

3.1.1 Complaints Policy and Procedure



Policy statement

The Queensland Police-Citizens Youth Welfare Association (PCYC) is committed to being open and responsive to any complaints offered by our employees, volunteers, contractors, members, supporters or members of the public. PCYC will endeavour to seek an outcome to a complaint which is satisfactory to all parties.

1. Objectives

PCYC will ensure the complaints process is consistent across the Association with any investigations being undertaken promptly, appropriately and confidentially. We will ensure appropriate action is taken to resolve any complaints and endeavour to seek an outcome which is satisfactory to all parties. We will seek to manage complaints in a timely manner and maintain appropriate communication with the complainant throughout the process.

2. Scope

This Policy and Procedure applies to all complaints received by PCYC from employees, volunteers (**staff**), contractors, members, or members of the public. Contractors who have disputes and issues should also refer to the dispute resolution clause in their Contract for Service Agreement.

This Policy and Procedure does **NOT** apply to:

- Complaints made against Queensland Police Service (QPS) Employees. These complaints can be received by State Office but are then forwarded to the QPS State Coordinator, QPCYWA who will manage the complaint in line with the appropriate QPS Policy and Procedure. PCYC will also determine whether a letter is to be provided to Ethical Standards Command regarding complaints received against QPS officers who are Agents of the Association.
- Disclosures that fall under the Whistle-blowers Policy or the Workplace Bullying Policy and Procedure
- Complaints that relate to the QPCYWA Collective Agreement should be dealt with under the Dispute Resolution Clause (21) of this Agreement.

3. Guiding principles

- PCYC will maintain a formal complaints register to ensure that all complaints are responded to in a timely and impartial manner;
- PCYC will ensure that all complaints are appropriately recorded, considered and retained for record keeping purposes;
- PCYC encourages all complaints to be expressed through the formal complaints procedure;
- PCYC will ensure the complainant is informed of the process to be followed and maintain regular communication with the complainant throughout the process;
- PCYC will provide assistance to those that wish to submit a formal complaint by verbal means by way of documenting the complaint on behalf of the complainant for them to sign off as an accurate reflection of their complaint;
- PCYC will advise complainants of Employee Assistance Service (if applicable);
- PCYC will address complaints in a confidential and timely manner and will endeavour to acknowledge all complaints within 48 hours of receipt at State Office;
- PCYC will ensure that the complaint investigation process is impartial with no assumptions being made or any action taken until all relevant information has been collected and considered;

- PCYC will endeavour to ensure that complaints will be managed without retribution for the complainant and will take all necessary steps to ensure that no victimization occurs against anyone who makes a complaint;
- PCYC will take reasonable steps to ensure that any complaints made are not vexatious and will take appropriate action (where appropriate) against anyone found to be making vexatious complaints;
- The nominated Complaints Officer is the main contact for who complaints should be directed to through complaints@pcyc.org.au;
- PCYC recognises the rights of individuals to approach an external agency if the formal complaints procedure has not resolved the issue to their satisfaction.

4. Roles and responsibilities

Complainant

The Complainant is expected to:

- Inform the Association about concerns in writing ensuring that as much detail as possible is provided in the complaint including what happened, dates and times of events (where possible), whether any witnesses were present, along with what outcome the complainant is seeking;
- Where a written complaint is not possible, the Complainant should provide as much information to the individual in receipt of the complaint to allow them to capture all information in the document for the complainant to sign as true and accurate.
- Participate in good faith and have regard to facts, relevant policies or procedures and the particulars of the circumstances;
- Maintain confidentiality throughout the process.

Complaints Officer

The Complaints Officer is responsible for maintaining confidentiality throughout the process. The Complaints Officer is expected to:

- Record the particulars of the complaint on the Complaints Register and endeavour to acknowledge the complaint within 48hrs of receipt of the complaint at State Office;
- Review the details of the complaint and identify an appropriate Investigation Officer to undertake the investigation into the complaint;
- Maintain regular communication is to be maintained with the Complainant throughout the process;
- Review the findings of all investigations and make a determination on any proposed course of action.
- Advise the Complainant of the outcome of the complaint once the investigation has been finalised, as well as advising the Respondent (if applicable) of any proposed course of action.

Investigation Officer

The Investigation Officer is responsible for reviewing the complaint in the spirit of achieving resolution, procedural fairness, sensitivity and confidentiality to the parties involved. The Investigation Officer is expected to:

- Ensure the complainant is informed of the process and engaged in the resolution process;
- Meet with any identified witnesses, advise them of their right to a support person and document any information relevant to the complaint;
- Meet and interview the Respondent (if applicable);
- Provide a written document for review out-lining findings and recommendations of any proposed course of action.

Witnesses

Witnesses may request a support person to be present during any investigation interview they are asked to attend. A Witness is expected to:

- Put forward any evidence relevant to the complaint during the investigation interview;
- Participate in good faith and have regard to facts, policies and procedures;
- Maintain confidentiality throughout the process.

