

COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT POLICY



Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear methods for receiving, recording, responding to and resolving all forms of feedback, including compliments and complaints from participants, families, carers, advocates, staff, students, and members of the community.

Aurora Support Services is committed to providing quality, safe, and responsive supports that meet the needs of our participants and their families.

Feedback, whether positive or negative is recognised as an essential tool for learning and improvement. This policy affirms Aurora Support Services' commitment to an organisational culture where feedback is welcomed, encouraged, and acted upon in the interests of participants, staff, and the broader community.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees, students, volunteers, contractors and members of the Committee of Management of Aurora Support Services.

This policy is relevant to all participants who attend Aurora Support Services as well as to their family members and any other supports who may interact with Aurora Support Services on their behalf.

Definitions

Compliment	Positive feedback about a service, staff member, or process.
Complaint	An expression of dissatisfaction made to or about an organisation regarding its workers, services, or products that warrants a response or resolution.
Complainant	An employee, service user, advocate, entity, or member of the public who expresses their dissatisfaction about an organisation to either the organisation itself or an external body.
Feedback	Includes both compliments and complaints.
Advocate	A person who supports or represents a participant to express their views or make a complaint.

Policy

All parties have a right to give feedback without fear of reproach. Aurora Support Services will take all reasonable steps to protect the privacy of people who make a complaint, and to ensure that no one will be adversely affected as a result of making a complaint, or a complaint being made on their behalf.

Aurora Support Services is committed to dealing with complaints promptly and fairly and in a manner that respects the rights of both complainants and respondents. Responding to and resolving complaints will be given a high priority within the organisation.

Our approach to managing feedback, compliments and complaints is based on the following principles:

- Maintaining positive attitude towards feedback, including compliments and complaints
- Actively seeking feedback about our services from our participants, families and staff



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- Ensuring that participants and families are provided with information about how to give feedback about the organisation, including information in a format that is easily understood, as well as information about external complaint pathways and advocacy support
- Treating every person who provides feedback with respect, without fear of retribution
- Information is managed confidentially
- Reinforcing the organisation's ongoing commitment to quality service delivery, and the important role that feedback plays in this
- Complaints are acknowledged, assessed, and resolved in a timely manner
- Address and investigate where necessary to do so, all issues or concerns relating to employees, including management
- Outcomes are clearly communicated
- Ensure that serious complaints, including allegations of abuse, neglect, exploitation or criminal conduct, are reported promptly to relevant external bodies such as the Police and the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission
- Record all feedback, and engage in data analysis to identify and explore trends that highlight opportunities to improve service delivery and management of compliments and complaints
- Continue training and development to ensure staff members are trained in the relevant processes for both making and receiving complaints and compliments
- Maintain an effective compliments and complaints management processes as part of a robust quality improvement framework

Providing Feedback

People can provide us with feedback in whichever way they feel comfortable to do so, including (but not limited to):

- In person, by speaking to a staff member that they trust (or for staff members, by speaking to their Line Manager or another member of Management staff with whom they feel comfortable)
- By phone
- In a letter or by email
- In a response to an annual survey sent by the organisation
- By completing the online Feedback Form (available via email signatures, website, and QR codes) <https://forms.office.com/r/AHwSbST7aB> (full version) or <https://forms.office.com/r/zNxr4vLkZE> (easy read version) - available/open at all times

Where the mode of communication allows, people can choose to submit feedback anonymously. This can, however, limit the effectiveness of the organisation's response to the feedback.

When someone chooses not to provide their name, it means that it is challenging and/or not possible to:

- Acknowledge or thank the person for their feedback
- Contact the person for more information or to clarify details of their feedback
- Identify a specific incident or person to which the feedback relates, in order to follow up effectively
- Identify patterns or trends across feedback received by the organisation
- Inform the person of what actions have been taken in response to their feedback



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Responding to Compliments

The most relevant staff members will respond to the person who has provided the compliment, acknowledging and thanking them, and confirming that we will share the compliment with relevant staff members.

