



POLICY

Feedback and Complaints

Policy Review Date

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Policy Version

4.0

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PURPOSE

To provide clear guidelines for JCS to respond to all complaints and feedback including suggestions and compliments.

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- a) All JCS staff and volunteers to provide clear guidelines and processes when responding to feedback and complaints;
- b) All JCS clients and/or their carers, external stakeholders and members of the public for their information when providing compliments, suggestions and feedback or wishing to lodge a complaint; and
- c) External advocates, case managers, agencies and service providers for the purpose of advising a JCS client who wishes to lodge feedback or a complaint.

DEFINITIONS

JCS Jewish Community Services Inc

Client An individual, also known as a *consumer, service user or care recipient*

Carer A person who, through family relationship or friendship, looks after a frail older person or someone with a disability or chronic illness. Carers look after these people in the community or in their own homes (DoHA, 2006)

Advocate A person who represents and works with an individual or group of people who may need support and encouragement to exercise their rights, in order to ensure that their rights are upheld

Informal Complaint is more a formal comment, recommendation or smaller issue that does not require a response, e.g. someone just wants to air a concern and ensure that a member of staff is aware of the issue and that it is brought to the attention of the General Manager or Board of Management, with all parties in agreement and satisfied with the outcome.

Formal Complaint is an issue that is not resolved at the first point of contact, and needs further investigation. A Complaints Investigation Form must be completed by the staff member or General Manager for action.

POLICY

It is the policy of JCS to ensure all feedback and complaints are addressed promptly and efficiently to resolve such issues in a conciliatory, non-threatening, respectful and confidential manner.

GUIDELINES

JCS values compliments, suggestions and feedback and supports the right of individuals to raise any problems, concerns or complaints that they may have regarding JCS facilities, services, personnel, policies, procedures or practices.

All individuals have the opportunity to provide feedback via a hardcopy feedback form which is available from the JCS office and also provided to each client (with a reply envelope) at the time of initial assessment and each subsequent review.

Individuals can also provide feedback by completing the electronic online feedback form via the JCS website – www.jcssa.asn.au or emailing feedback@jcssa.asn.au

JCS commitment to the resolution of Formal Complaints

- a) The process for resolving complaints will be open, honest, fair and confidential;
- b) Any individual or group who has a grievance relating to JCS has the right to complain, and to have their concerns resolved, and will be encouraged and supported to attempt to informally resolve the issue directly with the person concerned;
- c) Any individual or group may seek the assistance of another person in lodging their complaint. At all times during the resolution of their complaint they have the right to the assistance and support of an advocate (including an advocacy agency) of their choice. For further information and options around advocacy, please refer to the Advocacy Policy;
- d) Acknowledgement of a formal complaint will be made within three (3) working days of receipt; and
- e) A response to a formal complaint will be made within 21 days; however complaints of a serious or criminal nature (such as abuse or gross misconduct) will be actioned immediately. If the investigation and resolution is likely to extend beyond 21 days, the complainant will be advised in writing as to the cause of the delay and a new response deadline set.

Compliments and Feedback

- 1) All compliments and feedback received verbally or in writing in relation to a staff member, volunteer, program, service or any other aspect of JCS operations will be entered into the online feedback register; and

- 2) On completion of entering information into the online feedback register, the staff member receiving and documenting the compliment and feedback will provide the compliment to the relevant individual and advise the General Manager of the compliment.

Informal Complaints

- 1) All informal complaints received (that do not require a formal response) regarding a staff member, volunteer, program, service or any other aspect of JCS operations will be entered into the online feedback register
- 2) On completion of entering information into the online electronic feedback tool, the staff member receiving and documenting the informal complaint will provide details to the General Manager;
- 3) As informal complaints generally require no investigation or follow up, the General Manager should address as appropriate i.e. speak with relevant staff if the matter is in relation to a performance issue or through quality or service improvement measures; and
- 4) Where an informal complaint is received from a JCS client, and where deemed appropriate, the General Manager will make a file note of the informal complaint on the client hard or their electronic file.

Formal Complaints

- 1) All formal complaints received (where an investigation is required) regarding a staff member, volunteer, program, service or any other aspect of JCS operations will be entered into the online feedback register;
- 2) On receipt of a formal complaint, the General Manager will be made aware of the complaint immediately;
- 3) The individual lodging a formal complaint will be informed of the process and provided a copy of the Feedback & Complaints Policy;
- 4) A **Complaints Investigation Form** will be completed by the General Manager to enable prompt and satisfactory investigation;
- 5) Where a formal complaint pertains to the JCS General Manager, this will be directed to the Chairperson of the JCS Board of Management;
- 6) If the formal complaint continues unresolved as a result of the outcome by the General Manager or Chairperson of the JCS Board of Management, the individual will be encouraged to contact a relevant external advocacy service (as per the Advocacy Policy) *Refer below to Unresolved Concerns & Complaints*;
- 7) Once a formal complaint has been investigated and the matter resolved, the outcome will be confirmed in writing and forwarded to the Complainant. The outcome will also be recorded on the **Complaints Investigation Form**;

- 8) The general nature of the formal complaint, where appropriate, will be documented on service and continuous improvement plans to enable the organisation to address as part of its commitment to quality improvement; and
- 9) All formal complaints that have been documented and actioned will be filed in the online feedback register and on the clients' electronic or hard copy file.

Unresolved Concerns & Complaints

Where a concern or a complaint remains unresolved, there are a number of external options available to assist individuals to access information and support from agencies such specialising in advocacy & support. Please refer to the JCS Advocacy Policy which details relevant agencies that can provide further information and support.

Aged Care Quality and Safety Commissioner

The [Aged Care Quality And Safety Commissioner](#) provides a free service for anyone to raise their concerns about the quality of care or services being delivered to people receiving aged care services funded by the Australian Government.

Contact details for the Aged Care Complaints Commissioner are as follows:

Telephone: 1800 951 822

Lodging an Online Complaint: <https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/making-complaintlodge-complaint/online-complaints-form>

Confidentiality of Data Collected

JCS will capture all Compliments, Suggestions, Complaints and Feedback and store in the online feedback register. Data will only be made available to the JCS General Manager, Chairperson and JCS Board of Management members for the purpose of funding body, service agreement, auditing, accreditation requirements, service planning, and as part of JCS overall quality and continuous improvement processes.

RELATED DOCUMENTS & ATTACHMENTS

Related Legislation/Acts

- [Aged Care Act 1997](#)
- [Complaints Principles 2015](#)
- [Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#)
- [National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013](#)
- [Aged Care Quality and Safety Commissioner](#)
- [Commonwealth Home Support Program Manual 2018](#)

Related JCS Policies/Documents/Forms

- Advocacy Policy
- Complaints Investigation Form
- Online Feedback Form

Related Standards

Home Care Standards 2011

- 1.2 Regulatory Compliance
- 1.5 Continuous Improvement
- 3.3 Complaints and Service User Feedback

Aged Care Quality Standards 2019

- 6 (3) a - d Feedback and Complaints (Promotion; advocacy; response; review)
- 8 (3) c.ii Organisational Governance (Continuous improvement)
- 8 (3) c.vi Organisational Governance (Feedback and complaints)