

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to explain Family Spirit's commitment to best practice feedback and complaints management and evidence how we adhere to relevant legislation, regulations and standards, by maintaining a Complaints Management System which reflects the size and scale of our organisation. This Policy provides the key definitions and concepts, which contribute to our continuous improvement strategies in complaints management and related outcomes.

Processes to respond to complaints of child abuse (or other concerns) must be child focused. Children are the priority when responding to complaints of abuse.

This Policy aims to:

- Provide opportunities for positive, negative and constructive feedback to be given and documented
- Support us conduct workplace investigations fairly and consistently
- Ensure that the Workers, Clients and Stakeholders involved are treated fairly, have a reasonable opportunity to respond and have their rights and dignity protected
- Ensure that the outcome is supported by the evidence and procedural fairness
- Encourage complainants to raise their allegations early, with confidence that they will be fairly assessed
- Enable Family Spirit to understand, assess and respond to complaints about us in a timely manner
- Allow appropriate training, discipline, and behaviour management to be implemented promptly
- Minimise damage to our organisation's reputation and other business risk i.e. Financial
- Empower the organisation to defend any future legal action
- Provide a thorough understanding of why policies and procedures are an important basis to foster and support positive workplace culture
- Identify data, patterns and trends to support continuous improvement and our Quality Management System
- Provide a well-handled system that values the participant's opinions and takes all complaints seriously, with the intent to improve the relationship between our organisation and our stakeholders
- Empower all employees and participants to feel free to voice their complaints or provide feedback
- Allow us to respond to issues raised by individuals making complaints in a timely and cost-effective manner
- Boost stakeholder confidence in our administrative processes
- seek a resolution that meets all parties' expectations, where possible
- provide Family Spirit with information to help us deliver quality improvements in our services, supports, roles, and complaints handling and quality processes
- Help contribute to the resolution of complaints at a "Local Level"

This Policy is to be used in connection with its related Procedure, which also specifies the roles and responsibilities of Executive members, Managers, Workers and Complainants.

Scope

This policy applies to all Family Spirit workers, including contractors, Risk Related Roles and volunteers and must be read in conjunction with all other relevant Family Spirit policies, procedures and guidelines i.e. Code of Conduct and Ethics.

All workers and stakeholders must be provided access to this Policy and related Procedure.

COMPLIANCE WITH THIS DOCUMENT IS MANDATORY

Definitions

TERM	DEFINITION
Complaint Management System	<p>"A complaint handling system is an organised way of responding to, recording, reporting and using complaints to improve service to customers."</p> <p>Source: NSW Ombudsman</p>
Local Level	<p>Section 3(1)(c) states that one of the principles of the Act is:</p> <p><i>"...to encourage, wherever reasonable and practicable, the resolution of complaints at a local level."</i></p> <p>For the purposes of our Complaints Management System, "Local Level" means within Family Spirit (only).</p> <p>Source: Community Services (Complaints, Reviews and Monitoring) Act 1993 No 2</p>
Feedback	<p>Relates to opinions, comments and expressions of interest that can be positive or negative regarding services provided by Family Spirit or its contracted service providers. Information may be documented for consideration in service enhancement, and in some instances a response may not be deemed necessary by Family Spirit</p> <p>Source: DCJ Complaints and Feedback Policy 2024</p>
Allegation	<p>A claim or assertion that someone has done something wrong.</p> <p>Source: Workplace Investigations -4th Edition (Worklogic)</p>
Complaint	<p>A complaint is made whenever a person expresses dissatisfaction – usually about an organisation's services, or how they have been treated by staff – in</p>

