

Capricorn Citizen Advocacy

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Policy number:	5.0.1.0	Approved by Management Committee:	27 th March 2024
Version:	5.0	Signed off by Executive:	27 th March 2024
Responsible person:	Coordinator	Scheduled Review Date:	27 th March 2027

Purpose

Everyone who has a relationship with Capricorn Citizen Advocacy has the right to expect fair and just treatment, and to complain if they consider that this has not occurred.

Procedure

This procedure is applicable in the following circumstances:

- A complaint about an Advocate by a Protégé
- A complaint about a member of staff or a member of the Management Committee
- A complaint by a member of the public or representative of another organisation, about Capricorn Citizen Advocacy.

All people registering a complaint will be thanked for bringing the matter to the organisation's attention and advised of the following process:

1. Any person involved in a complaint is welcome to have a representative assist them with all aspects of the process.
2. Complaints are taken seriously by Capricorn Citizen Advocacy and handled within speedy timeframes.
3. Upon receipt of any complaint, the complainant will be offered a copy of [5.0.0 Complaints Policy](#), [5.0.1.1 Complaints Form](#), and this procedure (in appropriate formats) and will be asked to discuss the matter directly with the person with whom they have the complaint.
4. If the complainant requires assistance to do this, such assistance will be offered by Capricorn Citizen Advocacy, and will usually involve a member of the Management Committee providing this assistance.
5. The complainant may choose NOT to discuss the matter further with the person about whom they are lodging the complaint – that is their choice.
6. All complaints, regardless of how or by whom they are received, are to be referred immediately to the Coordinator who will consult with the President of the Management Committee regarding action to be taken. If the complainant perceives that either the Coordinator or President has a conflict of interest, they may choose to take the complaint to another member of the Committee.

7. If the complaint is a criminal matter, then the complainant will be advised to contact the Police immediately, and the person who receives the complaint is to immediately notify the President of the Management Committee, and if unable to do so, should notify the Vice President or another executive member of the Management Committee.
8. If the complaint is not readily resolved, then the President is to call a special meeting of the Management Committee to discuss the complaint.
9. The Management Committee will convene a Complaints Panel which shall be charged with seeking resolution of the complaint and carrying through the decisions of the Management Committee.
10. The Complaints Panel shall comprise a minimum of two people and a maximum of four people. At least one person must be independent from the program, and the others shall be members of the Management Committee or persons appointed by the Management Committee (all must be free from any conflict of interest). The Chairperson of the Complaints Panel shall be a member of the Management Committee and may be male or female if there is an actual or perceived preference on the part of the complainant.
11. The Complaints Panel is to keep the President informed of its actions and the progress made towards resolution of the complaint.
12. The procedure shall be as informal as possible and shall allow the complainant to be empowered to participate in the process of resolving the complaint. In that regard, the Complaints Panel charged with resolving the complaint shall, as far as possible, avoid discussion of the matter in the absence of the complainant who shall, in any event, be kept informed by the Complaints Panel of any matter concerning the complaint.
13. Complainants will be notified (by phone or email if possible) of the receipt of their complaint as soon as possible after its receipt (but within 3 working days), and at that time advised what action is in progress, along with an approximate time when they should receive an initial response.
14. The complainant will again be notified of the attempts made for resolution within 5 working days after having received the complaint, or within 2 working days after a special Management Committee meeting has been convened. If the complaint cannot be resolved within this timeframe, the complainant will continue to be informed of the steps being taken to achieve a resolution, in periods not exceeding 5 working days.
15. Complainants will be kept informed of all action taken by Capricorn Citizen Advocacy in addressing the complaint (where this does not impinge privacy laws and/or is not a conflict of interest) and will be notified of the final outcome.
16. If the complaint is not resolved, the Complaints Panel may refer the complainant on to an independent body e.g. Dispute Resolution Centre of Qld, Human Rights Commission of Queensland, Queensland Police Service or the Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors.
17. The complainant is responsible for any costs incurred in accessing any external process.
18. A "Record of Complaint" will be kept about every complaint. The Complaints Panel has responsibility for documenting all efforts and action related to the complaint, unless the Coordinator or President has handled the complaint without the need to convene such Complaints Panel. All records related to complaints will be securely stored with this "Record of Complaint" at the office. See [Form 5.0.1.2 Complaint Record Form](#).
19. The Management Committee is to be kept fully informed of all progress made towards resolving complaints and shall retain its ultimate right to do all things possible to achieve a satisfactory outcome to any complaint.
20. The complaints procedure shall be explained to all new staff, Advocates, Protégés and members of the Management Committee and regular refreshers shall ensure these parties have current knowledge of the policy and procedures.

Timeframes for Dealing with Complaints

Stage of Complaints Procedure	Required Timeframe
1. Complainants will be notified (by phone if possible) of the receipt of their complaint as soon as possible after its receipt and advised what action is in progress, along with an approximate time of when they should receive an initial response.	Within 3 working days
2. Complainant will be notified of the attempts made for resolution after having received the complaint.	Within 5 working days
3. Complainant will be notified of the attempts made for resolution after a special Management Committee meeting has been convened.	Within 2 working days
4. If the complaint cannot be resolved within the timeframes stated in 2 and 3 above, the complainant will continue to be informed of the steps being taken to achieve a resolution.	In periods not exceeding 5 working days.

Related Documents

- 1. [Policy 5.0.0 Complaints Policy](#)
- 2. [Form 5.0.1.1 Complaint Form](#)
- 3. [Form 5.0.1.2. Complaint Record Form](#)

References

- 1. [Human Rights Act 2019 \(Qld\)](#)
- 2. [Fair Work Act 2009 \(Cth\)](#)

Ratification

This policy was adopted by Capricorn Citizen Advocacy’s Management Committee at its meeting held on 27 / 03 / 2024.



SIGNED:
President

27 / 03 / 2024
(Date)



SIGNED:
Secretary

27 / 03 / 2024
(Date)