Compliments will be shared at the team meetings and include in reports to promote a culture of positivity and recognition.

Compliments will be recorded in the Compliments and Complaints Register.

Responding to Complaints – Informal Resolution

Aurora Support Services encourages respectful direct conversations in the first instance and for parties to speak in private i.e. don't confront someone in front of others.

Wherever appropriate, staff and their Line Manager are encouraged to resolve concerns through respectful discussion.

Listen to what each other has to say, acknowledge each other's feelings and work collaboratively towards a resolution.

If the issue cannot be resolved, or a party wishes to proceed formally, it will be recorded as a formal complaint.

The Formal Complaint Process

Where informal measures of resolving differences are unsuccessful or not appropriate, lodging a formal complaint may be required.

Participants, carers and Support Workers are encouraged to speak to a relevant Manager of their service to lodge a complaint. However:

- Where a person's feedback is in relation to their Program Manager, they are encouraged to speak to the relevant Service Director for their site
- Where participants or families may feel more comfortable speaking with a Support Worker to provide their feedback, they are welcome to do so. Support Workers are encouraged to receive this feedback and provide an initial response and to pass the complaint on to their Program Manager for actioning and recording
- Program Managers, Administrative Team members and Director Staff should speak to their Line Manager to make a complaint, or where this is not appropriate, to the next member of Line Management staff
- If the complaint concerns the Executive Director, the complainant should speak to the Assistant Executive Director, who will provide assistance to resolve the concern, and liaise with the Committee of Management if required

Community members are not expected to be aware of the organisational structure, and as such, may make a complaint to any member of staff. As above, Support Workers are encouraged to provide an initial response to the person, and to pass the complaint on to their Program Manager for further action.

To ensure that complaints are made in a person's own words, people are encouraged wherever possible to submit complaints in writing. A person receiving a complaint may assist the person to put their complaint in writing, by writing down what they have to say, and confirming with them that what has been written is correct.



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Where possible and relevant, people should include in their complaint:

- Specific details of the complaint
- Dates and times of events relevant to the complaint
- The names and titles of any other people involved, including any witnesses
- Copies of any documents related to the complaint
- What outcome the person is seeking from their complaint (what can be done to make it better?)

Following receipt of a complaint, the relevant Manager/Director within the organisation will take on the role of Complaint Case Manager and is responsible for implementing the complaint process. They will provide the complainant with a written *Acknowledgement of Lodgement of a Complaint*. They will determine the most appropriate actions required in response to the complaint. This may include interviewing witnesses and/or carrying out further investigation.

Where a complaint or feedback includes an allegation which is better addressed using the *Internal Workplace Investigation Procedure* – that is, an allegation of sexual misconduct, bullying, abuse, assault, theft or other behaviour of a similarly serious nature – the relevant Manager will make the determination to do so, and whether the Internal Workplace Investigation Procedure is best implemented alongside or in place of the Formal Complaint Process outlined here.

Where a complaint has been made about a staff member, the person's Line Manager will:

- Provide them with the details of the complaint about them. This will be deidentified where relevant to do so, to protect the confidentiality of the complainant
- Conduct an interview with the person to ascertain their point of view. The person may choose to bring a support person to this interview, if they wish to
- Invite the person to respond in writing
- Ensure that all parties will be treated fairly and given the opportunity to respond

After receiving written reports from both the complainant and the respondent, and conducting any further investigation that they deem necessary, the Complaint Case Manager will determine the most appropriate course of action, using the flowchart (Appendix 1). This person is responsible for conducting follow-ups to ensure that the relevant actions are completed. When the actions are complete, the Complaint Case Manager then determines whether it is appropriate to sign the complaint off as "Resolved" or for identifying further actions still required.

In the event that a complaint is dealt with at a local level (i.e. not requiring a full internal investigation or action from an external body), the complaint process will be deemed to be completed. Letters of *Finalisation of Complaint* will be forwarded to the complainant, and respondent where necessary.