	<p>circumstances where they (implicitly or explicitly) expect or are entitled to expect a response to their concerns.</p> <p>Complaints can range from very informal to the very formal. For example, they can be an oral complaint about a decision or action of frontline staff which those staff may be able to address and resolve immediately. They can also be a written complaint about an organisation to an external oversight body.</p> <p>A statement (verbal or written) containing allegations of behaviour, which in some workplaces is described as a “grievance”.</p> <p>A complaint or feedback may be related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Services provided by Family Spirit b) Conduct of employees, volunteers, foster carers or any contractor or contracted worker working for Family Spirit c) Policies and procedures of Family Spirit d) Facilities in which Family Spirit operates <p>“Any expression of dissatisfaction made to an organisation related to its product, service or the complaints handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.”</p> <p>Source: AS/NZS 10002:2014 Standards Australia</p> <p>Source: FS POL18.17.01 / 1 COMPLAINTS AND FEEDBACK POLICY AND PROCEDURE</p> <p>Source: Effective Complaint Management Guidelines: A practical guide to developing a Complaint management system and handling complaints NSW Ombudsman November 2024</p> <p>Source: Workplace Investigations - 4th Edition (Worklogic)</p>
<p>What is not a Complaint</p>	<p>It is generally not a complaint when a customer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • asks for services. However, a repeat request for service may be a complaint about inaction or delay. • asks for an update. However, some repeat requests for updates may be complaints about inaction or delay. • asks for information about, or an explanation of, policies or procedures. • provides feedback or expresses an opinion and doesn’t explicitly or implicitly expect a resolution or outcome. • applies for an internal review of an administratively reviewable decision. If no legislated review or appeal rights exist, an expression of dissatisfaction

	<p>with a decision or a decision-making process would be a complaint. Some organisations may choose to combine their recording and reporting on complaints and legislated internal review requests.</p> <p>You can build a clearer picture of what your customers like and don't like by recording suggestions, inquiries and compliments separately to complaints. This creates a more balanced view of how they perceive and experience your programs and services than if you were to only record complaints.</p> <p>Source: Effective Complaint Management Guidelines: A practical guide to developing a Complaint management system and handling complaints NSW Ombudsman November 2024</p>
Complainant	<p>A person who has made allegations, whether orally or in writing, about misconduct in the workplace. There may be more than one complainant in an investigation. We acknowledge that people who have experienced illegal conduct such as sexual harassment may refer to themselves as a discloser, report, victim, survivor, or impacted person</p> <p>Source: Workplace Investigations - 4th Edition (Worklogic)</p>
Respondent	<p>The person identified by the complainant as having engaged in the alleged misconduct. There may be more than one respondent. Other terms for "Respondent" may include "Alleged Person" or "the Person Subject of the Complaint".</p> <p>Source: Workplace Investigations - 4th Edition (Worklogic)</p>
Witness	<p>A person who may have observed or have relevant knowledge about the alleged wrongdoing.</p> <p>Source: Workplace Investigations -4th Edition (Worklogic)</p>
Instructor	<p>The individual who determines the scope of the investigation, directs the investigator on procedural issues, informs clients in the investigation about it, and manages clients who may be reluctant or obstructive.</p> <p>Source: Workplace Investigations - 4th Edition (Worklogic)</p>
Parties	<p>Both the complainant(s) and the respondent(s).</p> <p>Source: Workplace Investigations - 4th Edition (Worklogic)</p>
Partially substantiated or partially proven	<p>These terms are used interchangeably. These terms are used when the investigator has found that some but not all of the particulars or alleged conduct in the complaint have been proven.</p>

	Source: Workplace Investigations -4th Edition (Worklogic)
Substantiated or Proven	<p>These terms are used interchangeably in relation to making findings of fact. These terms are used when the investigator has found that it was more likely than not that the conduct occurred.</p> <p>Source: Workplace Investigations -4th Edition (Worklogic)</p>
Not substantiated or unsubstantiated or not proven	<p>These terms are used interchangeably in relation to making findings of fact. These terms are used when the investigator has found it was more likely than not that the conduct did not occur, or there is insufficient evidence available to determine whether the alleged conduct occurred or not.</p> <p>Source: Workplace Investigations -4th Edition (Worklogic)</p>
Conclusion, finding of fact or decision	<p>These terms are used interchangeably in relation to the conclusions you draw in your investigation.</p> <p>You will also note that in the book we sometimes refer to specific legal terms or principles. Within your organisation, when describing your work, you can use the language that best works for you in the context of your own investigation. Given that many people are not familiar or comfortable with legal terms, we recommend that you use plain English.</p> <p>Source: Workplace Investigations -4th Edition (Worklogic)</p>
Consequence	Outcome of an event affecting objectives.
Open Disclosure	Open disclosure is the open discussion that a service provider has with a consumer when something goes wrong and has harmed or had the potential to cause harm to the service user.
Service Provider	Also known as services, providers, organisations, approved providers, businesses. The term refers to an entity that receives Government funding to provide community and care services.
Service User	Also known as a care recipient, client, consumer, or customer. The term refers to a person receiving Government funded community or care services. Service user also refers collectively to the service user and their nominated and legal representative/s (i.e family).
Formal Resolution	Where informal resolution of a complaint is not possible the complainant may lodge a formal complaint with FS where an Investigation will be undertaken by the service provider.

