

Feedback and Complaints Management Policy

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This Policy, along with the related documentation set out in section 1.5 (**Related Documentation**), supports Empowerone Group Pty Ltd ABN 31 694 946 382 (**Empowerone Support Services**) to apply the Feedback and complaints management NDIS Practice Standard in the Core Module.

1.2 Policy Aims

Each Participant has knowledge of and access to Empowerone Support Services's complaints management and resolution system. Complaints and other feedback made by all parties are welcomed, acknowledged, respected and well-managed.

1.3 NDIS Quality Indicators

In this regard, Empowerone Support Services aims to demonstrate each of the following NDIS Quality Indicators through the application of this Policy and the Related Documentation, including the Procedures:

- (a) A complaints management and resolution system is maintained that is relevant and proportionate to the scope and complexity of supports delivered and the size and scale of the organisation. The system follows principles of procedural fairness and natural justice and complies with the requirements under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018.
- (b) Each participant is provided with information on how to give feedback or make a complaint, including avenues external to the provider, and their right to access advocates. There is a supportive environment for any person who provides feedback and/or makes complaints.
- (c) Demonstrated continuous improvement in complaints and feedback management by regular review of complaint and feedback policies and procedures, seeking of participant views on the accessibility of the complaints management and resolution system, and incorporation of feedback throughout the provider's organisation.
- (d) All workers are aware of, trained in, and comply with the required procedures in relation to complaints handling.

1.4 Scope

- (a) This Policy applies to the provision of supports and services by Empowerone Support Services.
- (b) All Workers are required to take full responsibility for ensuring they have a full understanding of the commitments and obligations outlined in this Policy.
- (c) The relevant Workers specified in the column corresponding to the Procedures have the responsibility to implement those Procedures.

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1.5 Related Documentation

The application by Empowerone Support Services of the NDIS Practice Standard specified in the Purpose is supported in part by, and should be read alongside, the Related Documentation set out in this Policy, which are also expressed to support Empowerone Support Services's application of the Purpose, including:

- (a) Complaints Register;
- (b) Feedback and Complaints Assessment, Investigation and Resolution Considerations;
- (c) Feedback and Complaints Management Criteria;
- (d) Feedback and Complaints Form;
- (e) Feedback and Complaints Procedural Fairness Considerations;
- (f) Feedback and Complaints Summary;
- (g) Feedback and Compliments Register;
- (h) Governance Policy;
- (i) Incident Management and Reporting Policy;
- (j) Participant Information Booklet;
- (k) Privacy and Information Management Policy;
- (l) Provision of Supports Policy;
- (m) Quality Management and Continuous Improvement Policy;
- (n) Risk Management Policy.

2. Definitions

The definitions specified in the Common Terms apply to this Policy. In addition, where it is easier for understanding, certain words and phrases are defined in this Policy. The definitions in this Policy override the definitions in the Common Terms, to the extent of any inconsistency.

In this Policy:

Common Terms means a document which sets out the common defined terms and rules of interpretation that apply to all Policies and Procedures of Empowerone Support Services.

Complaints Management System means the requirements for dealing with Complaints under the *National Disability Insurance Scheme (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018* (Cth).

Complaints Process means the process for dealing with Complaints as set out in the Procedures.

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3. Policy Statement

3.1 General

Empowerone Support Services aims to ensure:

