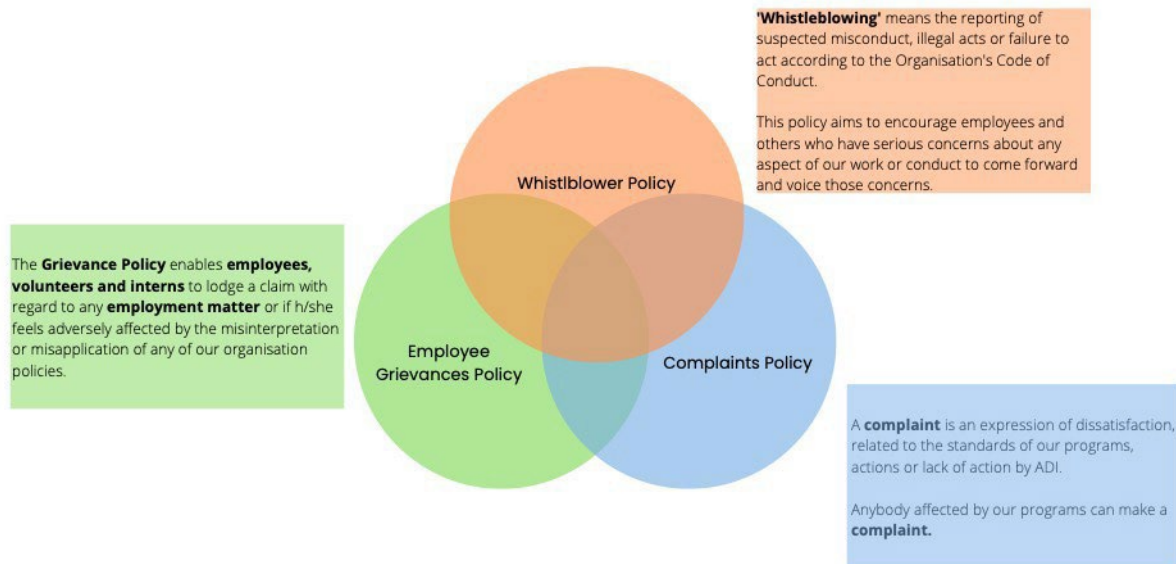


COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE



1. PURPOSE

This policy provides the method by which Australian Doctors International Limited (ADI) will handle and respond to all external complaints. We make clear the value we place on receiving concerns and complaints by whatever means including via our website and we provide clear information on how complaints may be made. ADI is committed to the timely and fair resolution of complaints.

2. SCOPE

This policy covers complaints from community members and all relevant external stakeholders affected by our programs including members of the public, partners and supporters.

This policy and the procedures contained in this document apply to all paid and unpaid Personnel. The diagram above details the relationship between the Complaints Policy, Employee Grievances Policy and Whistleblowing Policy.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

ADI recognises the importance and value of receiving and responding to concerns and complaints and is committed to achieving the highest possible standard we can for our work and to applying a process of continuous improvement. This applies to our development activities, seeking donations and accountability to partners and stakeholders generally. We are committed to working according to, or above, the standard required by the Code of Conduct of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID). Receiving concerns and complaints is one of the most important ways of learning what we need to do to improve our work.

4. DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Complainant	A person, organisation or its representative, making a complaint
Complaint	An expression of dissatisfaction made to an organisation, related to its products or services, or the complaint handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.
Concern	A marked interest or regard for that causes an uncertainty, apprehension or anxiety.
Feedback	Opinions, comments, suggestions and expressions of interest in the products or the complaint handling process.
Inquiry	A request for information or an explanation.
Personnel	Any employees, directors, volunteers, interns or contractors
Stakeholder or interested party	A person or group having an interest in the performance or success of the organisation.

