

## COMPLAINTS HANDLING POLICY

Classification	Policy
Date Reviewed	November 2023
Next Review	May 2025
Responsible Officer	Head of Customer Experience
Related Policies	Nil

### 1. Purpose

Effective complaints management is crucial for maintaining a positive reputation and ensuring the satisfaction of stakeholders. The aim of this Policy is to provide a fair, consistent and structured process for the Adelaide Festival Corporation's (the 'Corporation') stakeholders to make a complaint and for the Corporation to deal with such complaints.

### 2. Strategic Plan Desired Outcomes

The following aims within the Corporation's Strategic Plan are relevant in this instance.

*'Festival is seen as an exceptional delivery partner for cultural, economic, and social impact to the State'*

*'Strong media coverage locally and nationally'*

*'Grow and improve AF local, national and international brand recognition and positioning'*

### 3. Legislative Requirements and Corporate Policy Context

The following legislations are relevant in this instance.

*PC Circular 039 – Complaints management in the South Australian public sector*

*Australian/ New Zealand Standard: Guidelines for Complaint Management in Organizations (AS/NZS 10002:2014).*

*Privacy Act 1988*

### 4. Interpretation

For the purpose of this policy:

**'Business day'** means Monday to Friday inclusive (except for public holidays).

**'Complainant'** is the person, organisation or its representative making a complaint i.e., the person or organisation aggrieved about a matter.

**'Complaint'** is an expression of dissatisfaction made to the Corporation orally or in writing, about its products, services, actions of the staff or the complaints-handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.

**'Employee'** means a person employed by the Corporation and includes the Chief Executive.

**'Feedback'** can take the form of comments, both positive and negative, about services provided by the Corporation without necessarily requiring a corrective action, change of service or formal review. Feedback may, however, influence future service reviews and delivery methods.

## 5. Policy

- 5.1 The following Guiding Principles will be used by the Corporation in managing complaints:
- **Fairness and Respect:** The Corporation is dedicated to treating all complainants with fairness, respect, and empathy.
  - **Transparency:** The Corporation seeks to maintain transparency throughout the complaints handling process, providing clear communication and updates to complainants about the status of their complaints.
  - **Responsiveness and accountability:** The Corporation seeks to resolve complaints promptly and efficiently, striving for a satisfactory outcome for all parties involved.
  - **Confidentiality:** The Corporation respects the privacy and confidentiality of all complainants and will handle personal information in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988*.
  - **Continuous Improvement:** The Corporation is committed to view complaints as opportunities for growth and enhancement and will endeavour to make positive changes that benefit future festivals.
- 5.2 Complaints and feedback may be made orally or in writing and can be made via the following methods:
- Over the phone on 08 8216 4444;
  - Via email to [info@adelaidefestival.com.au](mailto:info@adelaidefestival.com.au);
  - Via post to PO Box 8221 Adelaide SA 5000; and
  - In person to venue staff, festival staff or volunteers during festival delivery at various locations.
- 5.3 When contacting the Corporation, the complainant should include the following details where relevant:
- date, time and location of event(s);
  - description of the event(s);
  - names of Corporation staff to whom the complainant spoke and dates;
  - copies or references to letters or documents relevant to the complaint (if any); and
  - the outcome the complainant hopes to achieve.
- 5.4 The Corporation expects customers will:
- Provide accurate and complete details when contacting the Corporation;
  - treat the Corporation staff with courtesy and respect; and
  - not engage in unreasonable conduct.

## Process

- 5.5 On receipt, a complaint will be acknowledged and assessed based on the severity and urgency of the situation.
- 5.6 Where a complaint cannot be resolved immediately, the complainant will be advised of the process to be undertaken. The Corporation will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within three [3] business days. The Corporation will then respond within ten [10] business days, and where possible, resolve it at that time. If a resolution is not possible at that time, the complainant will be kept regularly informed of the progress.
- 5.7 If an acknowledgement is not received, the complainant should make contact with the Corporation as the complaint may not have been received.
- 5.8 In case of events/circumstances which result in a high volume of enquiries and complaints – such as COVID vaccination mandates, or inclusion of controversial/ political programs, the timelines above may vary. Each event will be assessed and complaints will be dealt with as best as possible.

- 5.9 Instances where no action will be taken on a complaint and the complainant will be advised accordingly are as follows:
- where a complaint needs no action or is found to be irrelevant, frivolous or vexatious, and the Chief Executive has agreed with the assessment;
  - where the complaint is addressed to a third party and the Corporation is just a cc on the correspondence;
  - where the complaint contains profanities or direct insults and/or accusations; and
  - where a response has already been provided and there is no new content in the follow up complaint.
- 5.10 Where a complaint is found to be justified, the Corporation will, where practicable, remedy the situation in a manner that is consistent and fair for the complainant, the Corporation and any other parties if possible. The solution chosen will aim to be proportionate and appropriate to the circumstances.
- 5.11 Where appropriate, complainants will be provided with an explanation of changes proposed or made as a result of the investigation of their complaint.

## **Privacy and confidentiality**

- 5.12 It is the intention of the Corporation to manage personal information in a manner that is consistent with the *Privacy Act 1988* and with community expectations.
- 5.13 However, it should be noted that the Corporation can be subject to *The Freedom of Information Act 1991* which gives a legally enforceable right of access by members of the public (subject to certain restrictions) to corporate records held by government agencies. As such confidentiality cannot be guaranteed under the provisions of that legislation. For further information on our Privacy Policy, please visit [the link provided here](#).
- 5.14 Information relating to complaints is accessible only by staff who are required to use the information.
- 5.15 The Corporation will monitor and identify complaint trends after each festival, providing feedback to relevant areas of the organisation where potential improvements can be made.
- 5.16 This policy will be reviewed every two years and at other times if any significant new information or legislative or organisational change warrants a change to ensure that it remains effective and appropriate for performance improvement.

## **6. Relevant Procedures**

Complaints Handling Procedure

## **7. Attachments**

Nil