- (a) A system to manage and resolve Complaints is maintained that follows principles of procedural fairness and natural justice and complies with the Complaints Management System;
- (b) The Complaints Management System comprises the following documents:
 - (1) This Policy;
 - (2) Feedback and Complaints Summary;
 - (3) Feedback and Complaints Procedural Fairness Considerations;
 - (4) Feedback and Complaints Management Criteria;
 - (5) Feedback and Complaints Assessment, Investigation and Resolution Considerations.
- (c) Participants have knowledge of and access to the Complaints Management System;
- (d) Every Participant has equal access to make a Complaint, and are provided with information on how to give feedback or make a complaint, including avenues external to the Provider, and their right to access advocates;
- (e) Worker Complaints and disagreements, internal staff grievances, Code of Conduct investigations and public interest disclosures about Workers can be made in accordance with the Complaints Management System;
- (f) Participants are provided with information about how to give Feedback or make a Complaint, including avenues external to Empowerone Support Services, and their right to access advocates;
- (g) Complaints and other Feedback made by all parties are welcomed, acknowledged, respected and well-managed;
- (h) That its organisation and Workers recognise that everyone has the right to be safe and no one deserves to be abused;
- (i) All Participants, and their families, carers, Representatives and advocates are encouraged and supported to provide positive and negative Feedback, provide compliments or raise any concerns they have about Empowerone Support Services's service or organisation, including making Complaints. Further, every Concerned Person feels assured that raising any concerns or Complaints will not cause any negative consequences;
- (j) All Feedback and Complaints are handled promptly, fairly, efficiently and effectively through our Complaints Management System;

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- (k) Appropriate actions are taken to improve Empowerone Support Services's supports and services and safety and quality systems where required, and that we provide better outcomes to Participants and their Representatives;
- (l) As a part of managing Feedback and Complaints, timely Feedback is provided to Empowerone Support Services's governing body, Workers and Participants about Complaints and the actions undertaken by Empowerone Support Services in response to those Complaints;
- (m) There is demonstrated Continuous Improvement in Complaints and Feedback management by regular review of this Policy, seeking of Participant views on the accessibility of the Complaints Management System, and incorporation of Feedback by Empowerone Support Services;
- (n) All Workers are aware of, trained in, and comply with the required Procedures in relation to Complaint handling.

3.2 What Complaints are not covered?

The following Complaints are not managed by this Policy:

- (a) Complaints to the Commission about the outcome of a Complaint made about Empowerone Support Services (except as addressed in this Policy);
- (b) Complaints about fees and charges applied by the Commission (and not Empowerone Support Services);
- (c) Complaints about facilities or services other than those provided by Empowerone Support Services.

4. Process for making Complaints

4.1 Who can make a Complaint?

- (a) Participants, families, carers, advocates, statutory bodies, government agencies, stakeholders, Workers or any other person may make a complaint to or about Empowerone Support Services, its practitioners, employees, contractors, volunteers and other Workers.
 - (1) A complaint may be made on an anonymous basis.

4.2 How to make a Complaint

A person wishing to make a Complaint may do so:

- (a) In person to a Key Management Personnel or other Worker;
- (b) By email to info@empoweronegroup.com.au;
- (c) On our website www.empoweronegroup.com.au;
- (d) By post to 9 Amadeus Way, Brabham, WA 6055;

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- (e) Verbally by telephone to 0410 003 798.

The Complaint Manager will be responsible for receiving any email and postal correspondence and managing the receipt and resolution of Complaints in accordance with this Policy.

For all verbal and written Complaints received in a form other than the Feedback and Complaints Form, the recipient of the Complaint will request the complainant to provide their Complaint in the form of the Feedback and Complaints Form.

4.3 How to make a Complaint anonymously or confidentially

A Complaint may be made on an anonymous or confidential basis. A person can make an anonymous or confidential Complaint:

- (a) By calling Empowerone Support Services on 0410 003 798 and stating that they wish to make an anonymous or confidential Complaint (so Empowerone Support Services doesn't ask the person to identify themselves);
- (b) By filling out Empowerone Support Services's Feedback and Complaints Form but not including their name and the other details requested in the form as these may identify the person and post it to 9 Amadeus Way, Brabham, WA 6055.

4.4 How to make a Complaint to the Commission

Whether a person is concerned about the quality of Empowerone Support Services's supports and services, how the person is treated by Empowerone Support Services's Workers, the accuracy of Empowerone Support Services's invoices or the choice of activities provided by Empowerone Support Services, the first step, if the person feels comfortable, is to contact Empowerone Support Services directly.

