



FEELS LIKE HOME SUPPORT SERVICES

CORE MODULE: COMPLAINTS
AND FEEDBACK

Legal name: Feels Like Home Support Services Pty Ltd

Business/trading name: Feels Like Home Support Services

Head office: Suite 303 – 7 Clunies Ross Court, Eight Mile Plains, QLD

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Email: info@flhss.com.au

Website: www.flhss.com.au

Rev.1

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COMPLAINTS AND FEEDBACK POLICY & PROCEDURE

POLICY

This policy and procedure aim to demonstrate the organisation's commitment to deal with all feedback, including suggestions and complaints, fairly, promptly, and confidentially. Feels Like Home Support Services will provide feedback promptly and document this feedback following due process to reach mutually satisfactory and agreed outcomes.

This policy is about how the organisation encourages and collects feedback from service users or other stakeholders and manages complaints about its services or activities.

Complaints and feedback are the elements of our Integrated Governance Model. Feels Like Home Support Services has an effective complaint, compliment and feedback handling system that addresses the principles of visibility and accessibility, responsiveness, assessment and investigation, feedback, and continuous improvement.

Feels Like Home Support Services manages feedback effectively to identify improvement areas.

It is the policy of Feels Like Home Support Services to create an environment where complaints and concerns, compliments, and suggestions (feedback) are welcomed and viewed as an opportunity for acknowledgement and improvement. As a Participant exercises Choice and Control and is encouraged to do so, we will ensure that individuals always feel they have the right to make comments and complaints and are encouraged to exercise their right.

The culture we create is a "blame-free" and resolution-focused culture, respecting an individual's right to privacy and confidentiality. Please also refer to Whistleblower Policy for details on protecting those who make complaints about breaches of the Code of Conduct.

It is acknowledged that such comments and complaints are vital to review internal performance and processes and to seek continuous improvement of services as we strive to achieve our care commitment. Participants, families, and/or other stakeholders may submit compliments, complaints and/or feedback forms about Feels Like Home Support Services supports or services, staff, and/or contractors.

Our policy is to follow procedural fairness and natural justice principles and comply with the requirements under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018.

This policy applies to all staff, participants, stakeholders, and the community.



DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Compliment	an expression of praise, encouragement or gratitude about an individual staff member, a team, or a service.
Complainant	a person who makes a complaint, or has a complaint made on their behalf.
Complaint	an expression of dissatisfaction made to or about an organisation, related to its products, services, staff or the handling of a complaint, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.
Procedural Fairness	a principal that requires a fair and proper procedure be used when making a decision.

PROCEDURE

All complaints must be handled fairly and without reprisal or fear of retribution.

All interested party has the right to give their feedback/complaints anonymously. If such an event occurs, the provider will treat the information confidentially.

- by email to: info@flhss.com.au
- by phone on 1300 035 477, although the person making the complaint may have to follow up with a written complaint/
- in writing and post to, Suite 303 – 7 Clunies Ross Court, Eight Mile Plains, QLD 4113

At any time, people can make a complaint about NDIS service providers or the support they provide to the NDIS Commission. Staff must support people making a complaint about the NDIA to contact the Agency or Commonwealth Ombudsman, where this is required.

Information for clients and stakeholders

Feels Like Home Support Services complaints and feedback procedure will be documented for clients and stakeholders in our Complaints Brochure and Easy Read format for our Participants. These are made available and are part of the Welcome Pack on admission.

On admission, all clients will be informed of their rights and responsibilities regarding complaints and appeals at the earliest possible stage of their involvement with the organisation.



The orientation and Welcome Package material will contain information on the following:

1. How to make a complaint or lodge an appeal, including an anonymous complaint
2. Contact person for lodging a complaint or appeal.
3. How the organisation will deal with the complaint or appeal, the steps involved and the timelines
4. The rights of the complainant to an advocate, support person or interpreter
5. How the person will be informed about the outcome of their complaint or appeal
6. How to make a complaint to an external body including contact details

Complaint Handling

Complaints received by the Feels Like Home Support Services will be handled in the following manner:

Within one working day, all complaints will be recorded on a Complaints, Comment and Compliment form by the complainant or member of staff receiving the complaint.