Informal Resolution	Informal resolution means the resolution of a feedback or complaint to the satisfaction of the Complainant and the Respondent, without an Investigation being undertaken.
External Resolution	Where resolution cannot be found within the service provider, the complainant is referred to the relevant regulator and / or agency i.e. Police
Remedial Action	Remedial action attempts to correct the behaviour through a variety of means that may include counselling, training and/or issuing a warning (verbally or in writing). It may be appropriate in circumstances such as the first instance of poor performance or an isolated instance of misconduct.
Disciplinary Action	Disciplinary action may include a caution (verbally or in writing), suspension, demotion, transfer and dismissal from employment. It may be appropriate where remedial action has been unsuccessful or where the performance or conduct concern warrants it.
Underperformance	<p>Underperformance, unsatisfactory or poor performance can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not performing duties, or not performing them to the required standard • displaying negative or disruptive behaviour in the workplace • failing to comply with workplace policies, rules or procedures • Unsatisfactory work, in terms of quantity, quality and timeliness, and not meeting expectations of the role as specified • Breaches of work practices, procedures and guidelines, or refusal to follow lawful and reasonable direction • Breaches of policies, expectations and/or codes of conduct that do not immediately warrant a misconduct investigation, such as absenteeism and lateness • Inappropriate behaviour, such as poor interactions and communication problems with work colleagues, supervisor/managers, patients or clients • Non-achievement of standards of professional development • A series/pattern of minor issues that when taken together show a lack of cooperation, engagement or ability • Other deficits in work performance. <p>Underperformance doesn't just affect the output of an individual employee – it can also impact co-workers, financial risks, customers, stakeholders and business productivity.</p>

	<p>There are many reasons why an employee might perform poorly. Some common reasons include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the employee doesn't know what's expected of them because goals and standards are unclear the employee may not have the knowledge or skills to do the job the employee is unsure if they are meeting requirements low personal motivation or confidence personal issues such as family stress, physical and/or mental health problems, or problems with drugs or alcohol low morale in the workplace and/or a poor work environment interpersonal differences or cultural misunderstandings workplace bullying. <p>Source: Fair Work Ombudsman Managing underperformance best practice guide March 2025</p>
Serious Misconduct	<p>Serious misconduct includes deliberately and / or intentional or reckless unprofessional, dangerous or unlawful behaviour, such as theft, fraud, sexual harassment or assault, which may warrant instant dismissal.</p> <p>Source: Fair Work Ombudsman Managing underperformance best practice guide March 2025</p>
Unlawful Conduct	<p>Unlawful Conduct is any conduct which breaches a law, regulation and / or any other statutory obligation</p>
Reportable Conduct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a sexual offence sexual misconduct ill-treatment of a child neglect of a child an assault against a child an offence under s 43B (failure to protect) or s 316A (failure to report) of the Crimes Act 1900; and behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child. <p>Source: NSW Children's Guardian Act 2019</p>
Neglect	<p>Neglect is defined as conduct towards a child that is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Act defines neglect to mean a significant failure – by a person with parental responsibility for the child, or an authorised carer or an employee if the child is in the employee's care – to provide adequate and proper food,