Where a solution cannot be reached, or if the complainant is unsatisfied with the outcome, they or the Complaint Case Manager should escalate the matter to a more senior member of staff.

Where a participant, their carer, or advocate remains dissatisfied with the outcome, they will be informed of their right to escalate the complaint either to a more senior staff member or directly to the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission. Aurora Support Services staff shall provide clear information and appropriate support to any person wishing to escalate a complaint.

The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission can be contacted as follows:

Phone: 1800 035 544 (free call from landlines)

TTY: 133 677

National Relay Service: 1800 555 677

Online: www.ndiscommission.gov.au



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Required Reporting

Generally, any behaviour towards a participant that warrants an internal investigation will meet the NDIS Commission's criteria for reportable incidents, which includes any reports of abuse or neglect of a participant, unlawful sexual or physical contact with a participant and/or unauthorised restrictive practices. All incidents which are classed as reportable to the NDIS Commission must be reported in the required timeframe. The NDIS Commission may determine required actions or next steps; any direction provided by the NDIS Commission will be adhered to, and will override the organisation's internal process.

Where allegations are of criminal behaviour, the investigator must report this to the police. Next steps will then be guided by any direction provided by the police; this may include delaying or ceasing conducting an internal investigation if asked to do so. If the police determined that no offence has occurred, the investigator should seek their direction as to how an internal investigation should proceed.

Recording of Feedback

All feedback will be recorded on the organisation's *Compliments and Complaints Register*. To protect the privacy of complainants, access to the Compliments and Complaints Register is limited to Directors. As such, Program Managers should inform their relevant Service Director of feedback that they have received and actioned, for inclusion in the Compliments and Complaints Register. This register records the details of the feedback and any relevant follow-up actions including investigation and external reporting requirements, where these are deemed necessary and/or appropriate.

The Compliments and Complaints Register is reviewed at 6-weekly Quality Meetings with a view to identify organisational trends, areas of success and opportunities for improvement, and is reported on to the Committee of Management bi-monthly.

Positive feedback will be celebrated in team meetings, promoting a safe and positive workplace.

All staff will be encouraged to reflect on feedback in supervision and team meetings as part of a culture of learning.

Records must be kept for 7 years from the date the record was made.

Informing People of Complaint Pathways

Aurora Support Services makes every effort to ensure that participants are aware of their right to give feedback, and of the complaint pathways.

Some of the means by which this is done include:

- Including information about complaints in participant information packs, given to participants at intake and when service agreements renew
- 'Making a Complaint at Aurora' Posters (Appendix 2) displayed in participant spaces, in an Easy Read format
- A 'provide feedback here' link available in all staff members' email signatures, via the organisation's website and accessible by QR codes displayed at sites; (see Appendix 3) available in both a standard and an Easy Read version.

Staff members also receive training at induction in responding to complaints, and a yearly refresher training.



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Advocacy Support

Participants have the right to access support from an advocate to provide feedback, if they wish.

Participants can contact People with Disability Australia for advocacy support:

People with Disability Australia

Phone – 1800 422 015

Website - <https://pwd.org.au/get-help/individual-advocacy/>

Or participants can contact the following organisations or access their 'Find an Advocate' databases to find an access an advocate of their choosing:

Victorian Advocacy League for Individuals with Disability (VALID)

Phone – (03) 9416 4003

Website – <https://valid.org.au/>

Disability Advocacy Resource Unit (DARU)

Phone – (03) 9639 5807

Website – <https://www.daru.org.au/organisation-type/individual-advocacy>

Disability Advocacy Network Australia (DANA)

Website – <https://www.dana.org.au/what-is-advocacy/#find-an-advocate>

Policy Review

Document Owner/Approver	Assistant Executive Director
Date Reviewed	14 November 2025
Timeframe For Next Review	This policy is reviewed on a two-yearly basis. The policy will, however, be reviewed before this time if it is identified that changes in the legislative, policy and/or funding environment have rendered the policy no longer appropriate in its current form.
Next Review Due	14 November 2027

