



PROACTIVE  
COMPLAINTS  
MANAGEMENT

TRAINING • COACHING • CASE MANAGEMENT

## Objective of a Complaints Management System

The main objectives of a complaints handling system for any organisation should be to:

- Provide a complainant with access to an open and responsive complaints handling process;
- Enhance the ability of the organisation to resolve complaints in a consistent, systematic and responsive manner to the satisfaction of the complainant and the organisation;
- Enable an organisation to identify trends and attempt to eliminate causes of complaints and improve the organisation's operations;
- Assist an organisation to create a customer focused approach to resolving complaints; and
- Provide a basis for continual review and analysis of the complaints handling process and the resolution of complaints;

There are four key aspects of complaint complaints management which are as follows:

1. Responsiveness
2. Objectivity and fairness
3. Equity
4. Privacy and disclosure
5. Communication

### **1. Responsiveness**

The organisation should:

- ✓ Promptly acknowledge each complaint received;
- ✓ Assess complaints and give priority in accordance with the urgency of the issues raised;
- ✓ Advise as soon as practicable where the organisation is unable to deal with either part or all of the complaint;
- ✓ Actively manage the expectations of the complainant which includes advising the complainants about the following:
  - The complaints process
  - The expected timeframes for its actions

- Their likely involvement in the process; and
- The possible or likely outcome of their complaint, where practicable

## **2. Objectivity and fairness**

- ✓ Each complainant should be managed in an objective and unbiased manner
- ✓ Any conflicting interests should not interfere with, or be perceived to interfere with the management and resolution of complaints e.g. opportunities for review of the complaint outcome by individuals other than the original decision maker wherever possible.
- ✓ Where appropriate an organisation should defer any actions that might have significant detrimental impact of the complainant until their complaint (or review) has been finalized

## **3. Equity**

- ✓ All complaints should be addressed in an equitable manner and in accordance with the organisation's complaints management policy
- ✓ The organisation's complaints management policy should address the issue of how to manage the conduct of complainants who act unreasonably

## **4. Privacy and Disclosure**

- ✓ Personally identifiable information about any individual should only be disclosed or used in compliance with all relevant privacy laws and ethical obligations when managing a complaint

## **5. Communication**

- ✓ To minimise complaints and facilitate early resolution, the organisation should provide explanations for policies, procedures and decisions in its communication with complainants and its staff, particularly frontline staff and staff handling complaints.

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