- (a) Discuss the concerns with Empowerone Support Services to see if they can help resolve the person's issue.
- (b) If the person is not satisfied with Empowerone Support Services's response, they can make a Complaint to the Commission.
- (c) Phoning: 1800 035 544 (free call from landlines) or TTY 133 677. Interpreters can be arranged.
- (d) National Relay Service and ask for 1800 035 544.
- (e) Visiting <https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/about/complaints> and completing a complaint contact form.

The Commission can take Complaints about:

- (f) Supports and services that were not provided in a safe and respectful way.
- (g) Supports and services that were not delivered to an appropriate standard.

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Anyone can make a Complaint to the NDIS and the service is free. A person can make a Complaint anonymously, confidentially or openly.

A person can contact the Commission even if they haven't spoken with Empowerone Support Services first. Although, Empowerone Support Services would appreciate it if the person contact Empowerone Support Services first.

4.5 Support and assistance in relation to making Complaints

All Workers will be responsible for ensuring appropriate support and assistance is provided to any person in connection with this Complaints Management System, including any person who wishes to make, or has made, a Complaint by:

- (a) Providing accessible information to complainants (including the Feedback and Complaints Summary and this Complaints Management System) in relation to how to make a Complaint;
- (b) Providing a safe environment for a complainant to make a Complaint or provide negative Feedback without fear of adverse consequences, retribution or loss of service as a result of making a Complaint;
- (c) Treating all complainants with respect, recognising that the Complaint is important to the complainant;
- (d) Maintaining the confidentiality of parties involved in the Complaint in accordance with this Policy;
- (e) Facilitating the participation of an advocate or other representative or support person in connection with the discussion and resolution of a Complaint, if required;
- (f) Providing Participants, families, carers and advocates with access to this Complaints Management System and the Feedback and Complaints Summary;
- (g) Allowing a person acting as an advocate for a body that has been paid an advocacy grant access to the services.
- (h) Complying with the Complaints Management System and the Feedback and Complaints Summary;
- (i) Advising complainants and potential complainants in relation to how a Complaint or issue may be raised with the Commission, and giving appropriate support and assistance to people affected by an issue raised in a Complaint to contact the Commission;
- (j) Appropriately responding to Complaints, acknowledging, assessing and resolving the matter in a fair, efficient and timely manner with as little formality as a proper consideration of the Complaint allows;
- (k) Taking action in relation to issues raised in Complaints;
- (l) If a serious Risk is identified, taking corrective action;

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- (m) Keeping parties to the Complaint appropriately involved and informed of the progress of the Complaint;
- (n) Ensuring that Feedback and Complaints data (both positive and negative) is considered during training and planning for the provision of supports and services;
- (o) Ensuring the Complaints process is procedurally fair and follows the principles of natural justice, as set out in the NDIS (Procedural Fairness) Guidelines 2018;
- (p) Reviewing and evaluating the accessibility and effectiveness of the Complaints Management System and for Continuous Improvement in the Procedures.

4.6 Advocacy services

Upon request, Workers at Empowerone Support Services can facilitate advocacy support for Participants by visiting <https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/resources/find-assistance/find-advocate> and organising for an advocate to assist the Participant to make a Complaint or make a Complaint on behalf of the Participant, including on an anonymous and confidential basis.

4.7 Protection for Worker disclosures

Workers are supported by the Principal and other Key Management Personnel to report all Incidents and Complaints. There are no negative consequences for Workers in reporting Feedback. All Workers are advised that they can make a Complaint on behalf of a Participant to Empowerone Support Services or to the Commission. All Workers are required to comply with this Complaints Management System and be aware of their roles and responsibilities in receiving, supporting, managing and resolving Incidents and Complaints.

