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APPLICATION/SCOPE:	Entire Organisation		

Preamble

This policy is designed to provide information to employees, clients, stakeholders and the broader community on the way Bega Garnbirringu Health Services (Bega) manages complaints and the processes we adopt to ensure consistency and transparency when dealing with complaints.

Definitions

Complaint – an expression of dissatisfaction, made verbally or in writing, about the standards of service Bega provides, actions of our staff that are contrary to our Code of Conduct, or lack of action by Bega to provide our core services and functions. Complaints can affect an individual or group of people.

Complaints are not requests for services or information, nor are they appeals on decisions made by the Board or Executive Management of Bega (refer to the Internal Review policy for more information on appeals and reviews). Complaints must be legitimate and in no way be submitted so as to falsely disparage the organisation, our Board or employees or cause a nuisance.

Policy Statement

Wherever possible a complaint will be dealt with immediately or as soon as practically possible to alleviate any issues or provide clarification. All parties involved in a complaint should aim to achieve mutually agreeable outcomes to ensure an equitable outcome for all.

Bega is committed to managing complaints in an equitable way, as such we treat all complaints with due regard and ensure we meet a fair and just outcome wherever possible. All complaints are managed by the Chief Operations Officer. Where a review of a decision is required, these will be escalated for the Chief Executive Officer to manage.

Policy Guidelines

Bega is committed to minimising the potential for complaints and aims to provide a high level of customer service. If, however, an event occurs where inappropriate behaviours or actions by the organisation or our employees are legitimate, we will ensure we address complaints with due regard to their seriousness. We therefore ask that before submitting a complaint, that you ensure the complaint is legitimate and presented in a way that is not biased or is solely to cause nuisance or disruption to the employees.



Bega is committed to handling all complaints in an expedient and professional manner and as such, all complaints are kept confidential to the office of the Executive Management.

We also note that whilst we do everything we can to control social media comments, we have no control over social media platforms that are not managed by our organisation. As such, any complaints relating to personal blogs, websites, social media or other platforms that are related to personal matters outside work, we ask that you deal with these directly with the offending parties or seek advice from the appropriate authorities.

The Chief Operations Officer (COO) is responsible for managing complaints in the organisation. In the absence of the COO, all complaints will be redirected to the Human Resource Officer (HRO). As such, any review of decisions made regarding a complaint has recourse for internal review with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Where a complaint involves an Executive Manager, these complaints will be addressed by the Board of Directors.

Impartiality

Only people directly involved with a complaint are privy to the contents or nature of a complaint. Each party is reminded as to their commitment for confidentiality with the matter. Bega maintains Privacy and Confidentiality policies to support this process. The COO and/or CEO decides about the extent of information that needs to be shared or divulged from a complaint before sharing that information. Where strict confidence is requested, permission will be sought before disclosing any information.

No bias can be considered during a complaint handling process. As such all relevant information to a complaint will be assessed and investigated on its own merits, as to the nature of the allegations made, before a decision/resolution is made.

Victim Protection

Any persons or parties providing a complaint will be protected as far as practically possible, from victimisation. Any employee found to be victimising any person as a result of a complaint will be disciplined in accord with organisation policies.

BREACH OF POLICY

If an employee does not meet the expectations set out in this policy, they may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the organisation's **Performance Counselling** and **Disciplinary** policies up to and including possible termination of their employment.