5. OBJECTIVES

The key objectives of this policy are:

- To provide clear information about how and where to make a complaint.
- To ensure that our complaint handling process is as accessible as it is practicable to all potential complainants, including children. To ensure that we respond to complaints in accordance with our predetermined timeframes.
- To address all complaints in an equitable, fair and unbiased manner using evidence submitted by both the complainant and our personnel through the complaint handling process.
- To ensure that access to the complaint handling process is free of charge to complainants.
- To commit to keeping strict privacy and confidentiality in the complaints handling process.
- To ensure that accountability for and reporting on the actions and decisions with respect to complaint handling is clearly established.
- To commit to the continual improvement of the complaint handling process and the quality of programs.

6. POLICY IN ACTION

6.1 Publicising our Policy.

We make clear the value we place on receiving concerns and complaints in all relevant communications. Our website under the 'Feedback and Complaints' page has a prominent form to lodge a complaint, which links to this policy. A bilingual notice advising partners and stakeholders of ways to report complaints or compliments to ADI is displayed in all in-country offices in a culturally appropriate format. It will also be inserted in written material distributed in in-service training manuals. ADI and partners will ensure that beneficiaries are made aware of the policy and process through appropriate methods of communication considering local language and customs.

Where literacy is a constraint, we invite expressions of concern and complaint to be provided verbally. We will take care to give this invitation in a way that is culturally appropriate recognising that in some cultures people require greater encouragement to make a complaint. We will take special care to facilitate complaints from vulnerable populations including children and marginalised groups. If required, we will make use of pictorial means of communication. We ensure that making a complaint to us is as easy as possible. We will take complaints verbally in person, over the phone and by any written means, including email. We will do our very best to assist a complainant to put their complaint in writing or to write it down ourselves as faithfully as we can. We will ensure that all relevant communications explain this and explain our procedures for handling complaints.

6.2 Where and how complaints can be made.

We will receive complaints verbally in person or by telephone and in writing by post, email or online via our website. Where complaints are made verbally, we will ensure our write up of the complaint contains all the information the complainant wishes to provide and if required will engage independent oversight.

Complaints may be made by a friend or advocate of the complainant on their behalf. Where appropriate, some may also arise where we utilise complaint/suggestion boxes. We recognise that in some circumstances complainants may wish to remain anonymous. Because such complaints can alert us to problems that need resolution, we will make the appropriate investigation though clearly it may not be possible to provide a remedy to the complainant.

The email address for complaints is complaints@adi.org.au

Complaints can also be made via our website at <https://www.adi.org.au/feedback-complaints>

6.3 How we will handle complaints

For all complaints we will:

- i. Receive the complaint in a non-judgmental manner and will record the following details:
 - a. The name of the complainant.
 - b. Date, time and location the complaint is received.
 - c. A brief description of the complaint; and
 - d. Acknowledge receipt of the complaint to the complainant.
- ii. Seek from the complainant the outcome(s) they are expecting.
- iii. Make an initial assessment of the severity of the complaint and the urgency of action.
- iv. Clearly explain to the complainant the course of action that will follow.
- v. Assure the complainant that the complaint will receive full attention.
- vi. Give an estimated timeframe or, a date by which we will contact them again.
- vii. Check whether the complainant is satisfied with the proposed action and, if not, advise them of alternatives.
- viii. Ensure the complaint is appropriately addressed as per the procedures in this policy.
- ix. Follow up where necessary and monitor whether the complainant is satisfied.
- x. We will register all complaints outcomes and complainant satisfaction in a complaint register.

6.3 Inquiries, minor complaints, and jurisdictions

We will endeavour to deal immediately with inquiries and minor complaints which are made verbally by telephone or in person. As the extent that is practicable, we will ensure that the inquirer or complainant is satisfied with the information and/or resolution provided.

On receipt of a complaint, we will attempt to determine fairly whether investigation is required or not. If the complainant disputes an assessment that a complaint should not be investigated, the member of staff handling the complaint will refer it to a more senior colleague for review. If such a dispute is unresolvable, we will refer the complainant to Code Committee of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID).

6.4 How we investigate complaints.

- If the complaint is to an employee, that employee will immediately endeavour to resolve the complaint.
- If the complaint is about a employee, the person receiving the complaint will refer the complaint to the immediate line manager of that staff member.
- If the complaint is about the organisation as a whole, an intangible aspect of it, or if the complainant so requests, the complaint will be referred to the CEO.

