

Complaints and Grievances Policy

INTRODUCTION This document provides information on handling grievances at MLI, including how to make a complaint, how to deal with a complaint / grievance and how to support others through the grievance process. It is inevitable that conflict can occur in the workplace. It is important that there are established procedures to deal with such occurrences quickly to protect the people involved and also to protect our organisation.

DEFINITIONS **Complaint:** An expression of concern, dissatisfaction or frustration with the quality or delivery of service, a policy or procedure, or the conduct of another person.

Grievance: An actual or perceived wrong considered as grounds for complaint.

Harassment: Any form of ongoing behaviour that is not welcome, not asked for or not returned, and that offends, intimidates or humiliates a person. It includes sexual harassment.

Workplace Bullying: Repeated behaviour towards an employee by another person, including the employee's supervisor, a co-worker, Committee member or a member of the community that:

- Is unwelcome and unsolicited;
- The person considers to be offensive, intimidating, humiliating or threatening; and
- A reasonable person would consider to be offensive, humiliating, intimidating or threatening.

POLICY Any person can make a complaint. This can include staff, volunteers, Committee members, community members or other stakeholders.

While some conflicts will be resolved by an informal discussion between the parties, others will need to implement the procedure for successful resolution, as outlined in the following section of this Policy.

- PROCEDURE**
1. If a complaint is reported as a verbal grievance about minor matters, ideally this should be resolved informally with the relevant person
 2. For informal complaints, the Executive Officer may provide initial advice on how the issue is to be dealt with, and assist with resolution if appropriate
 3. If either party feels that the complaint needs to be formalised, the complaint must be lodged within 20 business days of the source of the cause or trigger for the complaint
 4. Once a formal complaint is lodged, the Executive Officer or Board should determine whether it is a matter that can be resolved informally, or dealt with by the Board
 5. If it is determined that the matter should be dealt with by the Board, the Chair will conduct initial consultations with the relevant parties involved
 6. After the initial consultations, the Board will convene a meeting of the parties involved. All parties are entitled to have a support person present if desired. This may include the Chair, or another member of the Board
 7. Detailed minutes of the meeting/s, together with the original complaint and other documentation, will be kept securely by MLI
 8. All parties to a complaint must treat the matter confidentially. This means that all parties ensure that information is restricted to those engaged in the resolution
 9. The person managing the complaint (either the EO for informal processes, or the Chair for formal processes) is responsible for monitoring the well-being of all parties involved in, or affected by, the complaint
 10. Complaints should be dealt with as quickly as possible. It is reasonable that informal attempts to resolve a complaint should take place within one week. Formal procedures may take longer to resolve, but the process of resolution should be commenced within one week.

RESPONSIBILITIES It is the responsibility of the Chair to ensure that:

- All Board members and senior staff are aware of this Policy; and
- Complaints and grievances are handled respectfully, confidentially and in accordance with the above Policy and Procedure.

AUTHORISATION:

This version was approved on:

This version takes effect on:

Authored by:

Mrs Nicole Maher

Authorised by: