);
- schedule a meeting with the CEO weekly to review progress and outcomes of feedback and complaints; and

- report to the CEO any non-compliance to timelines and reporting requirements.

Directors and managers (or other staff) will:

- ensure general (non serious) feedback at service level is included in the QIP and is actioned to support continuous improvement; and
- email any feedback (negative or positive) received to customerservice@onetree.org.au and cc the EA and ED.

Regional managers will:

- ensure they collect any feedback received at services and email to customerservice@onetree.org.au at least quarterly (or as directed).

OTDCU executive director will:

- work in accordance with this policy;
- pass on feedback and complaints in accordance with this policy;
- ensure that all OTDCU minor matters are dealt with in accordance with this policy and 100% resolved;
- inform the Commonwealth Representative on any OTDCU minor matters received at the next contract compliance meeting;
- ensure that all OTDCU major matters are reported to the Commonwealth Representative within 24 hours and dealt with in accordance with this policy;
- report the outcomes of any investigations to the Commonwealth Representative within 10 working days after receiving a major complaint;
- ensure that all OTDCU major matters are resolved within one month of receipt of the matter; and
- notify the Commonwealth Representative in writing on the resolution of any OTDCU major matter raised within one month of receipt of the complaint.

The Commonwealth Representative will:

- forward all feedback and complaints received relating to any OTDCU service directly to the OTDCU executive director.

Related policies, forms and checklists

HR-POL-002 Managing Poor Performance and Unacceptable Conduct Policy
 QM-FOR-002 Organisation Health Check Form
 QM-FOR-005 Log of Feedback, Complaints and Grievances
 QM-FOR-011 Operational Issues Feedback Form

Definitions

Commonwealth Representative: refers to the authorised delegate that is responsible for the administering the DCP contract on behalf of the Commonwealth.

Complainant: anyone making a complaint or providing negative feedback.

Complaints: Can be informal and formal.

Feedback: Information coming directly from Stakeholders about the satisfaction or dissatisfaction they feel with a product or a service. The person providing the feedback is not wanting to make a complaint but wanting the Organisation to be aware of areas requiring improvement or acknowledging good practice.

Formal complaint: Must be in writing and deemed serious enough to warrant immediate action. A formal complaint can include an unresolved informal complaint. Although 'common sense' applies, a serious complaint would be deemed to put the Organisation or its Stakeholders at risk (i.e. serious non-compliance to policy, regulations or legislation or a matter that is significantly impacting on the service as a whole).

Informal complaint: A written or verbal complaint with the intention of resolving the matter before it is escalated to a formal complaint. A complaint is deemed informal when:

- the issue can be resolved quickly and easily through discussion
- the matter is less serious (i.e. not reportable to an authority, not impacting on the health and safety of another nor deemed serious misconduct in accordance with 3.2-HRE Managing Poor Performance and Unacceptable Conduct Policy).
- the people involved are likely to have an ongoing relationship
- the person complaining wants to do it informally (and has been advised of the option to make a formal complaint)

Minor, day to day matters: is feedback that can be responded to and resolved immediately by the person receiving the feedback to the immediate satisfaction of the Stakeholder. It does not reoccur.

Organisation: One Tree Community Services Inc.

OTDCU major matter: refers to any incident that has or is likely to place the service in breach of any regulation or law as defined by the Early Education and Care Regulations and National Law.

OTDCU minor matter: refers to any incident that is not classified as above.

OTDCU notifiable matter: refers to the death or serious injury or illness of a person, or an incident that exposes a person to a risk or serious injury or illness.

QIP: Quality Improvement Plan

Stakeholders: Any person or group of people having an involvement with the Organisation to include customers, parents, carers, staff, volunteers, business partners, duty holders, funding or sponsoring bodies, government or the general community.

Change submission and approval details

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urgent approval required	<input type="checkbox"/> No changes made at this review
Submitted by Karri Hillier	Date 18/02/2019
Approved by S-MT Click or tap here to enter text.	Date Enter the date.
Approved by QMT Click or tap here to enter text.	Date Enter the date.
Approved by CEO Karri Hillier	Date 18/02/2019