This process will be tracked in the Complaints Register, accessible only by the General Manager, Finance and Operations.

If the complainant feels their complaint is not adequately addressed, it will be escalated for review in the following order:

- The relevant Staff Member
- That Staff Member's Line Manager
- The CEO
- The Code Committee of ACFID

6.5 Timeframe

We will acknowledge written complaints within 3 working days. We will acknowledge verbal complaints immediately on receipt.

We will aim to resolve complaints as quickly as possible and within 30 days unless there are exceptional circumstances. If a complaint is not resolved within 30 days we will inform the complainant of progress and keep them informed of progress every two weeks.

6.6 Responding to and closing out a complaint

We will communicate our decision on a complaint as soon as is practical. Our communication will be in writing to the complainant in the appropriate language by email and/or post. The complainant will be encouraged to respond and to advise whether they are satisfied with our decision in which case there will be communication with the complainant on their expectations.

Should the complainant advise that they are satisfied with our decision or withdraw the complaint, we will close the complaint. Should we receive no feedback within 14 days we will assume the complainant is satisfied with the outcome and close the complaint.

6.7 Outcomes of complaints

We will ensure that all relevant personnel are informed of the outcomes of complaints and the implications for our activities, procedures and processes.

We will take all required remedial action. We will be prepared to change the way in which we operate and improve or undertake further training of employees or volunteers. Where needed we will counsel or discipline board directors, employees or volunteers.

Where appropriate we will consult and take advice from ACFID and/or other relevant regulatory/enforcement authorities.

6.8 Confidentiality

We will not reveal a complainant's name or personal details to anyone in or outside our organisation other than staff involved in handling the complaint, without first having obtained the complainant's permission.

6.9 Reporting regarding complaints

Complex and/or major complaints will be escalated to the CEO or his/her nominated delegate for instruction/action.

Information on complaints received will be compiled for reporting to the Executive Team, and for Board information. An analysis will be included in the complaints report.

7. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

On an ongoing basis we will monitor the effectiveness of our complaint handling and make improvements to our working model as appropriate.

We will maintain data collection on complaints for the purpose of identifying systemic issues and trends for the purpose of enhancing information management and program implementation.

We will undertake specific training and retraining of staff to foster better complaint handling practices and we will conduct an internal review of the effectiveness of our complaint handling every year.



- Complaint is made to "first contact" staff member
- For minor complaints, "first contact" staff member attempts immediate resolution. If resolution is satisfactory to complainant, no further action required.
- If complainant is not satisfied with resolution, (complainant or) "first contact" staff member refers complaint to relevant line manager via email
- For serious complaints, "first contact" staff member immediately refers complaint CEO or his/her nominated delegate via email
- Information on complaints received will be compiled for reporting to the Executive Team. and for Board information



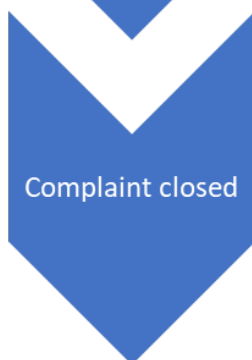
- Complaint is logged in Complaints Registry.
- Written complaint acknowledged within three working days.
- Responding staff member responds to complainant with resolution within 30 days. If complaint has not been responded to within 30 days, we will inform the complainant of progress and keep them informed of progress every two weeks.



- Complainant is provided with written response to complaint. Complainant has 14 days to provide feedback.
- If complainant is satisfied with the initial response, the complaint is closed.
- If the complainant does not respond by 14 days, the complaint is closed.
- If the complainant is not satisfied with the initial response, the complaint is referred upward in the order specified in Section 6 of the Policy.



- If the complainant is satisfied with the subsequent response following upwards referral, the resolution proposed in that response will be considered final.
- if the complainant remains unsatisfied after the upwards referral is followed to its' entirety, the complainant will be advised their next course of action is to complain to the Code Committee of ACFID.



- The complaint will be clearly identified as "Closed" in the Complaints Registry.