



**Ronald
McDonald
House**

South & Central
Australia

Complaints Management Policy

Policy Category: Operational

Document Owner: CEO

1. Policy Statement

We recognise that effective management of complaints is critical to the improvement of our service and the organisation. Complaints provide the opportunity for us to address concerns and issues fairly and build an environment of accountability, transparency, and continuous improvement.

This policy is guided by the principles of AS/NZS 10002: 2018 Guidelines for complaint management in organisations.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers and Board members.

This policy does not apply if the subject of the complaint relates to:

- A workplace grievance involving employees
- Matters better managed under other regulation, legislation, or via criminal investigations.

3. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure:

- Fair, accountable, transparent, and responsive management of complaints
- Complaints are handled promptly and as close to the source as possible
- Effective monitoring of complaints
- Identification and implementation of business improvement opportunities,

4. Definitions

Complaint	An expression of dissatisfaction with a service and/or decision of the organisation.
Complainant	The person making the complaint (may be a guest family or another person making the complaint on their behalf).

5. Accessibility of Complaint Process

This *Complaints Management Policy* is available to the public on the Ronald McDonald House South & Central Australia website. Information sheets regarding providing feedback and complaints is also provided to guest families directly as part of the check-in process.

6. Complainant Rights and Responsibilities

Rights

Any person making a complaint can expect that we will:

- Deal with the complainant in a respectful, fair and objective manner adhering to the principles of natural justice in the management of the complaint.
- Provide advice regarding the complaints process.
- Ensure that it is easy to make a complaint and there is support and assistance to enable a person to make a complaint.
- Provide help to those who may have difficulties representing themselves, including arranging access to interpreters, aids or advocates and documenting the complaint in writing where circumstances warrant.
- Resolve the issues or concerns as quickly as possible and ensure the complainant is regularly informed of progress.
- Where the complaint is reasonable, ensure an appropriate solution.
- Provide clear information about the action taken and the reasons for that action.
- Provide information about any further avenues for review or appeal when the complaint is not resolved to their satisfaction.

Responsibilities

Complainants can assist our staff to resolve their complaint by:

- clearly identifying their issues of complaint and providing all relevant information regarding their complaint
- assisting with any requests for information, enquiries or investigations in the timeframes agreed
- showing respect to our staff as they work to resolve the complaint.

Complaints maybe made anonymously, however, where the information provided is insufficient to allow thorough investigation of the issue, we will be unable to progress the complaint.

7. Receiving a Complaint

Initial contact

All Ronald McDonald House South & Central Australia staff can handle complaints in the first instance, and it is preferable that complaints are resolved at the initial point of contact if possible.

On receiving a complaint, we expect that staff will:

- be receptive and listen to the complaint.
- be calm, respectful and thank the client for raising the issues and concerns without blaming others.
- ensure that they have all the relevant information and check their understanding of the details.
- try to resolve the complaint immediately by discussing options for addressing the complaint.
- record the complaint by scanning the Feedback QR code displayed throughout the House and in Donesafe.

Complaint resolved at initial contact

If the complaint is resolved at initial contact, the staff member receiving the complaint must record the complaint and resolution in the Feedback Register and notify the relevant Department Head of the outcome.

Complaint not resolved at initial contact

If the complaint cannot be resolved at the initial contact to the satisfaction of the complainant, the staff member receiving the complaint will inform the complainant of the resolution process.

The complaint will be sent to the relevant Department Head responsible for the service the complaint relates to for management of the complaint within 1 business day from the receipt of the complaint.

Cases of serious misconduct

If at any point during the complaints process the person receiving or managing a complaint believes that fraud, corruption or serious misconduct may have occurred, they must immediately notify the relevant Department Head and the CEO.

The CEO will inform the Board should they determine that the complaint involves a serious risk to the organisation.

8. Managing a Complaint

Assessing the complaint

The Department Head responsible for the division providing the service the complaint relates to will assess the complaint to determine whether they should notify external bodies of the complaint.

In some cases, there will be a legislative requirement to notify any external organisation – for example mandatory reporting of suspected child abuse. If notification is required, the Department Head must ensure it is completed within the time frame set by legislation.

If the complaint alleges fraud, corruption or other criminal behaviour which must be referred to external agencies, the Department Head must refer the complaint immediately to the CEO.

