

Complaints, Grievances and Feedback Policy

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1. Policy Objective

This policy and procedure aim to:

- Ensure that the Zoe Support environment both in person and online is harmonious and free from intimidation, harassment and other unfair treatment
- Promote clear, honest and open communication
- Provide a timely and effective mechanism for staff, volunteers and clients to express their concerns or make complaints when they occur so that options for a resolution can be identified as soon as possible
- Ensure concerns and complaints are handled impartially, justly, confidentially and with the appropriate sensitivity
- Define the responsibilities and rights of staff, volunteers, visitors and managers in resolving concerns and complaints.

Zoe Support Australia is committed to listening to the voices of its clients, volunteers and employees to improve its services and working environments. This policy outlines the principles which support how Zoe Support Australia receives and manages feedback from clients (current and former), volunteers, employees, community members and stakeholders.

Effective collaboration with each other, clients, other services, community and government is valued in developing positive partnerships. We move forward with the community in determining and servicing its needs, acknowledging strengths and working towards improving outcomes for all.

2. Governing Legislation

- DHHS Human Services Standards
- QIC Health and Community Services Standards

3. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, clients, board members and operations of Zoe Support Australia.

4. Types of feedback

Feedback can be a person/persons making a complaint, compliment, comment or suggestion.

Each of these forms of feedback can;

- Be informal or formal
- Be provided by a person that can identify themselves or remain anonymous
- Can be provided by a current or past client or family member, volunteer, employee, community members and other stakeholders
- Can be made in relation to service delivery, the conduct of an employee or volunteer or other areas of operation of the organisation

If your feedback is in relation to the safety and wellbeing of a child, please refer to Zoe Support Australia's Commitment to Children's Safety Policy for further information on these processes.

4.1. Collection of feedback or complaints

Zoe Support Australia works proactively to ensure that clients, volunteers, employees, and stakeholders are provided opportunities and encouraged to give feedback. This process is summarised through the information booklet that is provided to clients as well as information displayed at each centre and on the website.

In detail, for complaints this process is:

- 1) The complainant makes notes about the details of their complaint (eg. time, place, what happened, who's involved, other witnesses)
- 2) If appropriate, the complainant takes their complaint directly to the person involved (eg. Zoe Support staff member).
 - a. This step is skipped if there are reasons why it should not be taken directly to the person. (eg. it's too serious, complainant feels too emotional, or complainant feels it is not appropriate to discuss directly).
 - b. The key contact people in Zoe Support at this step are the staff member involved and their manager. Their roles during this step are:
 - Receiving the complaint
 - Acknowledging the complaint
 - Assessing/investigating the complaint within the context of their role
 - Where possible, resolving the complaint and providing a satisfactory outcome to the complainant
 - Advising people of their right to make a formal written complaint where appropriate
 - Providing advice and assistance to people who have a complaint.
 - Manager Completing Complaints register (*Appendix 3*)

- 3) If a satisfactory outcome is not reached in Step 2, or it needs to be skipped, the complainant takes their complaint to different Zoe Support staff member that they trust.
 - a. The key contact people in Zoe Support at this step are the staff member approached and their manager. Their roles during this step are:
 - Receiving the complaint
 - Acknowledging the complaint
 - Assessing/investigating the complaint within the context of their role
 - Where possible, resolving the complaint and providing a satisfactory outcome to the complainant
 - Advising people of their right to make a formal written complaint where appropriate
 - Manager Completing Complaints register ([Appendix 3](#))
 - Providing advice and assistance to people who have a complaint
- 4) If a satisfactory outcome is not reached in Step 3, the complainant completes the Zoe Support Complaint/Appeal Form ([Appendix 2](#)) and sends it to the CEO. This begins Zoe Support’s formal complaint review process, leading to a full investigation and a decision by the Zoe Support CEO and board directors.
- 5) If a satisfactory outcome is not reached in Step 4, the complainant will be advised that they may take their complaint to the following external authorities. Additionally, you can refer a complaint at any time.
 - **The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing**
www.dffh.vic.gov.au
 - **Disability Services Commissioner**
1800 677 342 [Home - Disability Services Commissioner \(odsc.vic.gov.au\)](http://odsc.vic.gov.au)
 - **Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner**
www.ovic.vic.gov.au
 - **Commission for Children and Young People**
1300 782 978 www.cryp.vic.gov.au
 - **Office of the Public Advocate**
1300 309 337 www.publicadvocate.vic.gov.au
 - **National Mental Health Commission**
www.mentalhealthcommission.gov.au