Policy Context

NDIS Rules and Standards	NDIS (Code of Conduct) Rules 2018 NDIS (Provider Registration and Practice Standards) Rules 2018 NDIS (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018 NDIS Procedural Fairness Guidelines 2018 NDIS Practice Standards Core Module 2, Provider Governance and Operation Management – Feedback and Complaints Management
Relevant Legislation	Disability Act 2006 NDIS Act 2013 Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 Disability Discrimination Act 1992 Disability Service Safeguard Act 2018



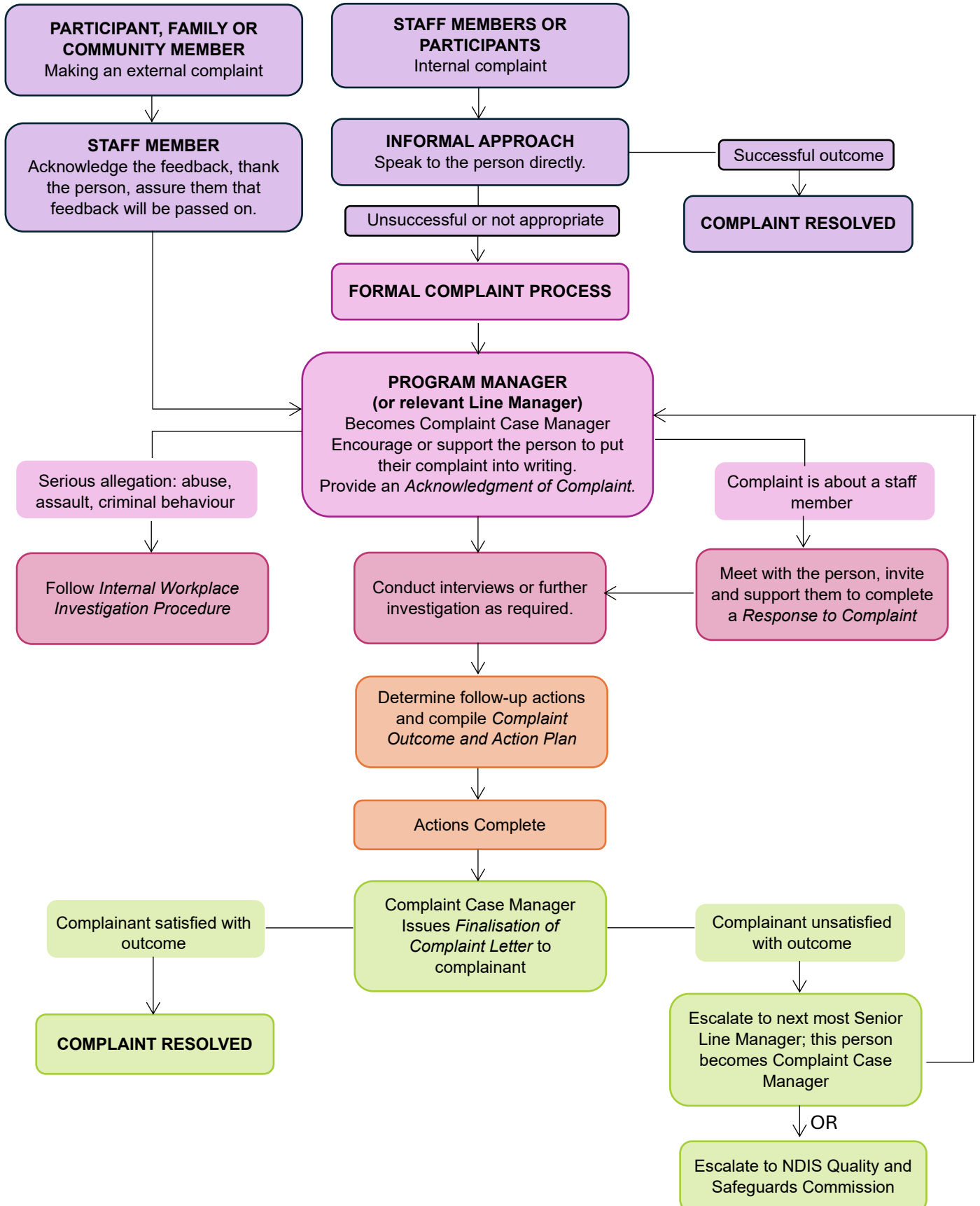
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	Equal Opportunity Act 2010 Privacy Act 1988
Contractual Obligations	NDIS Conditions of Registration Individual Service Agreements for NDIS Participants Individual Brokerage Agreements for DSOA Participants
Related Policies and Procedures	Advocacy Policy Employee Professional Standards Policy Internal Workplace Investigation Procedure Performance Management and Development Policy Privacy, Dignity and Confidentiality Policy Quality Management and Continuous Improvement Policy Supported Decision Making and Dignity of Risk Policy
Related Forms and Documents	Code of Conduct Agreement Compliments, Complaints and Feedback Register <i>Making a Complaint at Aurora</i> posters National Disability Services' Zero Tolerance Framework Participant Information Pack Staff Information Pack