4.8 Persons who will manage the receipt and resolution of Complaints

If the Complaint is about:

- (a) A person other than the Principal, the Complaint will normally be managed and dealt with by the Principal, unless the Principal determines that an External Complaint Manager should manage and deal with the Complaint;
- (b) The Principal, the Complaint will normally be managed and dealt with by some other Key Management Personnel at Empowerone Support Services; however, if no such person exists or if it is otherwise inappropriate given the nature of the Complaint for the other Key Management Personnel to manage the Complaint, an External Complaint Manager will manage and deal with the Complaint.

(Complaint Manager).

- (c) More than one person may act as Complaint Manager for organisational reasons or to avoid Conflicts of Interest or the appearance of bias.
- (d) More than one person may act as Complaint Manager for Complaints involving multiple persons if required to avoid Conflicts of Interest or the appearance of bias.

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- (e) If the complainant is not satisfied with the investigation and proposed resolution of their Complaint in accordance with this Policy, they can seek a further review of the Complaint by an External Complaint Manager (that has not previously acted as Complaint Manager in relation to the Complaint). When undertaking their review of the Complaint, the External Complaint Manager must follow the same process in resolving the Complaint as the Complaint Manager and as otherwise set out in this Policy.

4.9 Privacy and Confidentiality

Empowerone Support Services will take reasonable steps to ensure that information provided in a Complaint and during the Complaints Process is kept confidential and only disclosed if required under Relevant Laws or if the disclosure is otherwise appropriate in the circumstances. Without limiting the generality of the above, Empowerone Support Services considers that it would be appropriate to disclose such confidential information in the following circumstances:

- (a) The disclosure of the Complaint-related information is to the Principal or other Key Management Personnel, Complaint Manager or a Worker who is directly or indirectly involved in the Complaints Process;
- (b) The disclosure of the Complaint-related information is to a lawyer or other advisor of Empowerone Support Services;
- (c) The disclosure of the Complaint-related information is reasonably required to enable a Complaint to be properly investigated;
- (d) The disclosure of the Complaint-related information is to the Commission, the police or otherwise required under Relevant Laws.

4.10 Record keeping

- (a) Details of any Complaint will be kept in Empowerone Support Services's Complaint Register for a minimum of seven years after the Complaint has been made. The Complaints Register will be maintained by the Principal or other Key Management Personnel and will record the following for each Complaint or appeal:
 - (1) Details of the complainant and the nature of the Complaint;
 - (2) Date lodged;
 - (3) Action taken (and in the event of adverse action, any facts and issues that were raised during the Complaints Process and upon which the adverse action was based);
 - (4) Date of resolution and reason for decision;
 - (5) Indication of the complainant being notified of the outcome;
 - (6) Complainant response and any further action.
- (b) Copies of all correspondence will be kept in Participant Records.

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- (c) The Complaints Register and Participant Records will be confidential, and access will be restricted to the Principal, other Key Management Personnel and any Complaint Manager.
- (d) A statistical summary of Complaints will also be kept in and maintained by the Principal or other Key Management Personnel and reviewed annually. The Principal will be responsible for reporting Complaints to the Board at least annually.
- (e) Results from the report to the Board will be reviewed by the Principal and other Key Management Personnel and used to:
 - (1) Inform training by including a review of Complaints (on an anonymous basis) in complaints handling training activities;
 - (2) Inform service delivery by taking the learnings from training activities.

4.11 Continuous Improvement of the Complaints Management System

This Policy, the Complaints Management System, the Complaints Process and the Complaints Register will be reviewed and evaluated by the Principal and other Key Management Personnel at least annually. This will include:

- (a) A review of all Complaints and Feedback Policies and Procedures;
- (b) A review of Participant and Worker Feedback about the accessibility and effectiveness of the Complaints Management System;
- (c) Implementation of a Continuous Improvement Plan based on the review and Feedback received.

