

Wildcare Australia Inc  
Policy and Procedure  
**Grievance Policy**

*Version 3 (October 2011)*



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## PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that members have a process whereby grievances and/or complaints can be referred through the Management Committee of Wildcare Australia.

## WHAT IS A GRIEVANCE?

A grievance is a real or perceived issue causing resentment, suffering or distress and which may be regarded as grounds for complaint in the members' environment.

A grievance may be about any act, omission, situation or decision that you think is unfair, discriminatory or unjustified.

Grievances can range in severity from matters that can be immediately resolved by timely appropriate action, to complex matters involving prolonged investigation, negotiation or disciplinary action.

## **The Wildcare Australia Inc. Grievance Procedure is:**

- **Completely confidential** – Only the people directly involved in making or investigating a complaint will have access to information about the complaint.
- **Impartial** – Both sides of the grievance will have a chance to tell their side of the story. No assumptions will be made and no action will be taken until all relevant information has been collected and considered.
- **Free of repercussions** – No action will be taken against anyone for making a complaint or helping someone to make a complaint. The Management Committee will take all necessary steps to ensure that no victimisation occurs against any volunteer who makes a complaint.
- **Timely** – All complaints will be dealt with as quickly as possible. We aim to resolve all complaints within two weeks from receipt of the grievance if at all possible.

## WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE A GRIEVANCE

For a grievance to be dealt with effectively and efficiently you will need to:

- Prepare for your meeting at each level by writing down the facts relating to the incident. Be specific.
- When speaking to the appointed Management Committee member or Head Carer clearly describe the problem and your concern. Focus on the problem, not the personality of other individuals involved and avoid being hostile. Discuss the situation and agree on a possible resolution.

### **1<sup>st</sup> Stage**

If you can, try to sort out the issue directly with the person involved. Sometimes people do not mean to do things that hurt or offend others and sometimes they may not have realised that they did in fact hurt or offend you. This does not mean that it is acceptable. However, it does mean that if you can, you should tell the person who is acting in a hurtful or unsuitable way that you consider that their behaviour is unacceptable and/or is offensive so that they have the chance to apologise, and/or stop or change what they are doing.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Stage**

If the direct approach does not work, or you do not feel that you can sort it out directly with the other person, you should contact the Management Committee. You should put your concerns in writing and forward to the Secretary.

A written complaint should include:-

- The details of the grievance
- The efforts taken to resolve the grievance; and
- The desired outcome/resolution

At this level all complaints will be treated confidentially.

The Management Committee will discuss the issue and appoint a suitable Management Committee member to manage your grievance.

### **The appointed Committee Member will then take the following steps:-**

- Explain the grievance handling procedure including what may happen if there is enough evidence to support your complaint or what will happen if there is not enough evidence to support your complaint.
- Talk to the other person/people involved separately and impartially to hear their side of the story in order to fully respond to the allegations.
- Liaise with you in relation to what the other person/people stated and discuss possible resolutions in order to rectify the complaint.
- Attempt to ensure that whatever you have agreed/decided upon actually happens.

## **Appeals**

You should only ask the organisation to take a second look at a decision if they have not followed the procedure set out in this Policy or you think they did not do something properly.

If you think that the grievance procedure was not followed properly, you can appeal to the President. He/she will look at the way that the complaint was handled. If he/she thinks it was handled properly, they will not take any further action. If they think it was not handled properly, they will organise for the complaint to be looked at again by an alternative Committee member.

## **Note**

**Written statements of events will be kept for all stages of the grievance to ensure the correct information is communicated at each stage. You may be requested to sign and date any paperwork generated from your part of the grievance.**

Nothing in this policy is intended to alter or limit the rights of either the member or Wildcare Australia Inc.