- Within three working days, the complaint will be forwarded to the Director or delegate.
- If the complaint is about a staff member, it is to be referred to the Director immediately, and the Director will ensure the details are gathered and recorded in writing.
- The Director will record details of all complaints in the Complaints Register and allocate a suitable investigating officer unless the complaint is regarding the Director
- A letter acknowledging the complaint was received will be sent to the person making the complaint
- If the complaint is regarding the Director, details are to be recorded by the person receiving the complaint and forwarded to the Chair of the Company's Board within one working day. The Board will be convened to ensure a full investigation is undertaken.
- In instances when the complaint relates to suspected or actual assault, abuse, neglect or other criminal behaviour, the Director will be informed immediately, and the appropriate investigative department will be informed.
- The allocated investigating officer (usually a Service Manager) or Director will commence an investigation of the complaint within one working day, if that is required
- The Director will keep the person making the complaint in the loop on all matters.
- The Complaint will be managed efficiently, compassionately and within the time frame specified.

The investigating officer will contact the complainant within two working days of receiving the complaint and:

- Clarify and document the nature of the complaint or concern and the resolution sought by the complainant
- Explain the complaints procedure, individual's rights and what to expect
- Explain their right to an advocate
- Document all information on the Complaint Investigation Form
- The investigating officer will interview the involved parties and develop a course of remedial action for the Director to approve.
- When the plan of action has been approved the investigating officer is to inform the complainant of the remedial action within 10 working days of meeting with the complainant.
- Prior to a formal response being given to the person making the complaint, the Director will meet with the person and explain the outcome.



- The Director will ensure the complainant is also informed of the final outcome in writing using the Outcome of Complaint Letter and advised of their right to take the matter to the Board or raise it with the relevant external bodies.
- If either the complainant or other parties involved in the complaint are unsatisfied with the result or want the matter dealt with further, the matter will be taken to the Board of the Company.
- When the complaint cannot be resolved internally external mediation will be promoted.
- All current complaints resolved and unresolved will be tabled in a non-identifying summary form at the next Management Meeting to inform of any potential problems.
- If the person making the complaint is happy with the outcome, the matter will be finalised.
- Feels Like Home Support Services will ask for feedback from the person who made the complaint, at approximately 1 month after the matter has closed. This is to ascertain their satisfaction at the way in which the complaint was handled.

Appealing the Outcome of the Complaint n appeal

If the person making the complaint is unsatisfied with the outcome, information will be provided on the 'next steps' that can be taken concerning the matter.

Clients or their advocates may appeal if they disagree with a decision made by the organisation or by a staff member. An appeal should be made in writing on the internet, via email, using Dropbox or in person.

Complaints Escalation and Dispute Resolution

Where a complaint about Feels Like Home Support Services is made to the NDIS Commission, all staff must comply with any orders or requests made by the NDIS Commission; assist in any resolution process or inquiry undertaken by the NDIS Commission; and ensure the complainant or a person with disability affected by the complaint are not adversely affected or fear retribution because a complaint has been made by them or on their behalf.

PROCEDURE FOR APPEALS MANAGEMENT

Any staff member may be a recipient of a complaint, and is responsible for:

Receiving the complaint:

Listening to the complainant, acknowledging the concern raised, and explaining the next steps to the complainant. Depending on the type and severity of the complaint, either discussing with the complainant an agreed-upon resolution (for smaller matters) or referring the complaint to Director for further investigation and action. The Director will be responsible for:

- Processing the appeal which includes:
 - registering the appeal in the Complaints Register as an appeal.
 - informing the complainant that their complaint has been received and providing them with information about the process and time frame



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At this point, the Director will ask the person making the Complaint what their desired outcome would be. If the Director feels this outcome cannot be met, the person making the Complaint will be given External complaint mechanisms.

Record Keeping

Copies of all correspondence will be kept in a secure location, and any sensitive correspondence must be password protected. The complaints register, files will be confidential, and access is restricted to the Director or their delegate.

TRAINING PROCEDURES

Staff will be trained on the complaint's management procedures during their induction and as part of ongoing refresher training. Feels Like Home Support Services will utilise Induction Modules to ensure staff have been orientated to the Complaints and Feedback process.

From time to time, as resources allow, Managers and relevant staff will undergo training for complaints management and resolution to support clients throughout the complaint process and appropriately respond to complaints empathetically. This will include open communication strategies such as acknowledging the grievance without being defensive and apologising while accepting responsibility for what occurred.

Evaluation and Learning

A statistical summary of complaints and appeals will be created using the Complaints and Feedback Register. This will be reviewed each month. Learnings will inform improvements and staff development topics.

