

## 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 products and services. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) reviews all *feedback* and *complaints* and may intervene at any time.

### 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.

### Managing feedback and complaints

Stakeholders providing *feedback* or making a *complaint* are to be listened to respectfully. A copy of this policy is to be offered. Anyone providing negative *feedback* will be informed:

- they can provide a written *complaint* in accordance with the requirements of this policy and be contacted at the beginning and end of the process (including being provided with the outcome of their complaint); or
- provide verbal or written *feedback* which will inform quality improvement but will not be provided with the outcome unless they request it in writing.

All *feedback* and *complaints* will be emailed to [customerservice@onetree.org.au](mailto:customerservice@onetree.org.au).

Policy name	Feedback and Complaints Policy
Policy number	QM-POL-002
Scheduled review date	May 2019
Version	2.0
Responsible S-MT	Quality Management Team

The Executive Assistant (EA) will log feedback and *complaints* on the **QM-FOR-005 Log of Feedback and Complaints 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 *complaint* investigations will be concluded in 10 working days and feedback within 28 working days.

When *feedback* and *complaints* have been closed by the CEO, the EA will email **QM-TP-002 Case Closure Email** to the ED and the person completing **QM-TP-001 Feedback and Complaints Investigation Report**. The person completing **QM-TP-001 Feedback and Complaint Investigation Report** is to ensure recommendations are implemented.

## Feedback

The Organisation classifies *feedback* as information coming 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.

*Feedback* can also be forwarded at any time by completing **QM-FOR-011 Operational Issues Feedback Form** or by general email to [customerservice@onetree.org.au](mailto:customerservice@onetree.org.au).

If *feedback* is verbal and related to day to day matters at service or business level, the person receiving the *feedback* can respond without forwarding to the specified email address. 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, a completed **QM-FOR-011 Operational Issues Feedback Form** is to be forwarded to [customerservice@onetree.org.au](mailto:customerservice@onetree.org.au). The CEO may request an investigation.

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 (RMs) are required to collect postcards and any other *feedback* from services and forward to [customerservice@onetree.org.au](mailto:customerservice@onetree.org.au) at least quarterly.

## Parent, staff (or customer) satisfaction surveys

*Feedback* collated from parent, staff (or customer) satisfaction surveys are to be emailed to [customerservice@onetree.org.au](mailto:customerservice@onetree.org.au) to be lodged on the **QM-FOR-005 Log of Feedback and Complaints Form**. The collated parent satisfaction surveys are to be filed by the EA in the central filing system.

The EA is to notify the Executive Directors (EDs) of negative feedback. The ED must inform the parties concerned, and decide whether an investigation is warranted. When an investigation is deemed warranted it is to be documented on **QM-TP-001 Feedback and Complaint Investigation Report** and emailed to [customerservice@onetree.org.au](mailto:customerservice@onetree.org.au).

EDs will be required to coordinate an investigation when there are three occasions of similar negative *feedback* or as directed by the CEO.

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

### Staff grievance

A *grievance* is any type of problem, concern or complaint related to an employee's work including interactions with other employees. Refer to **4.2-NQS Staff Grievance Policy**.

Unresolved staff grievances are to be emailed to [hr@onetree.org.au](mailto:hr@onetree.org.au)

### Complaint

Although 'common sense' applies, a *complaint* would be deemed to put the Organisation or its stakeholders at risk. A *complaint* must be in writing and deemed serious enough to warrant immediate action. The following information is to be included:

- 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.

Anyone becoming aware of a serious matter must immediately telephone the EA. Serious matters 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 on the day it is received. 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

Serious 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.

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.

### Organisational Health Checks

Staff will be invited, at least quarterly, to complete an **QM-FOR-011 Operational Issues Feedback Form** to provide general *feedback* about issues they consider need to be addressed. These forms are to be emailed to [customerservice@onetree.org.au](mailto:customerservice@onetree.org.au). The EA will update the information onto the **QM-FOR-005 Log of Feedback and Complaints Form** for the next quality management team meeting with assistance from reception or administration staff. Human resources will be required to provide information from exit surveys, grievances and performance 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* 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 and Complaints** weekly to remain informed of negative *feedback* and *complaints*.

The quality management team will:

- review the **QM-FOR-005 Log of Feedback and Complaints Form** quarterly to identify unresolved or persistent issues that could be a potential risk or to improve products and services;
- 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 or the CEO;
- contact the complainant within one working day;
- ask complainants:
  - if they wish to make a formal *complaint* (and advise them of the requirements);
  - of 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
- 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 recommendations documented on **QM-TM-001 Feedback and Complaints Investigation Report** are implemented;
- ensure *complaints* are finalised within 10 working days and *feedback* within 28 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;
- advise complainants of their options to provide *feedback* or make a *complaint* (and what both options involve);
- deescalate *complaints* or negative *feedback* by actively listening;
- advise the complainant that the matter will be forwarded to the CEO's EA;
- advise those making a *complaint* they will be contacted in one working day;
- cc the ED and the EA into any *complaints* sent to [customerservice@onetree.org.au](mailto:customerservice@onetree.org.au);
- complete and submit a **QM-FOR-011 Operational Issues Feedback Form** to [customerservice@onetree.org.au](mailto:customerservice@onetree.org.au)

The EA will:

- check [customerservice@onetree.org.au](mailto:customerservice@onetree.org.au) for any *feedback* or *complaints* daily;
- advise the CEO and EDs of *feedback* or *complaint* in accordance with this policy;
- advise the ED to contact the person making a *complaint* within one working day;
- update the **QM-FOR-005 Log of Feedback and Complaints Form** (at least weekly);
- email **QM-TM-002 Case Closure Email** to ED;
- ensure the *feedback*, *complaints* and surveys are documented to the **QM-FOR-005 Log of Feedback and Complaints Form** to provide quarterly 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](mailto: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](mailto: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.

HR will:

- Keep a log of all grievances and performance
- Provide log to the EA as requested (quarterly)

#### Related policies, forms and checklists

HR-POL-002 Managing Poor Performance and Unacceptable Conduct Policy

4.2-NQS Staff Grievance Policy

QM-FOR-005 Log of Feedback and Complaints Form

QM-FOR-011 Operational Issues Feedback Form

QM-TP-001 Feedback and Complaint Investigation Report

QM-TP-002 Case Closure Email

**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.

**Complaint:** Must be in writing and deemed serious enough to warrant immediate action.

Although ‘common sense’ applies, a *complaint* would be deemed to put the Organisation or its Stakeholders at risk (i.e. non-compliance to policy, regulations or legislation or a matter that is significantly impacting on the service or its stakeholders).

**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 (or serious matter):** refers to any incident that is not classified as above.

**OTDCU notifiable matter (or serious 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**

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Urgent approval required  No changes made at this review

Submitted by Karri Hillier Date 24/06/2019

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 26/02/2019