

## Feedback Procedure

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The Participate Australia Feedback Procedure applies to all feedback, complaints and grievances submitted by all Participate Australia stakeholders.

### Procedure

1. A copy of the feedback procedure and a feedback form will be made available to any stakeholder in Participate Australia immediately upon request. Copies of this procedure and form are present in all Participate Australia venues and the procedure is also viewable via the Participate Australia website.
2. Any stakeholder in Participate Australia has the right to provide feedback and/or lodge a complaint with the organisation.
3. The purpose of documenting feedback is to improve the quality management system for the organisation. If there are common issues, ideas and concerns, this is the responsibility of senior management and the Board to address. Participate Australia will seek to identify the root cause of any feedback, especially if a trend becomes apparent, and recommend appropriate corrective action in order to avoid the issue from reoccurring.
4. All stakeholders providing feedback will be encouraged to complete a feedback form. However, they may provide feedback in other ways too (e.g. verbally, by email, etc.).

For this purpose, Participate Australia has created a unique email address, which is received by the Manager Corporate Services only: [feedback@participateaustralia.com.au](mailto:feedback@participateaustralia.com.au).

If feedback is received verbally, it is incumbent upon the staff member who received the feedback to prepare a written version of it and to forward it without delay.

5. All feedback is treated as strictly confidential and must be forwarded to the Manager Corporate Services, who will assess whether it is informal or formal feedback and who will escalate it or direct it to the appropriate Participate Australia employee for further action.

Participate Australia defines informal and formal feedback as follows:

- a. Informal feedback is where the facts surrounding the circumstances of the basis of the feedback are not disputed and/or are not difficult to establish, and/or the matter is clearly within the scope of responsibility of a Coordinator.
  - b. Formal feedback is where the facts surrounding the circumstances of the basis of the feedback are disputed and/or are difficult to establish, and/or the matter is either against or involves a Coordinator or is beyond the scope of responsibility of a Coordinator.
6. In addition, any feedback of a serious / criminal nature, severe physical or emotional distress, reoccurring unacceptable behaviour, or any report of sexual or racial harassment reported either by or on behalf of a participant is to be considered as a high level complaint and immediately treated as such. This requires immediate reporting to the CEO.
    - a. In cases where the person providing feedback is raising allegations of abuse, discrimination, neglect or exploitation, Participate Australia will immediately treat it as a high level complaint to be escalated to the CEO.
    - b. In addition, Participate Australia will offer to engage the services of the Complaints Resolution and Referral Service (CRRS) to act as an advocate for the complainant during the resolution of the allegation.

- c. In the instance that the complaint is levelled against the CEO, it is immediately escalated to the President of the Board.
7. In the case of informal feedback the complainant will be encouraged and supported to discuss the grievance directly with the person in question and seek to agree a resolution of the matter. In the instance that the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome achieved by this means, or in circumstances where the Manager Corporate Services perceives the resolution to be inadequate, the matter will be referred to the appropriate senior manager and it will automatically be treated as formal feedback.
8. In cases where the feedback/complaint is found to be formal in nature it will be immediately treated as such by the Manager Corporate Services and will be escalated to the appropriate senior manager, or in the case of serious allegations to the CEO.
9. In the event that a settlement still cannot be reached, or the person is still dissatisfied with the outcome of previous attempts to settle the matter, the CEO will be notified and act as a mediator. A meeting shall be arranged and will be held no later than 15 working days after the initial receipt of the complaint.
10. Where a suitable resolution still cannot be reached via the mediation of the managers or CEO the person can approach the Board. The complaint will be listed on the agenda for the next available Board meeting.
11. In these circumstances the person will be encouraged to produce a written submission or to attend the Board meeting, with an advocate if desired. The Board will notify the person in writing of the outcome of the meeting and any resulting action no later than 10 working days of such a meeting.
12. Participate Australia will provide the person with a written report on the outcome of any complaint that requires the involvement of the CEO or the Board. The person will be provided with support in understanding the outcomes (and any subsequent action taken), if required.
13. If the person continues to be dissatisfied with the outcome of these proceedings they will be encouraged to take their complaint to the Ombudsman's office.

### **Documentation and Analysis**

1. Stakeholders should understand that staff will be notifying the person that some of what is said will be documented, to gather information, identify a root cause, and, where necessary to recommend corrective actions.
2. All feedback received is to be logged in the complaints register either as a high level complaint or general complaints, which is managed by executive management. Any corresponding documentation is attached to a cover page form, so as there is supporting evidence for the complaint and any necessary follow ups.
3. When actioning feedback, the staff member responsible is to identify the root cause and recommend corrective action.
4. Feedback received by Participate Australia is analysed monthly. An analysis of any corrective action taken in response to feedback will also be reviewed quarterly to ascertain whether it has had the desired effect.
5. Monthly analysis and reporting is provided to the Board. All names are kept confidential.

### **Communication & Rights**

1. Participate Australia will continue to keep the person informed either verbally or in writing of the progress and any action taken regarding the investigation of their feedback.
2. The person (if a participant or family) will continue to receive Participate Australia services as usual (alternative arrangements will be made if a complaint is against their existing support worker), unless they decide to withdraw themselves from the service.
3. In the case of a serious allegation made against a Participate Australia employee, that employee may be placed on administrative leave with pay for the duration of the complaints process, in accordance with Participate Australia Human Resources procedures.