	<p>supervision, nursing, clothing, medical aid or lodging for the child that causes or is likely to cause harm to the child.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neglect can be an ongoing situation of repeated failure by a caregiver to meet a child's physical or psychological needs, or a single significant incident where a caregiver fails to fulfil a duty or obligation, resulting in actual harm to a child or where there is the potential for significant harm to a child. • Mandatory considerations • The Act provides that in assessing whether conduct amounts to Reportable Conduct, the following mandatory considerations should be considered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - professional standards. - codes of conduct, including any professional or ethical codes. - accepted community standards <p>When evaluating whether the substantiated conduct constitutes neglect, the investigator considered whether a reasonable person in the same situation would have reported their child missing. The investigator also assessed whether conduct qualifies as neglect.</p> <p>Source: NSW Children's Guardian Act 2019</p>
actus reus	<p>physical element / result of a decision</p> <p>Source: Australian Law Reform Commission</p>
mens rea	<p>mental element of a decision</p> <p>Source: Australian Law Reform Commission</p>
Client – Incident	<p><i>Broadly speaking, incidents can be defined as any event or allegation of an event that had potential to or has resulted in actual or perceived impact to a person or organisation. This includes any event that may be categorised as near misses due to proactive strategies to remove to mitigate impact.</i></p> <p>Source: FS CLIENT INCIDENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE Safeguarding FS P18.17.7 / 0</p>
Control	<p>A measure (treatment or strategy) that is modifying a risk.</p>
CTARS	<p>Family Spirit's electronic client and incident management system accessible by authorised users</p>
Inherent Risk	<p>Risk that exists before treatments.</p>

Likelihood	The chance of something happening.
Residual Risk	The level of severity of the risk remaining after treatment/control.
Risk	Risk is defined as the effect of uncertainty on objectives.
Risk analysis	The process to comprehend the nature of risk and to determine the level of risk.
Risk appetite	The level of risk the organisation is prepared to accept.
Risk assessment	The overall process of Risk identification; Risk analysis and Risk evaluation.
Risk attitude	Organisation's approach to assess and eventually pursue, retain, take or turn away from risk.
Risk criteria	Terms of reference against which the significance of a risk is evaluated.
Risk evaluation	The process of comparing the results of risk analysis with risk criteria to determine whether the risk and/or its magnitude is acceptable or tolerable.
Risk identification	The process of finding, recognising and describing risk.
Risk management	Coordinated activities to direct and control an organisation with regard to risk.
	Risk management involves the systematic application of management policies, practices, and procedures to the task of identifying, analysing, assessing, treating, monitoring and communicating risk i.e. "what could happen" and "what should we do about it".
Risk Owner	A person with the accountability for and authority to manage risk.
Risk treatment	<p>The process to modify risk which can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • avoiding the risk by deciding not to start or continue with the activity that gives rise to the risk • taking or increasing risk in order to pursue an opportunity • removing the risk source • changing the likelihood • changing the consequences • sharing the risk with another party or parties retaining the risk by informed decision.
Insufficiency	Update staff raising with decision making rationale and outcomes via email and archiving records in ConnX

Corrective Action	Action taken to eliminate the cause of an existing non-conformance or deficiency and to prevent its reoccurrence.
Preventive Action	Action taken to eliminate a 'potential cause' of a potential non-conformity or deficiency that has not occurred.
Non-Conformance (NCR)	<p>A failure to comply with requirements or an observation that indicates practice contrary to the requirements of documented procedures or applicable standards.</p> <p>These requirements include quality, customer, management, product / service and legal requirements.</p>
Risk-Related Role	<p>A person employed or otherwise engaged by a registered NDIS provider will require worker screening if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are in a role for which the normal duties are likely to require more than incidental contact with people with disability (as defined in s6 of the NDIS Rules (Practice Standards – Worker Screening) Rules 2018) • They are in a role for which the normal duties include the direct delivery of specified supports or specified services to a person with disability • They are Key Personnel. "Key Personnel" means individuals who hold key executive, management or operational positions in an organisation, such as directors, managers, board members, chief executive officer or chairperson. You must disclose the requested information for all key personnel. <p>Source: NDIS Practice Standards Verification Module – Required Documentation March 2025</p>

Policy

Family Spirit shall maintain a Complaints Management System which creates an environment where complaints, concerns, grievances and suggestions are welcomed and viewed as an opportunity for self-reflection and continuous improvement.