5. Feedback and Complaints Management Procedures

This Policy is supported by these Procedures which are intended to provide Key Management Personnel and Workers with guidance regarding Feedback and Complaints Management responsibilities, by making explicit procedures to ensure the underlying principles of Feedback and Complaints Management approved by Empowerone Support Services are achieved. These Procedures work together dynamically and are relevant to effective Feedback and Complaints Management. These Procedures are not ordered in priority, and all are important to achieving the aims of the Policy Statement.

Procedure	Responsibility
5.1 Overview (a) Any Worker may be a recipient of a Complaint. However, in all cases, the Complaint Manager is primarily responsible for managing the process and resolution of Complaints in accordance with this Policy. (b) The Complaint Manager will use all reasonable endeavours to complete the Complaints Process within 21 days. The Complaint Manager will keep the complainant up to date on progress of the Complaints Process, particularly if there are any delays. It may be	Recipient of Complaint, Principal and other Key Management Personnel and Complaint Manager

Procedure	Responsibility
appropriate for the Complaints Process to be extended to ensure relevant parties are afforded procedural fairness. (c) The Complaints Process is to be applied in receiving and resolving all Complaints, but the individual elements and actions the Complaint Manager decides to take may be tailored to each Complaint (subject to Relevant Laws). (d) As part of the handling of a Complaint under the Complaints Process, procedural fairness must be afforded to a person (including a Worker) if their rights or interests may be adversely or detrimentally affected.	
5.2 Receive Complaint (a) In the case of a verbal Complaint, the recipient of a Complaint should: (1) Genuinely listen to the complainant, their support person or advocate; (2) Make sure the complainant feels comfortable; (3) Acknowledge how the situation has affected the person; (4) Thank the complainant for making the Complaint; (5) Take detailed notes of the complainant and the Complaint, including whether the Complaint is specifically about the conduct of identifiable Workers or about the provision of supports and services that incidentally identify Workers; (6) Encourage and offer support to the complainant to confirm their verbal Complaint in writing by filling out a Feedback and Complaint Form; (b) At the time of acknowledging the Complaint, the recipient of the Complaint should also ask the complainant if they would like any additional support or assistance (including through the use of advocates), in relation to making, discussing and resolving the Complaint or if they would like any representative or advocate to be involved in the discussion and the Complaints Process. (c) Further, the recipient of the Complaint should advise the complainant of any other mechanisms that are available to address complaints, including the use of advocates, and provide such assistance as the complainant requires to use those mechanisms. (d) If a Worker other than the Principal receives a Complaint, they must immediately notify and provide to the Principal all information known	Recipient of Complaint, Principal and other Key Management Personnel and Complaint Manager

Procedure	Responsibility
to the Worker about the complainant and the Complaint, including any notes regarding a verbal Complaint taken by the recipient or the written Complaint itself. (e) If the Complaint is in respect of the Principal, the Principal will coordinate, notify and provide all information provided to or known to them and the recipient to the Complaint Manager that will be managing the Complaint.	
5.3 Record the Complaint (a) The Complaint Manager will register the Complaint in the Complaints Register maintained in accordance with section 8. (b) The Complaint Manager will update the Complaint record in the Complaints Register at each material step of the Complaints Process.	Principal and other Key Management Personnel and Complaint Manager
5.4 Acknowledgement of Complaint (a) The Complaint Manager will acknowledge the Complaint within 3 days of it being received. Consideration will be given to the most appropriate medium (e.g. email, letter, phone) for acknowledgement and all further communications with the complainant. (b) To the extent that the Complaint Manager acknowledges a Complaint verbally, they should also provide written acknowledgement. (c) When acknowledging the Complaint, the Complaint Manager will also indicate to the complainant a time frame for discussion, investigation (if required) and resolution. (d) If the complainant had previously indicated that they require an advocate or Representative to be involved in their dealings, the Complaint Manager will: (2) Enquire as to whether an advocate (including an independent advocate) or Representative will be included in the Complaints Process; (3) If an advocate or Representative is to be involved, offer to facilitate arrangements for such an advocate (including an independent advocate) or other representative to be included in the Complaints Process. (4) Arrangements for advocacy services can be facilitated by Workers for Participants in accordance with this Policy.	Principal and other Key Management Personnel and Complaint Manager

