



Feedback and Complaints Policy and Procedures

1. Aim of the Policy

SAWCC aims to provide an appropriate, respectful and ethical service to clients/service users. The aim of this policy is to provide users with a mechanism to address concerns or complaints.

2. Scope

This policy covers all SAWCC users/clients who access the service and who wish to lodge a complaint about the service that has been provided.

3. Policy Statement

SAWCC is committed to ensuring transparency of process and information. SAWCC is also committed to utilising information gained through feedback and complaints to improve the quality of service provided.

SAWCC service users have a right to provide positive or negative feedback and/ or complaints about the service they have been provided without fear or retribution and can expect complaints to be dealt with fairly and promptly.

4. Policy Interpretations/Definitions

Feedback: a service user seeks improvement in a situation where they consider that appropriate standards have not been met. The service user perceives that the impact on her has not been large and seeks resolution in an informal way via talking directly to a worker or by using **Service User Feedback Sheet**.

Complaint: a formal process by which service users seeks some form of redress or change in a situation where they consider that there has been direct and significant adverse impact on her by a service they have received. The claim must be lodged in writing **using SAWCC Complaint Form**.

Advocate: an external third party chosen by the service user to provide support/assistance through the feedback / complaints process.

Investigation: a step within the formal complaints process which aims to discover whether claims made by service users can be substantiated. This is undertaken by an appropriate person, nominated by the staff team i.e. Complaint Investigator

Legal Process: serious claims of professional misconduct i.e. in relation to legislation such as Anti-Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, Duty of Care.

Mediation: a step prior to the formal complaints process where an impartial third party assists the worker and service user to resolve the complaint.

Ombudsperson: a step within the formal complaints process where the ombudsperson is called upon as the issue is not resolved at the staff level.

5. Accountability and Reporting Arrangements



Staff members, Centre Manager and Coordinator are accountable for receiving and responding to feedback and complaints in an appropriate and timely manner and following up with agreed actions as outlined in the procedures of handling feedback and complaints.

6. Procedure

The following procedure for lodging a complaint is based on the principles of natural justice. These principles apply to both parties:

- The right to be heard – this means the right to a fair hearing with the opportunity to present one's case.
- The right to have a decision made by an unbiased decision maker.
- The right to have the decision based on specific examples rather than generalisations or assumptions.

A statement of client's rights and responsibilities and the process for providing feedback and making complaints will be displayed at SAWCC.

See Flowcharts: Complaints Flowchart for Service Users

- 1) A Service User/Client may want to give feedback or complaint.
- 2) **Anonymous Feedback** – Can use Feedback Form without using names.
- 3) **Direct Feedback** – Can talk directly to staff or use Feedback Form with name and contact details
- 4) **Mediation** may be offered to resolve concerns with the assistance of the Ombudsperson
- 5) **Resolution**: The Service User and the worker/s meet to clarify expectations and negotiate an outcome. Actions are agreed on between both parties. Outcomes documented.
- 6) **No Resolution**: Should the Service User feel that the response received from SAWCC does not adequately address their concerns then they may opt to undertake a formal complaints process.
- 7) **Formal Complaint**:
 - Service User to submit written complaint, outlining actual circumstances and events that led to dissatisfaction, and what they would like to see as an outcome (See the SAWCC complaints Form attached)
 - Complaints of a serious nature, and/or complaints about the Centre Coordinator/Centre Manager, will be forwarded to the Executive Council.
 - The Coordinator/Manager and/or the Executive Council will investigate the issues raised in the complaint.
 - The service user can expect an acknowledgement from the organisation within 10 working days.
 - In some circumstances mediation may be offered to resolve the complaint with the assistance of SAWCC Ombudsperson. .
 - The service user can expect a formal response to your complaint within 30 working days.
- 8) **Resolution**: Agreed actions are undertaken & service user gets a copy of documentation



9) **No Resolution:** If the service user feels that the response from SAWCC does not address their complaint, they have a right to have the decision reviewed either by SAWCC Ombudsperson or by going to an external party

10) **External Complaints Process:** Submit a complaint to external party such as MICC (Ministère de l'Immigration et Communautés Culturelles)

11) **Review of Original Decision:** The service users' complaint will be reviewed by the Executive Council & a written response provided to you within 30 working days.

12) **Legal issues:** It may be the case that the issue/concern raised involves an alleged breach of law. In this circumstance, the other options outlined here may not be appropriate. The matter will be passed directly to the Executive Council who will seek legal advice and undertake the appropriate actions.

7. Responsibilities

SAWCC's Manager and Coordinator are required to notify the Executive Council that a complaint has been lodged and to keep them informed of the handling and outcome of the complaint.

The Executive Council members have the responsibility to be aware of SAWCC's feedback and complaints policy and procedure and to ensure that all processes are consistent with this policy.

8. Documentation

Client feedback/complaints and all associated documentation must be kept on file in confidentiality.

Anonymous feedback – Service User Feedback File

Direct feedback / formal complaints

9. List of Attachments

Complaints Flowchart for Service

Doc No: _____ **Policy Title** _____ **Issue No:** _____

AMENDMENTS

Amend No.	Description of Amendment	Date submitted	Approved (Meeting)/action taken by
1	Feedback and Complaints Policy & Procedures	2013-08-29	
2	Feedback and Complaints Policy & Procedures	2013-09-21 To EC	To submit to staff after corrections

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