Contacting the complainant

Within 2 business days of the receipt of the complaint, the Department Head will:

- advise the complainant of their contact details
- seek additional information about the complaint
- identify the outcome the complainant is seeking in response to their complaint
- advise the complainant on the frequency of updates on progress (not less frequently than every 5 business days)

Reviewing the complaint

The Department Head will review the complaint, gathering information from staff, guest records and other relevant sources including but not limited to:

- oral evidence (recollections)
- documentary evidence (records)
- expert evidence (technical advice)
- site inspection.

Where there are witnesses it may be necessary to gather evidence from more than one to provide corroboration.

From this information they will then reach a conclusion on:

- whether the complaint is reasonable
- if it is reasonable, what action should be taken to satisfy the complainant
- if it is not reasonable, what information should be given to the complainant.

Determining findings and recommendations

The Department Head will determine their findings, document the reasons and evidence for each finding, and identify recommended actions to respond to or remedy the complaint. Recommendations may include:

- disciplinary action
- dismissal of a disciplinary charge
- referral of a matter to an external agency for further investigation or prosecution
- introduction of administrative policies, procedures or practices
- changes to administrative policies, procedures or practices
- redress for the complainant.

If the recommended remedy is outside their delegations, they will refer it to the CEO.

Advising the complainant of the result

The Department Head will advise the complainant of the result of the complaint process and the action to be taken. They may give this information by phone or face-to-face initially.

Where a complaint is resolved but the complainant is not satisfied with the response, the Department Head will provide a written response to the complainant outlining:

- the result of the complaint
- avenues for appeal, including:
 - request for internal review
 - contact details of external bodies to review the complaint

The Department Head can use their discretion to determine whether a written response is not required in response to the circumstances and needs of individual complainants.

Closing the complaint records

When the complaint is closed the Department Head will ensure that:

- all required information is recorded in the Feedback Register / Donesafe.
- a closure note is recorded on the guest file
- any continuous improvement actions arising from the complaint are reviewed by the Executive Leadership team.

9. Request for Review

Making a request

Complainants may request an internal review of the management and resolution of their complaint. The request can be made in person, by phone or in writing.

Receiving the request

Requests for review should be referred to the CEO within 1 business day of receipt.

Initial response to the request

The CEO will:

- advise the complainant that they are personally reviewing the management and resolution of their complaint
- advise the complainant when they can expect a response
- ensure the review is completed within 10 business days.

Reviewing the request

The CEO will review the management and resolution of the complaint, considering:

- the effectiveness and efficiency of the management of the complaint
- the reasonableness of the resolution of the complaint.

The CEO will discuss their findings and the result of the review with the Department Head who initially handled the complaint.

Responding to the complainant

The CEO will advise the complainant of the result of the review, and options for pursuing their complaint externally if they wish.

10. Recording, Monitoring, and Reporting

Complaints are recorded using the Feedback QR code in the first instance, with details around the resolution of a complaint recorded in the Feedback Register/ Donesafe and a comment noting a complaint made may also be recorded in the guest family's file. Records relating to complaints will be retained for a minimum of seven years.

The *Feedback Register* is reviewed by the Executive Leadership Team regularly for continuous improvement actions.

11. Responsibilities

Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Receive notice of complaints deemed as serious breaches or risk to the organisation• Receive an annual data complaints report
CEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Receive notice of complaints deemed as serious breaches or risk to the organisation• Ensure that mandatory notification and/or reporting of complaints to external agencies occurs where required• Conduct reviews in accordance with this policy
Department Head	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure that mandatory notification and/or reporting of complaints to external agencies occurs where required• Manage complaints in accordance with this policy• Ensure all complaints are recorded in the <i>Feedback Register</i> and Donesafe• Ensure continuous improvement actions are recorded and actioned
All staff and volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Follow this policy• Assist a complainant to make a complaint, when requested

Complainant

- Clearly identify their issues of complaint
- Provide all relevant information about their complaint to the best of their ability
- Co-operate with any requests for information, enquiries or investigations

12. Associated Policies and Procedures

- Code of Conduct and Ethics for employees, volunteers and Board members

13. Policy Approval and Version History

Version	Description of changes	Approved by	Effective date	Next Review Date
1.0	Creation of Policy	Melissa Monkhouse	May 2025	May 2026
2.0	Amendment as per brand modernisation guidelines	Melissa Monkhouse	June 2026	June 2027