Procedure	Responsibility
(e) If the Participant is affected by an issue raised in a Complaint or a decision maker advocate or substituted or informal decision maker, these people should be included and recognised and raised as potential support persons or interested parties in any discussion and resolution of the Complaint.	
5.5 Initial Assessment (a) The Complaint Manager will confirm whether the issue(s) raised in the Complaint are within Empowerone Support Services's control. The Complaint Manager will also consider the potential outcome(s) that may be sought by the complainant (if not known) and, where there is more than one issue raised, determine whether each issue needs to be separately addressed. (b) When determining how a Complaint will be managed, the Complaint Manager will consider: (1) The nature of the matter being dealt with; (2) How serious, complicated or urgent the Complaint is; (3) Whether the Complaint is specifically about the conduct of identifiable Worker(s) or about the provision of supports and services that incidentally identify Worker(s); (4) If about the conduct of identifiable Worker(s): (A) Whether confidentiality can be maintained consistently while affording procedural fairness to the Worker(s); (B) Which (if not all) of the procedural fairness considerations set out in the Empowerone Support Services's Procedural Fairness Considerations should be afforded to the Worker(s); (5) Whether the Complaint raises concerns about people's health and safety; (6) How the complainant or Participant is being affected; (7) The Risks involved if the resolution of the Complaint is delayed; (8) Whether facts in issue are in dispute and investigations are required; (9) The options for resolving the matter;	Principal and other Key Management Personnel and Complaint Manager

Procedure	Responsibility
(10) The gravity of possible findings that may be reached; (11) The sanctions that could be imposed based on those findings; (12) Whether a resolution requires the involvement of other organisations; and (13) Empowerone Support Services's Assessment, Investigation and Resolution Considerations.	
5.6 Discuss the Complaint (a) The Complaint Manager will organise a time to discuss the Complaint with the complainant (and any advocate or support person). Depending on the severity of the Complaint, the Complaint Manager has the discretion to determine to undertake an investigation of the Complaint prior to discussing the Complaint. (b) Consideration should be given to the most appropriate medium for the discussion (in person, via video chat or on the telephone). (c) During this discussion, the Complaint Manager should: (1) Genuinely listen to the complainant, their support person or advocate, and provide the complainant with a reasonable opportunity to present their Complaint, without interrupting; (2) Make sure the complainant feels comfortable; (3) Acknowledge how the situation has affected the complainant and any person with disability; (4) Ask the complainant what a good outcome to the Complaint would look like for them; (5) Not dismiss the Complaint on a view of the facts that is not raised with or apparent to the complainant; (6) Identify any material information relevant to the Complaint provided by the complainant or any other person which was shared on a confidential basis (or may be confidential in nature). If it would be difficult to maintain confidentiality while resolving the Complaint, for procedural fairness reasons, inform the complainant of this difficulty and ascertain if the complainant wishes for the Complaints Process to continue. (b) The Complaint Manager will explain to the complainant, and any representative or advocate that the complainant wishes to be involved	Principal and other Key Management Personnel and Complaint Manager