Respondent

Respondents may request the right to a support person being present during any investigation interview they are asked to attend. A Respondent is expected to:

- Put forward version of events in response to the complaint and provide any relevant information during the investigation interview;
- Participate in good faith and have regard to facts, policies and procedures;
- Maintain confidentiality throughout the process.

Executive Management Team

The PCYC Executive Management Team is expected to:

- Ensure the Complaints Policy and Procedure is adhered to and is consistent with any applicable legislation;
- Review all complaints and findings on a monthly basis as a standing agenda item at EMT meeting.

5. Procedure

Submitting a Complaint

For a member of the Club or a member of the public who wishes to make a complaint, the Complaints Policy and Procedure document will be made available at a Branch level for their reference. Where possible, complaints should be received by the nominated Complaints Officer by way of a written complaint. Where a written complaint is not possible, the complainant may provide a verbal complaint which will be documented by the Complaints Officer or nominated delegate with the complainant signing off the file note as a true and accurate reflection of their complaint.

Receiving and Recording a Complaint

A complaint, once documented, is to be forwarded to complaints@pcyc.org.au. PCYC will acknowledge the complaint within 48hrs of receipt, where possible, and update complaints register. Where the complaint is against a QPS employee, PCYC will forward the complaint and any other documentation to the CEO for forwarding onto QPS.

Assessing the Complaint

PCYC will identify whether the complaint can be investigated internally or whether consideration should be given for the complaint to be investigated by an external investigator. If it is to be investigated internally, it will then be determined whether the investigation will occur locally at a Branch level, or by State Office. Once this is determined, an appropriate Investigation Office will be identified and the complaint and any other relevant documentation will be forwarded to the Investigation Officer for auctioning. If the complaint is to be investigated externally, Terms of Reference will be developed and the Complaints Officer will promptly forward these along with the original complaint to the appropriate external agency.

Investigating the Complaint

The Investigating Officer will contact the Complainant and advise them of their role and the process to be followed, and obtain any additional information from the Complainant as required. After reviewing the details of the complaint, the Investigating Officer will identify whether any witnesses need to be formally interviewed. The Investigating Officer will then meet with any Respondents to the Complaint and ensure that a Respondent has been provided the right to a Support Person being present at any meetings.

The Investigating Officer will review all evidence obtained, produce a report of findings including any recommendations on a proposed course of action. Finally the Investigating Officer will forward the report to the Complaints Officer for further discussion with EMT members as appropriate.

Finalising the Complaint

The Complaints Officer will formulate a response to the Complainant advising them of the outcome and any action taken (where appropriate) to remedy their complaint. The Complainant will be advised that any decisions made by PCYC are final. The Complaints Officer or delegated representative will then inform the Respondent (if applicable) of any proposed course of action. The Respondent will also be advised that any decisions made by

PCYC are final. The Complaints Officer or delegated representative will update the Complaints Register and close off the complaint.

Monitoring Complaints for Improvement

The Complaints Officer will analyse all complaints on a quarterly basis and provide reports to the Executive Management Team highlighting any trends or areas of concern that may require improvement.

Document version control

Related Documents	Managing Complaints Flow Chart, Managing Complaints against QPS Employees Flow Chart
Policy Owner	GM People
Approved By	CEO
Last Review Date	April 2017
Next Review Date	April 2018

Appendix

Policy comparison – Whistle-blower, Complaints, Workplace Bullying

Though similar in theme, the intended use for each policy is distinct.

The *Whistle-blower Policy and Procedure* are specifically intended for staff and volunteers to report instances of **unethical or fraudulent behaviour** including: corrupt conduct, fraud or theft, official misconduct, maladministration, harassment or unlawful discrimination, serious waste of public resources, and practices endangering the health and safety of workers and volunteers or the environment.

The *PCYC Complaints Policy and Procedure* is meant to cover **all complaints** received from PCYC staff and volunteers, contractors, members or members of the public towards an individual connected to PCYC or PCYC itself – but NOT of an unethical or fraudulent nature.

The *PCYC Workplace Bullying Policy and Procedure* is meant to provide the expected standards of behaviour of PCYC workers – **to ensure all those in the workplace are treated with respect, dignity and fairness.**

POLICY COMPARISON

Policy	Main coverage	Contacts
Whistle-blower	Unethical or fraudulent behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• their supervisor: or, if they feel that their supervisor may be complicit in the breach,• the CEO: or, if they feel that the CEO may be complicit in the breach,• the organisation's 160 nominated Whistle-blower Protection Officer, or• the duly constituted legal authorities responsible for the enforcement of the law in the relevant area.
Bullying	Bullying behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Person exhibiting bullying behaviour• Supervisor/Manager• HR team
Complaints	All other complaints	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• complaints@pcyc.org.au