This Policy ensures that Family Spirit clients and stakeholders know and understand, in the mode of communication that best suits them, they have the right to make complaints about Family Spirit and are

encouraged to exercise this right in a blame-free and resolution-focused culture - whilst also respecting an individual's right to privacy and confidentiality.

It is acknowledged that Family Spirit views all complaints as a vital inputs and output contributors (through data, patterns and trends) to our internal review of performance and quality processes, which assists in developing the continuous improvement of our services as we work towards achieving our care commitment, values and Mission.

Regardless of whether an issue is anonymous, big or small, it will be treated seriously, and Family Spirit will ensure the complainant(s) is / are advised on how their complaint has been dealt with and resolved.

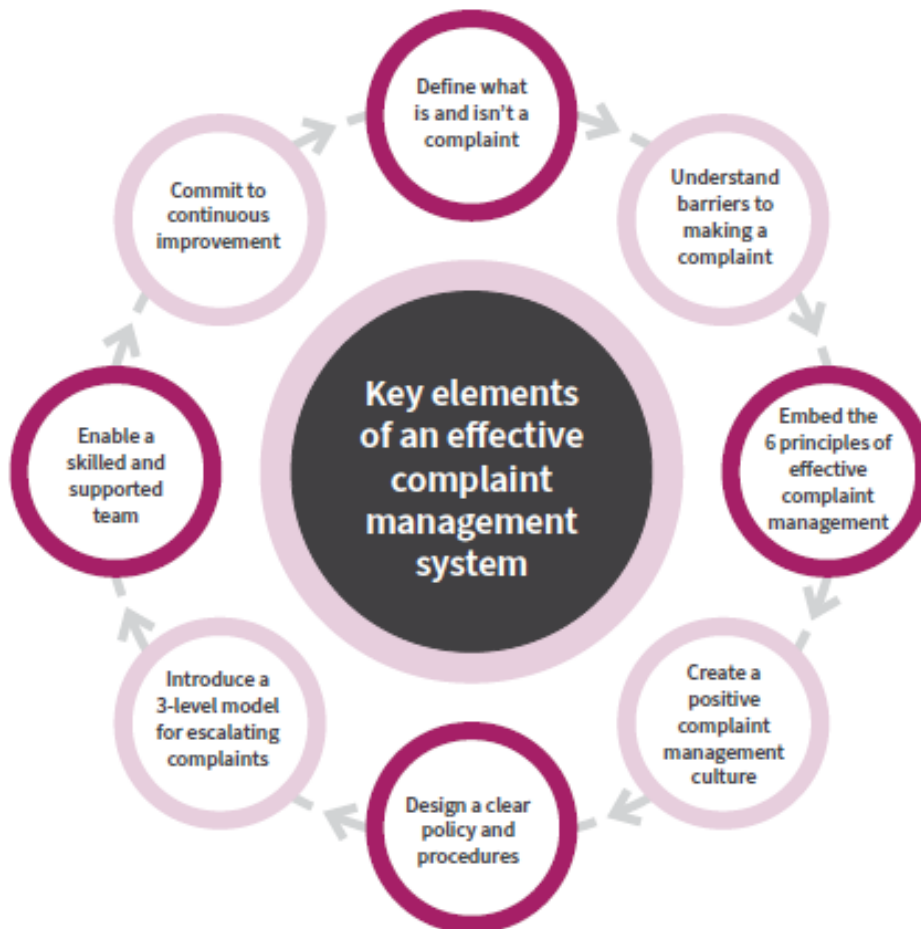
Children, young people, families, advocates and stakeholders may complain about Family Spirit's supports, services, staff, or contractors. Family Spirit must provide child-friendly complaint and feedback options in the mode of communication that best suits them i.e. Easy Reads.