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Appendix 1 – Complaints Flowchart





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Appendix 2 – Poster for display in program rooms – add photos of relevant people for each site



MAKING A COMPLAINT AT AURORA



IF I AM NOT HAPPY ABOUT SOMETHING AT AURORA



I CAN TELL SOMEONE AND MAKE A COMPLAINT



IN A PHONE CALL



IN A LETTER OR EMAIL



USING MY PHONE

I CAN SPEAK TO:

				MY SUPPORT WORKERS
				MY PROGRAM MANAGER(S)
				A DIRECTOR



AN ADVOCATE OR SOMEONE I TRUST CAN HELP ME



NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission

I CAN ALSO SPEAK TO THE NDIS ABOUT AURORA
www.ndiscommission.gov.au



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Appendix 3 – Feedback Form QR Code A5 Posters for Display at all Sites



AURORA
SUPPORT SERVICES



Feedback Form

We would love to hear from you about our services.

We use your feedback to help make our services better.

You can scan the QR codes below to provide us with compliments, complaints or ideas.

Full Version:



Easy Read:



Compliments and Complaints Management Policy – Easy Read

Your Rights



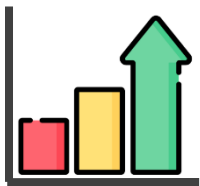
- You have the right to speak up.
- You can give feedback at any time.
- You will not get in trouble for making a complaint.
- Your information will be kept private.



What is Feedback?

A compliment is something good you want to say.

A complaint is something you are not happy about.



Why your feedback is important

- It helps improve services.
- It helps keep people safe.
- It helps Aurora learn.
- It helps us find ways to do better.



How you can give feedback

You can choose what works best for you:



- Talk to a staff member you trust.
- Call on the phone.
- Write a letter or email.
- Fill in a feedback form – online or paper.
- Do a survey.

Compliments and Complaints Management Policy – Easy Read

Making a Complaint



Try to include:

- What happened.
- When it happened.
- Who was involved.
- What you would like to happen.

You can:

- Use your own words.
- Ask someone to help you.
- Stay anonymous (not give your name), but this can make it harder to respond to you.



Aurora's Staff will:

- Listen to you.
- Look into what happened.
- Be fair to everyone.
- Tell you what they will do.
- Tell you the outcome.
- Respect your privacy.



If you are not happy with the result of a complaint:

- You can ask for a more senior staff member to review it.
- You can complain to an external organisation, like the NDIS Commission.



Serious Issues

If something serious happens (like abuse or harm):

- It will be reported to the police or NDIS Commission.
- Action will be taken quickly.