Procedure	Responsibility
in the Complaints Process, the next steps that will be taken in response to the Complaint. (d) Depending on the type and severity of the Complaint, the Complaint Manager will either: (1) Discuss with the complainant an immediate resolution to the Complaint (for smaller matters); (2) Conduct further investigations in relation to the Complaint. (e) If the Complaint is specifically about the conduct of identifiable Worker(s) or any other person where adverse action could be taken in relation to the person, the Complaint Manager will organise a time to discuss the Complaint with the Worker(s) or other person. (f) In such circumstances, the Worker(s) or such other person: (1) Must be given a reasonable opportunity to be heard and to put forward information and submissions in support of an outcome that is favourable to their interests; (2) Should be afforded procedural fairness by the Complaint Manager, who should adopt some or all of the considerations set out in Empowerone Support Services's Procedural Fairness Considerations.	
5.7 Investigate the Complaint (a) After assessing the Complaint (and potentially, discussing the Complaint with the complainant) the Complaint Manager will consider whether an investigation is required, in which case, the Complaint Manager may (among other things): (1) Give the complainant an explanation as to whether an investigation will occur; (2) Gather information about the issue, person or area that the Complaint is about (or request an external investigator to do so at the direction of the Complaint Manager); (3) Investigate the claims made in the Complaint (or request an external investigator to do so at the direction of the Complaint Manager). (b) If the Complaint is about the conduct of identifiable Worker(s) or may involve a person's rights or interests being adversely or detrimentally	Principal and other Key Management Personnel and Complaint Manager

Procedure	Responsibility
affected in a direct and specific way as a result of or in connection with the Complaint: (1) An investigation must occur as part of the Complaints Process; (2) The Worker(s) or such other person must be given a reasonable opportunity in a fair and impartial manner to be heard on those matters before adverse action is taken, and to put forward information and submissions in support of an outcome that is favourable to their interests; (3) The Worker(s) or such other person should be afforded procedural fairness, including by the Complaint Manager adopting some or all of the considerations set out in Empowerone Support Services's Procedural Fairness Considerations. (c) The Complaint Manager will inform the complainant in writing within 10 days of the Complaint being received of what is being done to investigate and resolve it, and the expected time frame for resolution. (d) The Complaint Manager or an external investigator should have regard to Empowerone Support Services's Assessment, Investigation and Resolution Considerations when conducting an investigation. (e) Depending on the findings from the investigations, the Complaint Manager may have further discussions with the complainant, Workers and other interested parties. (f) Resolve all complaints and disagreements in a way that is reasonable and understandable by all Workers.	
5.8 Take appropriate action in relation to the Complaint (a) The Complaint Manager will make a decision in respect of the Complaint. The Complaint Manager or an external investigator should have regard to Empowerone Support Services's Assessment, Investigation and Resolution Considerations when making a decision. (b) Prior to making any adverse finding, the Complaint Manager should provide any Worker against whom an adverse finding may be made: (1) With a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed adverse finding; (2) With procedural fairness, including by the Complaint Manager adopting some or all the considerations set out in the	Principal and other Key Management Personnel and Complaint Manager

Procedure	Responsibility
Empowerone Support Services's Procedural Fairness Considerations. (c) Any adverse finding should be soundly based on the facts and issues that were raised during the Complaints Process. (d) The Complaint Manager will inform the complainant of the outcome and the reasons for any decisions made, including: (1) The outcome of the Complaint and any action taken; (2) The reason(s) for the decision; (3) The remedy or resolution(s) proposed or put in place. (e) If an apology is in order, the Complaint Manager will ensure that the appropriate person makes the apology and informs the complainant why such a situation arose and what Empowerone Support Services intends to do to avoid further grievance in respect of the subject matter of the Complaint.	
5.9 Rights to the review of Complaints (a) The complainant and any Participant should be notified that if they are not satisfied with the investigation and proposed resolution of the Complaint, they can seek a further review of the matter by an External Complaint Manager. (b) The External Complaint Manager must follow the same Complaints Process in resolving the Complaint as the Complaint Manager.	Principal, Key Management Personnel and External Complaint Manager
5.10 Referral to Commission (a) If the complainant is still not satisfied with the outcome after a review of the Complaint has been completed, the complainant should be referred to the Commission and provided information and support to make the Complaint externally if necessary, including whether they would like such information to be provided to a representative or advocate. (b) In this regard, take reasonable steps to ensure the complainant and each person with disability affected by an issue raised in the Complaint, is advised how that Complaint or issue may be raised with the Commission by: (1) Referring them to the Feedback and Complaints Summary previously provided to them and explaining to them that such	Principal and Key Management Personnel