Family Spirit will ensure complaints and feedback are managed effectively through:

- Implementing open and transparent complaint management procedures
- Observing the principles of procedural fairness and compliance with relevant mandatory reporting under Australian law
- Committing to the right of stakeholders to complain either directly or through a representative.
- Undertaking procedural fairness to reach a fair and correct decision.
- Taking reasonable steps to inform the complainant of the NDIS commission complaints process, including the use of various communication means, e.g., oral and written.
- Maintaining complete confidentiality and privacy
- Abiding by all relevant legislation, regulations, standards and international conventions
- Training staff in our complaint process and the rights of all stakeholders to complain.
- Considering all complaints seriously and respectfully
- Advising participants and staff members of their right to complain
- Staff will be trained in complaint handling during assessments and orientation.
- Guidance regarding the complaint process is outlined in the welcome information provided to our participants.
- Provision of support for people who may need assistance to make a complaint.
- Protection of complainants against retribution or discrimination
- Prompt investigation and resolution of complaints
- Communicating and consulting with participants, family and advocates during the complaints process and Providing feedback and resolutions
- Interpretation and application of policies and processes
- providing opportunities for all parties to participate in the complaint resolution process.
- Ensuring that complainant is involved in the resolution of the complaint.
- Keeping complainant informed of the progress of the complaint:
 - actions taken.

- the reasons the decisions are made
 - options to have decisions reviewed
- Ensuring that the decision-maker or advocate is included and recognised in the process

Key Elements of Family Spirit's Complaint Management System



Source: Effective Complaint Management Guidelines: A practical guide to developing a Complaint management system and handling complaints | NSW Ombudsman | November 2024

6 Principles for Effective Complaint Management



Create a Positive Complaints Culture

Family Spirit understand that:

- people receiving public services or publicly funded community services have a democratic right to complain if they are dissatisfied with their service or treatment
- complaints provide valuable feedback
- complaints present an opportunity to improve systems, services and staff
- recording and analysing complaint data supports system and service improvement.

To foster a positive culture, Family Spirit value our Complaint Management System and invest in resources to sustain it. Family Spirit foster positive complaints management culture by

1. Championing a positive Complaints Management culture &
2. Understanding the benefits:
 - increase organisational efficiency and cost effectiveness
 - help your organisation understand your customers' behaviour, needs and preferences
 - produce data and insights that support continuous improvement
 - inform decisions about future services and programs
 - enhance your organisation's reputation and strengthen public trust in government and the services funded by government
 - reduce escalation to external dispute resolution agencies (for example, ombudsman offices, tribunals or courts)

1. Encouraging and Acknowledging Feedback, Compliments and Complaints

- We will ensure clients are aware of their right to provide feedback and make a complaint (without fear of reprisal or retribution), both internally in our organisation and externally to a regulator, and support them to do this if requested
- We will welcome all complaints, concerns, compliments and suggestions and view them as opportunities for continuous improvement
- We will support clients to access an advocate, language services or any other aid or service they need to raise and resolve a complaint
- We will acknowledge the complaint verbally and/or in writing, expressing regret that standards or expectations have not been met, or express verbal gratitude to acknowledge a compliment, in a way that is culturally respectful and in the mode of communication that best suits the complainant.

2. Response Actions

- We will take required action(s) to address immediate client risks, issues or concerns
- We will conduct internal and external incident reporting as required
- We will document the feedback/complaint in the Complaints Register
- We will discuss our response actions with the client and/or family/alternate decisionmaker/advocate and encourage their involvement in improving our services
- We will inform the client if their rights or interests may be adversely affected in a direct and specific way because of the complaint, or something relating to the complaint
- We will ensure any adverse decision outcome(s) for the client is/are based on the facts and the record of decision is clearly and accurately documented in the client file and in the Complaints Register

3. Communication and Collaboration

- We will conduct all discussions with the client and/or family/alternate decision make/advocate with sensitivity, courtesy and respect
- We will communicate and collaborate with the client and/or family/alternate decisionmaker/advocate throughout the complaints process

4. Continuous Improvement and Quality Management

- We will seek to learn from feedback and complaints and continually improve our service delivery processes
- We will review and analyse feedback and complaints raised to identify systemic issues and take follow up action(s) as required (changes to policy and procedures, worker rostering, supervision and training, technology and communications)

- We will report outcomes of complaints/incident investigations to both the client and other stakeholders (including relevant workers) and ensure this is documented in our quality management system as part of the continuous improvement process
- We will regularly review and improve the effectiveness of our feedback and complaints management system

