

HFHSA Complaints Policy

Policy Title	Complaints Policy		
Authorised by	Board of Directors		
First Implemented	October 2025	Last Review	
Revision Number	1.0	Next Review	November 2028
HFHSA Policy Ref	1.1.11	Standard of Excellence	1.4.3

Introduction to the policy

Habitat for Humanity South Australia SA(HFHSA) is committed to listening and responding to concerns or complaints. Having a clear and confidential complaints process in place for stakeholders is an important to HFHSA's overall approach to safeguarding and accountability. Receiving concerns and complaints and is an opportunity to learn and improve.

Purpose of the Complaints Policy

To purpose of the policy is to detail how Habitat for Humanity Australia (SA) will deal with complaints about its people, products or services including how to make a complaint, key principles, and the complaints handling process.

Policy Scope

The policy applies to complaints about employees, volunteers, partners and anyone acting on behalf of Habitat for Humanity (SA). Grievances and disputes between staff and volunteers are out of scope and will be addressed through the Grievance and Dispute Resolution Procedure.

Making a Complaint

HFHSA will receive complaints orally (in person, by telephone) or in writing (post, email). Complaints may be made by a friend or advocate on behalf of the complainant.

- General complaints about any aspect of HFHSA and its work should be sent to hfhsa@habitat.org.au or 102 Port Road, Alberton 5014 South Australia.
- Complaints about the CEO should be sent to Habitat for Humanity SA Chair
- Complainants may be anonymous however this may limit complaint investigation and resolution.

The Habitat Ethics and Accountability Line (HEAL) can be used when the complainant wishes to remain anonymous or when the HFHSA complaints process has not resolved an issue.

For complaints which do not fall within the scope of this policy HFHSA will, if possible, assist in referring the issue /matter to the appropriate organisation or government authority.

How complaints are handled

When we take an oral complaint, we will:

- Identify ourselves, listen, record details of the complaint.
- Confirm that we have understood and received the details.
- Show empathy and respect for the complainant, but not attempt to take sides, lay blame, or become defensive.

For all complaints we will:

- Seek from the complainant the outcome/s they are expecting.
- Make an initial assessment of the severity of the complaint and the urgency of action.
- Clearly explain to the complainant the course of action that we will follow, which may include that the complaint is out of our jurisdiction; if we may exercise a discretion not to investigate; if preliminary enquiries need to be made, or further consideration needs to be given; or that the complaint will not be investigated.
- We will not create false expectations but assure the complainant that the complaint will receive full attention.
- Give an estimated timeframe or, if that is not possible, a date by which we will contact them again.
- Check whether the complainant is satisfied with the proposed action and, if not, advise them of alternatives.
- Ensure that the complaint is appropriately acknowledged.
- Follow up where necessary and monitor whether the complainant is satisfied.
- Register all complaints.
- Report relevant matters to law enforcement authorities where appropriate.
- Take all reasonable steps to ensure that people making complaints are not adversely affected because a complaint has been made by them or on their behalf.
- Ensure that a complainant is not required to express their complaint to a person implicated in their complaint.

Where possible, complaints will be resolved at first contact with us.

All complaints will be recorded on the Complaints Record Form (Appendix 1)

6. Inquiries, minor complaints and jurisdiction

We will endeavour to deal immediately with inquiries and minor complaints which are made orally by telephone or in person, during the initial phone call or meeting. As far as possible, we will ensure that the inquirer or complainant is satisfied with the information and or resolution provided. When appropriate, we may offer an explanation or apology to the person making the complaint.

On receipt of a complaint, we will also attempt to determine expeditiously whether an investigation is required, depending on jurisdictional questions or whether the complaint is ill-conceived. If the

complainant disputes an assessment that a complaint should not be investigated, the staff handling the complaint will refer it to the Chair of the Habitat SA.

7. How complaints are investigated

We will make every reasonable effort to investigate all the relevant circumstances and information surrounding a complaint. The level of investigation will be commensurate with the significance or seriousness of the complaint.

8. Timeframes

We will acknowledge written complaints within 5 working days of receipt. We will aim to resolve complaints as quickly as possible within 30 working days unless there are exceptional circumstances. If a complaint is not resolved within 30 working days, we will inform the complainant of progress and keep them informed of progress.

9. Responding to and closing a complaint

The CEO will normally make the decision on a complaint that has required investigation (that is not a minor complaint). Decisions on serious or significant complaints will be reported to the HFHA Board.

We will communicate our decision on a complaint as soon as is practical. Our communication will be in writing in the appropriate language by email and/or post. We will encourage the complainant to respond and advise whether they are satisfied with our decision. In our decision we will advise that if a complainant is not satisfied, we will be prepared to consider any additional information they may provide and to review our decision

10. Confidentiality

We will not reveal a complainant's name or personal details to anyone in or outside our organisation other than the Board, CEO, worker involved or an advisor we may engage and who will commit to keeping any information confidential in handling the complaint, without obtaining the complainant's permission

Implementation of this policy

The Board and CEO are to ensure that they are familiar with this policy and are responsible for its implementation. The CEO is responsible for ensuring staff and volunteers have been made aware of and are familiar with this policy.

Review Process

The Complaints Policy is to be reviewed by the Board of HFSA every three years, or as required to meet any legislative and regulatory changes.

Related Documents

HFSA Employee Manual
HFSA Volunteer Handbook
HFSA Grievance and Dispute Resolution Procedure
HFSA Volunteer Management Policy

Definitions

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	Chief Executive Officer of HFHSA
Complaint	An expression of dissatisfaction made to or about HFHSA, related to its people, products or services, or actions as a result of a complaint, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required. (AS/NZ 10002:2014)
Complainant	A person, organisation or its representative making a complaint.
Dispute	An unresolved complaint escalated either within or outside of HFHSA.
Feedback	Opinions, comments, suggestions about HFHSA's people, products and services.
Inquiry	Request for information.
HFHA	Habitat for Humanity Australia Ltd (ACN 131 976 004)
HFHSA	Habitat for Humanity Australia (South Australia) Inc. (ACN 159 846 232). HFHSA is an Affiliate of HFHA
HFHSA Personnel	Staff employed by HFHSA, any volunteer, consultant or contractor deemed by the Chief Executive Officer to be involved with an allocated HFHSA activity.
Volunteer	Any person from the community who offers to do work for HFHSA without monetary compensation and has read, acknowledged and signed the HFHSA Volunteer Agreement.

Appendix 1: Complaints Record Form

All external complaints are to be recorded on this form. Please discuss and seek advice from the CEO as required.

Date <date complaint received>	
Complainant Details <name, contact details>	
Nature of complaint <brief outline of complaint>	
Details of Complaint <detailed description, any further information including • Location • Who is involved • Witness/es • Frequency Attach any documents provided by complainant.	
How do they want the complaint remedied?	
Person receiving the complaint	
How was it dealt with <describe actions, including record of and dates of communication with complainant >	
When is response to be completed	
Outcome <what happened because of the complaint>	
Follow up required <Any action required because of the complaint including training, changes to policy and procedures etc.>	