In detail, for feedback this process is:

- 1) Tell us what you think forms
 - The client information booklet includes a ‘Tell us what you think’ section. This can be completed and posted to 278 Deakin Avenue Mildura 3500.
 - Tell us what you think forms can also be found at each Zoe Centre notice boards
 - A response to the complement or suggestion is followed up with person who it was provided by, if requested.
 - If form is completed for a complaint follow detailed complaints process as outlined above.
- 2) Survey Monkey

- At the end of each term online surveys are to be distributed
- The program manager will provide all survey feedback to staff at a meeting the following month.
- All feedback is discussed at staff meeting and changes are made if required.
- Follow up on what changes have been made and why changes may not have been made are recorded.
- Client focus groups and service and program evaluations are also carried out throughout the year
- Reports following feedback and processes carried out are provided to management and board.

4.2 Recording of feedback

When a feedback or complaint has been made to Zoe Support Australia management accurate written records must be kept of all communications that form part of the complaint process. This includes notes taken of conversations between the parties which relate to management of the complaint and all decisions made in relation to the complaint. All records must be marked “Confidential.”

Only the people who are directly involved in the complaint, or in helping to resolve it, are to have access to information about the complaint. All documentation of complaints managed under this Policy will be held by the Zoe Support Manager. Complaint documentation is to be kept separate from personnel or client files, and these should be annotated only where a person has had a penalty imposed as result of disciplinary action as an outcome under this Policy.

All records and information collected under this Policy will be kept confidentially according to the Zoe Support Privacy Policy.

5. Version Control Information

Drafted by: Merinda Robertson

Responsible person: Appointed policy officer

Version issue date: 24 04 2023

Original approval date: 31 03 2016 **

Scheduled review date: January 2026

**The title of this policy has changed, it was formally known as the Complaints Policy however feedback is not always a complaint so a more appropriate term to use in the title.

Appendix 1 Complaints / Appeal Flow chart process

TIPS

Write notes about your complaint (eg. Time, place, what happened, who's involved)

Skip Step 2 if there are reasons why it should not be taken directly to the person. (eg it's too serious, you feel too emotional, or you feel it is not appropriate to discuss directly).

Remember that you may be helped by a support person you trust. (eg. Friend, parent/guardian, carer, youth worker, educator) at any time during this process.

STEPS

I have a COMPLAINT/APPEAL about Zoe Support Australia

Complaint / Appeal taken to the person involved (eg. Zoe Support staff member)

SATISFACTORY OUTCOME

NO SATISFACTORY OUTCOME

Complete a complaint/appeal form and send to the info@zoesupport.com.au, or 278 Deakin Avenue, Mildura VIC 3500. This begins a formal complaint review process leading to a full investigation.

SATISFACTORY OUTCOME

NO SATISFACTORY OUTCOME

Complaint/Appeal taken to the Zoe Support Board Directors, for further review and determination on the matter.

SATISFACTORY OUTCOME

NO SATISFACTORY OUTCOME

Complaint/Appeal taken to one of the external authorities listed under 4.1 of the Complaints Grievances and Feedback Policy. Additionally, you can refer a complaint at any time.

FINAL DECISION PROVIDED BY EXTERNAL AUTHORITY

Appendix 2: Complaint / Appeal Form

Please complete this form and submit to the Zoe Support CEO: info@zoesupport.com.au

Contact Person: _____ Date: / /

Best way to contact you: _____

Please tick one of the following boxes:

- I am unhappy with a service provided by Zoe Support (Complaint)
- I disagree with a decision that has been made by Zoe Support (Appeal)
- Other: _____

Details of complaint/appeal:

How would you like your complaint/appeal to be resolved?

Please attach any additional information that you think will assist in investigating your complaint/appeal.

Your complaint/appeal will now be formally investigated by Zoe Support CEO, including the Board Directors.

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 3 Complaints Register

Complaints Register

Complaints Register						
Date of complaint	Complainant	Nature of complaint	External notification required	Status	Date Actioned	Notes
	<input type="checkbox"/> Service user		<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Being investigated		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff member		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Resolution proposed		
	<input type="checkbox"/> volunteer		Date of notification:	<input type="checkbox"/> Resolved		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Governance board member			<input type="checkbox"/> Remains unresolved		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Family/carer					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other agency					