5. Reviewing and Monitoring Processes

- We will conduct audits to review and monitor our feedback and complaints management process and make any required adjustments
- We will maintain a Complaints Register and a Continuous Improvement Register with details, actions and outcomes of complaints and suggested improvements

6. Information and Record-keeping

- We will ensure our CTARS Complaints Management Register is accurately maintained in a prompt and timely manner
- We will ensure information and records are accurate and up to date
- We will ensure the client has provided us with all required written consents
- We will store the information securely to ensure privacy, dignity and confidentiality and make sure it is accessible to the client and only other stakeholders authorised to access it

7. Worker Training and Supervision

- We will maintain a skilled and trained workforce, which is aware of clients' right to complain and our complaints-handling process
- We will maintain processes to adequately monitor and supervise workers

Anonymous Complaints

Family Spirit acknowledge some Complainants choose to remain anonymous. This may be because they fear that detrimental action will be taken in response to their complaint. While anonymous complaints are not ideal, they can be accepted. They may be lodged either in writing or accepted by an employee as a verbal statement, through formal internal and external channels.

Complainants are encouraged to provide as much information as possible which may be of assistance when assessing the complaint.

It must, however, be noted that an anonymous complaint might be more difficult to investigate and prove as, for example, further details of the circumstances relating to the complaint might be difficult to obtain, or Family Spirit may be unable to identify all relevant parties and witnesses.

Family Spirit maintain and provide complainants with the option to be a Whistleblower, via our Whistleblower Policy & Procedure:

FS POL18.1.04-0 Whistleblower Policy

FS P18.01.07-2 Whistleblower Anonymity and Protection Procedure

Documenting the Standard

- An organisation's Child Safe Reporting Policy includes details on how to make and respond to a complaint, including procedures to make sure the response is child-focused, fair, transparent and timely
- An organisation's Child Safe Code of Conduct clearly describes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour
- Records of complaints made to the organisation are kept, ranging from concerns to disclosures
- Records of reports about child safety that have been made to government agencies are kept, in line with legislative obligations
- Accessible complaint handling information is available online and in print, including website, social media, brochures, fact sheets or posters
- Records of complaint handling and Child Safe Code of Conduct training are kept

Indicators of success

- There's an organisational culture where complaints are taken seriously and acted on
- Staff feel supported to raise concerns about child safety
- Children feel safe to raise concerns about themselves or their friends

Feedback and Complaints Management System Outcomes and Standards

Outcome: Each client (and their advocates (including Family Spirit Staff)) have knowledge of and access to Family Spirit's Complaints Management and Resolution system. Complaints and other feedback made by all parties are welcomed, acknowledged, respected and must be well-managed.

To achieve this outcome, Family Spirit demonstrate the following:

- Processes to respond to complaints of child abuse (or other concerns) are child focused
- Children are the priority when responding to complaints of abuse
- Leaders create a culture where complaints are taken seriously, and all adults take responsibility for the safety of children
- Leaders clearly explain that breaches to their Child Safe Code of Conduct will result in disciplinary action

- Staff are given support and information on what and how to report, including to external agencies
- Accessible processes are provided to enable children, staff and others to report complaints
- Procedures describe likely time frames, review processes and potential outcomes of complaints
- Complaints are handled confidentially
- Processes are reviewed regularly and after complaints are made
- Complaint handling procedures are publicly available
- Staff are offered a variety of learning strategies
- Documents are confidential where required
- Our system follows principles of procedural fairness and natural justice. Family Spirit is committed to addressing issues of concern, complaints or feedback raised by Family Spirit clients, their carers or advocates, stakeholders and service providers
- Each client 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
- Demonstrated continuous improvement in complaints and feedback management by regular review of complaint and feedback policies and procedures, seeking of client views on the accessibility of the complaints management and resolution system, and incorporation of feedback throughout the provider's organisation
- All workers are aware of, trained in, and comply with the required procedures in relation to complaints handling.

