



Complaints & Grievance Policy

Puckapunyal & District Neighbourhood Centre aims to create a safe and supportive environment.

In the event where a student, Community Member, staff member, volunteer, etc. has a concern about the behaviour of another person at the Puckapunyal & District Neighbourhood Centre, it is important to have in place a clear, structured process for reporting and resolving the problem.

Grievance is defined as - a concern about the behaviour of another person, this can include harassment of any form such as sexist or racist language, physical, emotional or verbal abuse.

Legislative Context

All Victorian organisations, including the Puckapunyal & District Neighbourhood Centre, must comply with Commonwealth and State human rights legislation and directions such as:

- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Racial Hatred Act 1995
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984
- Age Discrimination Act 2004
- Equal Opportunity Act 2004 (Vic)

The major purpose of these Acts is to eliminate discrimination against people because of their disability, race, gender or age.

This policy is based on the principles that:

- All should have the opportunity to raise issues and all issues are recorded and addressed as appropriate
- A process should exist to determine whether a grievance is justified
- When a grievance is not upheld, an appeal process should be available to an independent authority
- All should be confident about the grievance and appeal process available to them.

Procedures

If you have a problem, grievance or are unhappy about something that is happening at the PDNC, in the first instance try to resolve the issue with the person if you can. If this is not possible or unsuccessful:

- Talk to your tutor / immediate supervisor
- Be clear about what you are unhappy about
- Suggest some ways that The Neighbourhood Centre can help
- Be open minded about how the problem can be resolved

- Complete a Complaints Form
1. If you are still unhappy, you could write to, or make an appointment to meet with, the PDNC Manager
 - You will be contacted within 7 workdays by the Manager to discuss and try to resolve your issue.
 - Explain why you are unhappy with the way the problem was dealt with
 - Be clear about what you are unhappy about
 - Say what you think could help resolve the problem
 - Be prepared to try different options
 - Complete an Incident Report, if you haven't already done so.
 - You will then receive a letter outlining your options within 10 – 60 days depending on how complicated your issue is.
 2. If you are still unhappy with the Managers suggestions or actions or Centre Manager is not able to resolve the grievance and/or remedy the cause of the dispute within 14 days of first being given notice of it:
 - You can put your problem or concern in writing and send it to the Committee of Management, addressed to the Chairperson
 - The Chairperson will send you a written response
 3. The Committee of Management should then seek to resolve the grievance and remedy the cause of the dispute. Without prejudice to either party, study/work should be continued normally in accordance with the practice existing before the grievance, while the matter in dispute is being dealt with in accordance with this procedure.
 4. If you are unhappy with the Chairperson's response or the Committee of management is not able to resolve the grievance and/or remedy the cause of the dispute within 14 days of receiving the referral, it shall be referred to an appropriate third party agreed to by both parties who will endeavour to resolve the issue as soon as practicable by conciliation.
 5. (Students) If you are still unhappy and you no longer want to continue studying at the PDNC, we will endeavour to assist you to find a suitable course of study elsewhere.
 6. A grievance is regarded as resolved if:
 - a. it is withdrawn by the student / Community Member who made the complaint; or
 - b. written agreement is reached resolving the matter; or
 - c. a final decision is made by the conciliator
 7. As a result of the grievance procedure, counselling or disciplinary action may be taken against parties documented in the written grievance or against the complainant if the grievance is proven to be malicious or unwarranted.
 8. If your grievance is with the Manager, write to the Committee of Management.



Complaints Form

[Please complete the details below and attach all relevant documentation]

Name: _____

Postal address: _____

Telephone No: _____ Email address: _____

Details of Complaint

When did the incident occur? Date: _____ Time: _____ am/pm

Persons Involved:

Where did it occur?

What were the circumstances?

Description of Incident

General

Were there any witnesses? Yes No

[if "Yes", please complete details below]

Name of witness:

Postal address:

Telephone No: _____ Email address: _____
