

Australian Evangelical Alliance Inc. (Missions Interlink)

COMPLAINTS POLICY

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Drafted by	Pam Thyer	Approved by Board on	23 March 2015
Reviewed by	Policy Committee	Last reviewed	August 2022
Responsible person	Nataliya Osipova	Scheduled review date	August 2025

Introduction

This Policy outlines Australian Evangelical Alliance Inc.'s (AEA) approach to receiving and responding to negative feedback (complaints) from stakeholders, including staff, volunteers, participants in AEA ministries and members of the public.

The Policy and associated Procedures provide stakeholders with an avenue to raise problems and concerns and have their complaints listened to and effectively resolved. It also provides AEA with the opportunity to receive feedback that can assist with its operations and stakeholder relations.

Application

Applies to all activities of Australian Evangelical Alliance Inc. and all its ministries including Missions Interlink.

Policy

1. Members, Associates and other stakeholders have a right to access satisfactory grievance and complaints procedures. Complaints are welcome, are taken seriously, and will be handled honestly, fairly and without bias.
2. Confidentiality regarding the nature of the complaint and the parties involved will be maintained. Permission will be sought if it is necessary to discuss the complaint with others.
3. AEA encourages complaints to be resolved informally if possible by discussion between the parties involved.
4. The National Director will receive and action complaints unless the complaint is against the National Director, in which case the Chair of the Board will receive and action complaints
5. The Board will be informed of the number, nature and resolution of complaints and be minuted.

Policies can be established or altered only by the Board: Procedures may be altered by the CEO.

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COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the National Director to establish the complaint management procedures set out below and in accordance with the *Grievance Rules* as outlined in the AEA Inc Rules.

Processes

1. Many complaints can be resolved informally and effectively by discussing the issue directly with the person(s) involved. If a person has a complaint, they should contact the person against whom the complaint is directed. If the complainant believes that the person against whom the complaint is directed will be unable to help, then a formal complaint may be lodged.
2. Prior to lodging a formal complaint, consideration should be given to informally engaging either the National Director or the Chair of the Board in an attempt to achieve a satisfactory informal solution to the dispute.
3. A formal complaint must:
 - Be lodged in writing by mail or email and clearly identify that it is a formal complaint.
 - Clearly identify the person making the complaint, including full name and contact details (phone number and email).
 - Clearly outline the circumstances and nature of the complaint.
4. Complaints should be directed to the National Director, or the Chair of the Board if the complaint relates to the National Director.
5. The National Director (or Chair) will acknowledge in writing each complaint received, and the complainant will be advised of the timeframe in which the complaint will be considered and of any further supporting information required to be provided.
6. The National Director (and Chair if applicable) will then consider the complaint and advise the complainant in writing of the outcome, within the timeframe specified in the letter of acknowledgement.
7. In considering the merits of any complaint, the following principles will be observed:
 - The complaint will be handled fairly and based on the principles of natural justice.
(Natural justice means the right to be given a fair hearing and the opportunity to present your case, and the right to have a decision made by an impartial decision maker)

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- There will be no victimisation as a result of making a complaint or supplying information to an investigation, or other person with a role in this procedure.
 - The complaint will be handled confidentially with only those involved in implementing the policy or remedial action. In cases when complaint raises a major risk for an organization, the Board must be informed as well.
 - Any parties interviewed during the complaint investigation will have the option of nominating a support person to be present.
 - Any person being complained about will be informed of the allegations against them. They will be given an opportunity to respond to the allegations.
8. If not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint process, then an appeal can be made to the full Board of Directors of AEA who will appoint a Mediator acceptable to both or all parties to the dispute.
 9. If the dispute cannot be resolved by mediation, then the dispute shall be referred by the Mediator to an Arbitrator.
 10. If the complaint relates to an incident of harassment, bullying or discriminatory conduct the complainant has the option of lodging their complaint with the relevant Equal Opportunity Commissioner or other relevant statutory authority.

Related Documents

Nil