EXTERNAL COMPLAINTS BODY – NDIS COMMISSION

NDIS: Ph: 1800 035 544 (free call from landlines) or TTY 133 677.

Complaints about the NDIA should be directed to the Agency itself or the Commonwealth Ombudsman.

- Complaints to the Commonwealth Ombudsman about the NDIA can be lodged:
- by phone on 1300 362 072
- online at www.ombudsman.gov.au.

Complaints to the NDIA can be lodged:

- by phone on 1800 800 110; and
- by email to feedback@ndis.gov.au

Help with Interpreter Services: Interpreters can be arranged by calling 131 450 Translating and Interpreters Service - <https://www.ndis.gov.au/understanding/language-interpreting-services>

National Relay Service and ask for 1800 035 544

Auslan Services Australia Telephone [1300 AUSLAN](tel:1300AUSLAN)



Completing a complaint form. -

<https://forms.business.gov.au/smartforms/servlet/SmartForm.html?formCode=PRD00-OCF>

FEEDBACK

In addition to addressing the specific complaint, the organisation will utilise the information for feedback into the organisation's continuous improvement cycle.

Staff will be educated about the complaint's procedure, their role and how to support participants and carers with making complaints. Education will occur when staff commence working at Company and periodically through staff training and the staff newsletter.

Feedback is "any comments or compliments made about any aspects of the services provided by Feels Like Home Support Services (including the actions of an employee, volunteer or persons otherwise engaged by Feels Like Home Support Services)".

Feedback may lead to Feels Like Home Support Services reviewing and adapting an aspect of service or may not require any action beyond acknowledging the feedback and passing on details to relevant parties.

Feedback will be recorded on the Complaints, Compliments and Feedback form by the person providing the feedback or the member of staff receiving the information.

The information will then be forwarded to the people involved, Service Manager and Director.

The Director will record the details on the relevant register and decide what action is required, if any.

If the comment is of a negative nature, it may be necessary to implement the complaints procedure above.

Compliments will also be communicated at staff meetings to ensure staff are recognised and examples of best practices identified and acknowledged.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

Feels Like Home Support Services Management Team will review this policy and procedure at least annually. This process will include reviewing and evaluating current practices and service delivery types, current policy and practice in this clinical area, and the Incident Register. It will incorporate staff, participants, and other stakeholder feedback. Feedback from service users, suggestions from staff and best practice developments will be used to update this policy.

Feels Like Home Support Services Continuous Improvement Plan will be used to record and monitor the progress of any improvements identified and, where relevant, feed into Feels Like Home Support Services service planning and delivery processes.



AUDIT INFORMATION:

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Compliments, Complaint / Feedback Form
- Participant information about making a Complaint
- Complaints Register
- Quality Improvement Plan (Register)
- Service Agreement
- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy / Form
- Continuous Improvement Policy
- Incidents, Accidents and Emergencies Policy
- Risk Management Policy

REFERENCES

- Work Health and Safety Act (2011)
- NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators 2018
- NDIS (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018
- Privacy Act (1988)

Measuring Success

- Follow up surveys will be given to those who provided Complaints or Feedback to assess the level of satisfaction.
- Audit results: Annual Surveillance Audit and Random File and Participant Interview.

EXAMPLES OF EVIDENCE FOR AUDIT

- A documented complaints and feedback policy appropriate to the size of the provider and the types of services and supports it provides.
- The process for making complaints is accessible, easy to navigate, and support is provided to clients who wish to make a complaint.
- Clients understand their rights relating to complaints, including the right to contact the NDIS Commission.
- Clients are aware of how to complain to the organisation, including anonymously, and receive information on the process and outcome of any relevant complaint investigation.
- Clients receive accessible information and understand how to lodge a complaint with the NDIS Commission, and how to access an advocate to support with making a complaint.
- Each complaint is taken seriously and treated fairly, and complainants' supports are not affected by their decision to make a complaint.
- Staff understand the principles of complaint management and follow procedures of the complaints management system; and



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- Monitoring and review of complaint data to inform improvement activities.
- Copy of complaint form (accessible online and/or at the service location)
- Information for clients on how to make a complaint such as a brochure or information sheet
- Record of staff orientation and training about the organisation's complaint management system

Position description template/organisational chart that clearly defines staff responsibilities in relation to complaints and feedback management