Procedure	Responsibility
document includes information about how complaints may be raised with the Commission; (2) Directing them to Commission’s Complaints website; and (3) Asking the complainant if they require any support or assistance in raising the Complaint with the Commission, including whether they would like the Feedback and Complaints Summary, this Policy or any other information to be provided to a representative or advocate.	
5.11 Privacy and confidentiality (a) Ensure that information provided in a Complaint and during the Complaints Process is kept confidential and only disclosed if required under Relevant Laws or if the disclosure is otherwise appropriate in the circumstances, including in the following circumstances: (1) The disclosure of the Complaint-related information is to the Principal, other Key Management Personnel, Complaint Manager or other Worker who is directly or indirectly involved in the Complaints Process; (2) The disclosure of the Complaint-related information is to a lawyer or other advisor of Empowerone Support Services; (3) The disclosure of the Complaint-related information is reasonably required to enable a Complaint to be properly investigated; (4) The disclosure of the Complaint related information is to the Commission, the police or otherwise required under Relevant Laws.	All Workers
5.12 Record keeping (a) Include details of any Complaint in Empowerone Support Services’s Complaint Register for a minimum of seven years after the Complaint has been made. (b) Maintain the Complaint Register and record the following for each Complaint or appeal: (1) Details of the complainant and the nature of the Complaint; (2) Date lodged;	Principal and Key Management Personnel

Procedure	Responsibility
(3) Action taken (and in the event of adverse action, any facts and issues that were raised during the Complaints Process and upon which the adverse action was based); (4) Date of resolution and reason for decision; (5) Indication of the complainant being notified of the outcome; (6) Complainant response and any further action. (c) Keep copies of all correspondence in Participant Records. (d) Keep the Complaints Register and Participant Records confidential, and restrict access to the Principal, other Key Management Personnel and any Complaint Manager. (e) Keep a statistical summary of Complaints and review annually. (f) Submit a report on Complaints to the Board at least annually. (g) Review the results from the report on Complaints submitted to the Board and use the report to: (1) Inform training by including a review of Complaints (on an anonymous basis) in complaints handling training activities; (2) Inform service delivery by taking the learnings from training activities.	
5.13 Continuous improvement of the Complaints Management System (a) Review and evaluate this Policy, the Complaints Management System, the Complaints Process and the Complaints Register at least annually, including: (1) A review of all Complaints and Feedback Policies and Procedures; (2) A review of Participant and Worker Feedback about the accessibility and effectiveness of the Complaints Management System; (3) Implementation of a Continuous Improvement Plan based on the review and Feedback received.	Principal and Key Management Personnel
5.14 Training	Key Management Personnel

Procedure	Responsibility
(a) Train Workers to assist them to understand how to apply this Policy and these procedures in everyday practice during their induction, and as part of ongoing refresher training and/or when processes change. (1) Training will include open communication strategies, such as acknowledging the grievance without being defensive and making apologies while accepting responsibility for what occurred. (Complaint Manager) (b) Ensure the Complaints Manager is trained in complaints management and resolution, and in supporting Participants throughout the Complaints Process, and appropriately responding to Complaints in an empathetic manner. (c) Ensure the Complaints Manager is trained in conducting serious Incident investigations, including investigating Incidents that may involve a criminal element and in applying Procedural Fairness, as detailed in the NDIS (Procedural Fairness) Guidelines 2018 (Cth) and Empowerone Support Services's Feedback and Complaints Procedural Fairness Considerations.	

6. General

6.1 Relevant Laws and Related Documentation

The Relevant **Laws**, as set out in the Legislation Register, and Related Documentation, apply to this Policy.

6.2 Inconsistency with Relevant Laws

Provisions contained in Relevant Laws will prevail over provisions contained in this Policy, to the extent of any inconsistency.

6.3 Policy Details

Approved By: The Board of Empowerone Group Pty Ltd

Approval Date: April 2026

Next Scheduled Review: April 2028

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