

Client Feedback, Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure

Policy Statement

MANAWISE Care is committed to:

- Listening to people using our services.
- Taking on feedback, both positive and negative, as a source of ideas for improving our services and other activities.
- Facilitating our clients' right to make a complaint about our service, to appeal a decision we have made that directly concerns them, and to making sure that their complaint or appeal is fairly assessed and responded to promptly.

Scope

This Client Feedback, Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure applies to all personnel.

Definitions

Complaint:

- Any written or verbal statement outlining a problem or concern involving an organisation including its staff, the service they provide, or the terms of engagement or contract with an organisation
- A formal objection concerning a decision, communication, behaviour or service by personnel of an organisation.

Complainant: A person who makes a complaint.

Complaint Resolution: a complaint is resolved when both parties reach agreement. The parties will be informed, in writing, of the complaint agreement.

Procedure

We encourage complaints, feedback or compliments from our clients and stakeholders.

Complaints, feedback or compliments can be provided to us by individual clients or stakeholders on their initiative or in response to requests by our organisation, including:

- Using MANAWISE Care Complaints, Feedback and Compliments Forms.
- Through regular surveys.
- By speaking with a staff member.
- New Service User Induction Form and Welcome Pack.

We make it as easy as possible for people to provide complaints, feedback or compliments.

We make sure of the anonymity of people who provide feedback or make a complaint unless they agree otherwise.

Our complaints, feedback or compliments processes include:

- Complaints are acknowledged, then addressed fairly, efficiently, transparently and promptly, at the point at which the service was provided whenever possible and in a way that supports the rights of the complainant taking into account their particular abilities and circumstances.
- A process for managing the receipt and resolution of complaints positively and flexibly including:
 - Management and staff roles, responsibilities and accountabilities.
 - Assessment of staff ability and capacity to deal with the feedback or complaint.
 - Internal referral of the complaint for a response depending on whom the complaint is concerning.
 - Communications, verbal and written, with the complainant and any applicable individual within the organisation that the complaint applies to, of the feedback and complaints systems and the process for mediation and/or resolution, regarding the means and outcomes of any resolution.
 - Notification to the complainant of their right, and the right of others affected by the matters raised, to take the matter up with the relevant government Departments or agencies or other external moderators at any time, including providing them with appropriate support and assistance to do so.
 - Timeframes for the resolution of complaints.
 - Documentation including templates of appropriate forms.
 - Admission of fault protocols.
 - Keeping privacy and confidentiality obligations.
 - Informing the complainant of resolutions and actions taken as a result of the complaint.
 - When the complainant is a child/young person, Care Leaders will respond in person within 7-10 days as per Complaints and Feedback Form.

We keep records of complaints, feedback or compliments in the MANAWISE Care Complaints, Feedback and Compliments Register.

There are regular reviews of the feedback and complaints management systems and the complaints including the way MANAWISE Care records, monitors, analyses and reports its performance regarding feedback and complaints within a culture of best practice and continuous quality improvement.

We want our clients to feel able to voice their dissatisfaction with any aspect of our services, and to be confident that we will manage their complaints, feedback and compliments well and respond quickly and appropriately.

All clients are informed of their rights and responsibilities and our complaints, feedback and compliments and appeals processes at the earliest possible stage of their involvement with our services, including during intake and entry processes, service plan reviews and when requested.

If a client is unhappy with initial responses to complaints the matter will be escalated and further action taken.

Clients can, at any time, access an external complaints agency, the Office of the Public Guardian, Community Visitor or Child Advocate Legal Officer, or make a complaint to the Department, including if they are not satisfied with how we have responded to their complaints.

- Staff will inform the clients of relevant external agencies.

- Staff can find how clients can make a complaint to the relevant Queensland Government department or agency by going to the Department's website and searching for complaints.

Clients have the right to escalate a human rights complaint to the Queensland Human Rights Commissioner if 45 days have elapsed and the person has either not received a response to the complaint or has received a response the person considers to be inadequate. Clients should be informed of this right if a complaint relating to a human rights issue is raised.

MANAWISE Care will never discontinue, reduce, or in any other way take any retaliatory action in relation to a client or any other stakeholder making a complaint.

- We will only take action, if a complaint raises an issue, to ensure the safety of clients and others, or to prevent harm to the same.

Staff will receive training in complaint and feedback management during induction and orientation and through regular refreshers.

Referring Complaints Externally

If a complaint is made that raises an issue that needs to be externally reported (e.g. abuse), staff will notify their immediate supervisor and Case Manager who will report to the Service Manager.

- The Service Manager will delegate responsibility to inform the relevant authorities including the Department, police etc, to an appropriate staff member.

Child Protection Placement Services

A 'reviewable decision' is when the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal can review decisions made about a child or young person in care or about foster / kinship carers.

MANAWISE Care will provide information to children and young people and foster / kinship carers about Reviewable Decisions and their right to appeal, and how to access advocacy or the Department if they choose, including during intake / entry to MANAWISE Care, at service plan reviews and if requested by the client.

More information about the department's issues and complaints processes can be found at:
<https://www.qld.gov.au/community/caring-child/foster-kinship-care/information-for-carers/get-help/issues-and-complaints>.

Supporting Documents

- MANAWISE Care Complaints, Feedback and Compliments Forms.
- MANAWISE Care Complaints, Feedback and Compliments Register.

References

Human Services Quality Standard Indicator 5.1

Human Services Quality Standard Indicator 5.2

Human Services Quality Standard Indicator 5.3

Human Services Quality Standard Indicator 5.4

Child Protection Placement Services

Schedule 3 *Child Protection Act 1999*

Policy/Procedure/Form Name	Client Feedback, Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure	Date Ratified	24/01/2022
Owner	HR Manager	Review Date	01/07/2026
Version and Date Issued	V1 24/01/2022 V2 01/07/2025	Approver	CEO
		Change	Updated to add Client to the title, information about making a complaint to an external party. Policy to be reimplemented.