Related Quality Management Documents

- FS POL 18.17.01-1 Complaint Management Policy
- FS P18.17.06-1 Complaint Management Procedure
- FS P18.17.07-0 Feedback and Complaint Management CTARS Register Procedure
- FS G18.17.1-0 CHILD AND YOUNG PERSON COMPLAINTS HANDLING GUIDELINES
- FS G18.17.2-1 Complaint Process Checklist
- FS G18.17.3-0 How to Make a Complaint
- FS G18.17.4-0 FAMILY SPIRIT COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT TRAINING
- FS F18.17.04-1 Anonymous Complaints and Feedback Form
- FS F18.17.05-0 Child and Young Person Complaint Form (Staff Use Only)
- FS F18.17.09-1 Complaint Form
- FS F18.17.10-2 Complaint Investigation Case Management Form
- FS T18.17.06-2 Complaint Outcome Letterhead
- FS T18.17.07-2 Complaint Acknowledgement Letter Template
- FS F18.1.14-1 Confidentiality Agreement - Fact Finding, Complaints & Investigations
- FS F18.1.4-1 Complaint Form for Children and Young People 7-12 Years Old

- FS F18.1.5-1 Complaint Form for Children and Young People 13-17 Years Old
- FS F18.3.04-1 Client and Service Complaints
- FS F18.3.05-1 Complaint Management Register

Related External Documents

Legislation/Regulations

- The Community Services (Complaints, Reviews and Monitoring) Act 1993 No 2
- Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998
- Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994
- Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002
- Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988
- NSW Office of the Children's Guardian: Child Safe Standards
- National Standards for Disability Services
- National Disability Insurance Scheme (Complaint Management & Resolution) Rules 2018
- Aged Care Act 1997
- Charter of Aged Care Rights
- Aged Care Quality Standards
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- United Nations Convention on The Rights of the Child
- United Nations Convention on The Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- *Ombudsman Act 1974* (NSW)
- Fair Work Act 2009
- Fair Work Regulations 2009
- NDIS Act 2013
- NDIS Practice Standards
- NDIS Code of Conduct
- National Disability Insurance Scheme (Complaint Management & Resolution) Rules 2018
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW)
- Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017 (NSW)
- Workers Compensation Act 1987 (1987 Act) (NSW)
- Workplace Injury Management and Workers Compensation Act 1998 (NSW)
- Workers Compensation Regulation 2016 (NSW)

References

- Guidelines for Complaints Handling in Organisations, AS/NZS AS10002:2022
- Complaint Handling Framework and Model Policy DRAFT 2015, Ombudsman NSW

- Effective Complaint Management Guidelines: A practical guide to developing a complaint management system and handling complaints | NSW Ombudsman | November 2024
- Public Service Commission, NSW Government
- Better practice guide to complaints handling in aged care services, Aged Care Quality Commission
- NSW Child Safe Standards
- SCHADS Award 2010
- Fair Work Ombudsman | Managing underperformance best practice guide | March 2025
- NDIS Practice Standards
- NSW Health Policy Directive PD2016_040 - Managing for Performance
- NSW Public Sector Performance Development Framework
- SESLHDPD/328 - Framework for Managing Allied Health Staff with Identified Clinical Practice Issues
- National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards: Standard 1 – Clinical Governance
- ISO 45001 – Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems
- ISO 45003 - ISO 45003:2021 Occupational health and safety management — Psychological health and safety at work — Guidelines for managing psychosocial risks
- ISO 9001 Quality Management Systems
- CODE OF PRACTICE MANAGING PSYCHOSOCIAL HAZARDS AT WORK SAFEWORK NSW MAY 2021 (This code of practice on how to manage psychosocial hazards at work is an approved code of practice under section 274 of the New South Wales Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (WHS Act))
- SIRA – Guidelines for workplace return to work programs – March 2021

Approval and Version History

Document Owner : Family Spirit

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Reviewer	: Chief Executive Officer, Family Spirit
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#	APPROVING AUTHORITY	APPROVAL DATE	KEY CHANGES
0	Chief Executive Officer, Family Spirit	Feb 2024	Foundational Document
1	A/Chief Operating Officer	May 2025	Updates, corrections and reformatting.