



*Central Highlands Association of Neighbourhood Houses*  
**Feedback, Compliments and Complaints**  
**Policy**

**Document Control**

<b>Policy Title:</b>	Feedback Compliments and Complaints		
<b>Policy Number:</b>	MAN001	<b>Version Number:</b>	3
<b>Date Ratified:</b>	May 23, 2019	<b>Review Date:</b>	May 2021

**Relevant standards, legislation and other documents:**

- Incorporations Act
- Victorian Human Rights Charter
- DHHS Service Agreement Information Kit

<b>Definitions:</b> (define key terms)	
CHANH	Central Highlands Association of Neighbourhood Houses
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services
Members	Neighbourhood Houses (represented by managers and committees of management) funded by DHHS within the Central Highlands area
CoM	Individuals representing member houses in CHANH Committee of Management
Staff	Any person employed by CHANH or volunteering at CHANH
Executive Team	CHANH President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary
Feedback	provision of information about reactions to a product, a person's performance of a task, etc. which is used as a basis for improvement.

**Central Highlands Association of Neighbourhood Houses**

Compliment	expression of praise, encouragement or gratitude about a service that is funded, regulated or provided. It may be about an individual staff member, a team or a service.
Complaint	expression of dissatisfaction made to or about an organisation, related to its products, services, staff or the handling of a complaint, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required.

## Policy Declaration

The CHANH embraces feedback in all its forms as valuable and beneficial, as it provides insight and understanding to guide our organisation’s growth and development.

### Purpose:

This policy defines CHANH’s acceptance, use and response to various forms of feedback received by our organisation.

### Owner:

This policy is the responsibility of the Executive Team and must be ratified by the CoM.

### Application:

This policy supports any person making feedback to CHANH and is applied to staff, Executive Team or any member managing feedback for CHANH.

## Policy Rationale

In accordance to our Continuous Improvement Policy, information regarding member satisfaction or perspectives people outside our organisation highlights where the CHANH is performing well. Feedback, compliments and complaints focus attention to areas where we can increase effectiveness and efficiency of our organization to communicate and deliver our core business-supporting the development and governance of neighbourhood houses in the Central Highlands region.

CHANH acknowledges there will be circumstances where CHANH is required to act in the best interest of our member neighbourhood houses, in manner which may be viewed as unsatisfactory by individuals engaged in those organisations. In these situations, CHANH representatives are required to adhere to the Critical Information Management Policy. Feedback or complaints received regarding implementation of the Critical Information Policy will be responded to according

the procedures outlined below, however, it is recognized that there may be some circumstances where resolution will not resolve.

## **Procedures**

CHANH employs the following strategies to manage feedback:

- Recording and responding to all forms of feedback, verbal and written, positive and negative;
- Resolving complaints at the earliest opportunity in a way that values and respects the person's feedback;
- Utilising information provided in complaints to reduce the potential for future complaints;
- Allocating resources to address feedback where required;
- Respecting the privacy of the person making the feedback.

The compliment and complaint management process can be simplified into five steps:

1. Receive information from the individual
2. Record in Feedback Register
3. Respond to the individual, outlining process for resolution (if required)
4. Resolve or progress
5. Communicate resolution or progression.

### **Compliments**

Compliments will be progressed to the relevant employee or members, as well as the Executive Committee.

### **Informal Complaints**

Informal complaints can be made verbally to any Network employee or executive team member. Where an informal complaint is made the person receiving the complaint will advise complainant of the formal process. Informal complaints should be recorded in the Feedback Register, and reviewed by the Executive Team, who will decide on whether follow up is appropriate.

### **Formal Complaints**

Formal Complaints must be made by completing a CHANH Complaint Form. All parties involved in the Formal Complaint process must respect the confidentiality of all individuals involved in the situation. Breach of Confidentiality during or following complaint resolution is fair cause for complaint.

The party receiving a Formal Complaint on behalf of CHANH will ensure the complainant is aware of the Feedback, Compliments and Complaints Policy, the Privacy Policy, and if appropriate, the

Critical Information Management Policy – copies will be provided as required. The person receiving the complaint will discuss whether there is a need for a course of action with the complainant and act accordingly.

Formal Complaints can be submitted via the CHANH Complaint form to either:

- CHANH Networker
- CHANH President

Formal Complaints will be forwarded to the person(s) who is the subject of the complaint, as well as the Executive Committee. Any individual involved in resolving a complaint has the right to bring a support person or advocate to meetings. Formal complaints will be assessed according to the following criteria:

**Level 1:** Complaints involving misunderstandings, communication breakdowns or which can be resolved quickly to the satisfaction of the individual. The individuals involved in the situation must meet with the and attempt to resolve the grievance within 14 days of the complaint being made. If it cannot be resolved at this point, the process shall move to Level 2.

**Level 2:** Complaints involving conflict between an employee and Level 1 complaint, which have not been satisfactorily resolved. In the first instance the individuals must meet and attempt to resolve the grievance within 14 days of the complaint being made. If this is not satisfactory then a second meeting will be arranged with the President of the CHANH within 14 days of the initial meeting. If resolution cannot be made at this meeting then the process shall move to Level 3.

**Level 3:** Complaints involving serious allegations of harassment, unprofessional conduct, abuse, mistreatment, or infringement of rights. These allegations will be dealt with as a matter of urgency. In this instance a meeting will be held between the individuals involved and/or their advocate, the President of the CHANH and an independent mediator.

Complaints at Level 3 will be addressed within 24 hours, and in the instance of a serious complaint about a worker or committee person, that person shall not have contact with the individual making the complaint.

The mediator must be;

- A person chosen by agreement between parties; or,
- In the absence of agreement
  - In the case of a dispute between a member and another member, a person appointed by the Committee of the CHANH
  - In the case of a dispute between a member and the CHANH, a mediator may be a person appointed or employed by the Dispute Settlement Centre or Victorian Department of Justice

A member of the Network can be a mediator. The mediator cannot be a member who is a party to the dispute.

The mediator must:

- give all parties every opportunity to be heard
- allow due consideration by all parties of any written submission
- ensure that natural justice is accorded to the parties to the dispute throughout the process
- Maintain, and ensure all parties understand they must maintain, confidentiality regarding the complaint and its resolution

The meeting between these parties shall make every effort to achieve a mutual decision in regard to the grievance. If an agreement cannot be reached the parties may seek to resolve the dispute in accordance with the relevant law.

Once the complaint has been resolved or a process to handle the complaint legally has been established the parties involved must finalise the CHANH Complaint Form with the outcome and signatures.

## **Related Organisational Policies and Procedures:**

- Continuous Improvement Policy
- Critical Information Management Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Complaint Form
- Feedback Register

## **Responsibilities**

### **Executive Team:**

- To implement and monitor policy

### **Members:**

- To implement and execute policy
- To participate in policy reviews as required

### **Staff:**

- To implement and execute policy
- To maintain records as required
- Participation in policy review as required

# **Breach of Policy**

A breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.