



GIRL GUIDES VICTORIA

COMPLAINTS POLICY and PROCEDURE

GP 42

POLICY

At Girl Guides Victoria we pride ourselves on our commitment to provide high quality programs delivered by high quality volunteers and staff members.

We acknowledge everyone's right to express their opinion about our services and our organisation.

We will provide our Girl Guides, their families and the community with the opportunity to influence the way we work by listening to and responding to their feedback.

Aim of this policy

Girl Guides Victoria aims to deliver the highest quality of service to the Girl Guides we support. We recognise that in some instances the service we provide may not meet the expectation of the Girl Guide or her family and that a complaint may arise. The aim of this policy is to enable Girl Guide complaints, where they exist, to be promptly and respectfully resolved so that the circumstances giving rise to the complaint are more effectively handled in the future for the benefit of Girl Guides, their families and successful program delivery.

Scope of this policy

This policy applies to all girls, families and community members involved with Girl Guides Victoria. This policy also applies to past Girl Guides and family members. All Girl Guides volunteers and staff members must be aware of and adhere to this policy.

What is a complaint?

A complaint is a matter or problem concerning a Girl Guide's access to or participation in a Girl Guides Unit or program that is raised formally by a girl, family member or member of the community. A complaint is a matter that has not been able to be resolved through normal discussion with the relevant Girl Guides volunteer or staff member. It could also be a matter that, because of the nature or sensitivity of the matter, is more appropriately raised by the complainant with a GGV staff member or the State Commissioner.

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A complaint can include but is not limited to the following examples:

- The manner in which a Girl Guide or her family members are treated
- Disagreements with decisions made by Girl Guides Victoria
- Girl Guides Victoria failure to provide an appropriate service
- Dissatisfaction with the action of a Girl Guides Victoria volunteer or employee
- Difficulties accessing a Girl Guides Victoria unit; e.g. physical access to a hall, or failure to provide assistance with communication difficulties
- Concern about Girl Guides Victoria's handling of the personal information of a member.

Principles for managing complaints

- Girl Guides Victoria will ensure that Girl Guides, family and community members are informed about how to make a complaint if required and that a complaint will be welcomed. Written information will be made available (brochures, website) for Girl Guide participants to access.
- Girl Guide volunteers and staff members will be equipped with the skills and information required to answer questions about how to lodge a complaint and how to resolve a complaint within their level of authority.
- A person wishing to make a complaint about a Girl Guides Victoria program or member will be supported in doing so.
- A formal complaint will be dealt with in a professional and respectful manner- in particular, a complaint will not be reviewed by a volunteer or staff member that is named or involved in the complaint.
- A serious complaint- particularly where people or the organization is at risk, will be escalated for immediate attention and reviewed by the Chief Executive Officer or delegated officer.
- A complaint will be kept confidential to members within Girl Guides Victoria who have a need to know.
- Every effort will be made to ensure a timely resolution of a complaint and the complainant will be kept informed of progress.
- A complainant will be provided with written feedback about their complaint, whether or not it has been able to be resolved to their satisfaction, and if necessary at various stages of the complaint resolution process.
- A person making a complaint will not be negatively affected in terms of their ability to access or continue to access a Girl Guides program.

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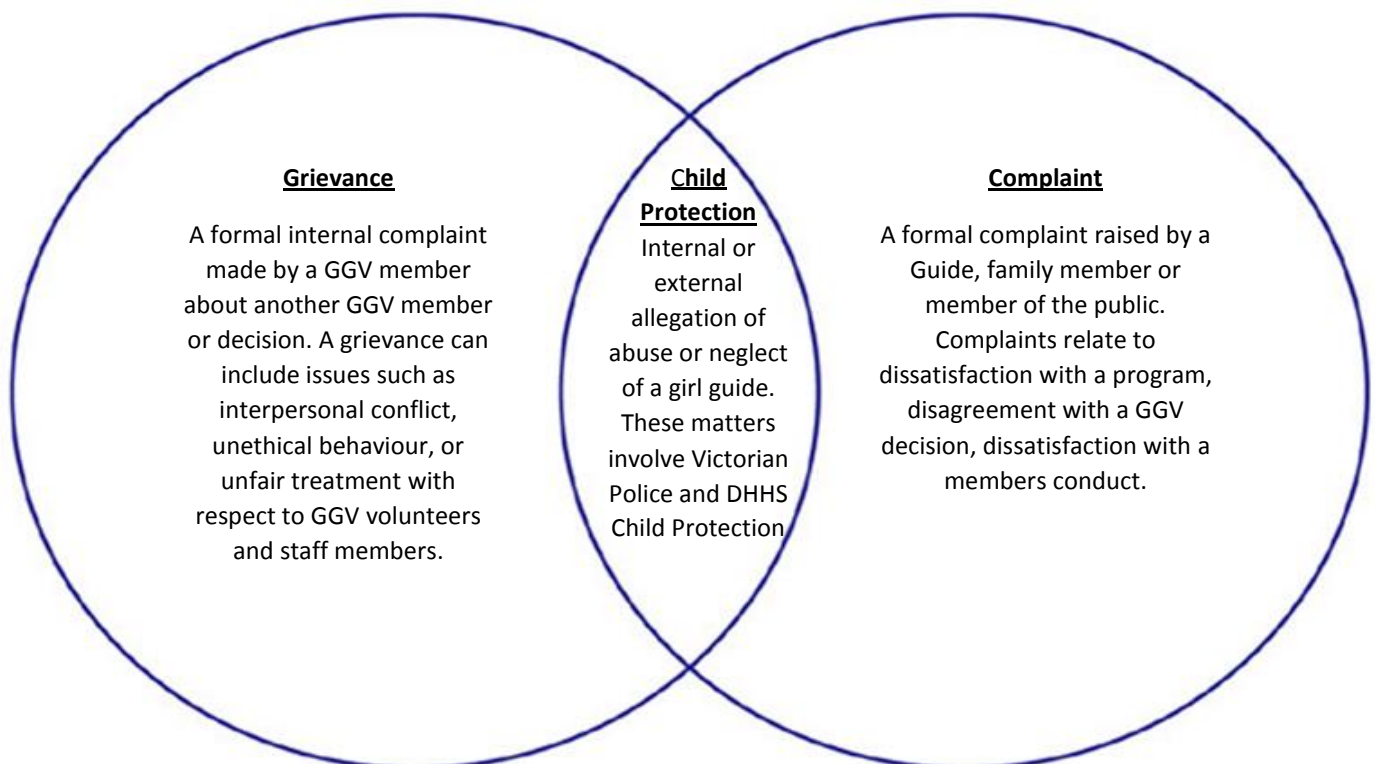
- Where a volunteer or staff member is the subject of a complaint, Girl Guides Victoria will ensure that the volunteer or staff member is provided with procedural fairness and able to explain their point of view.

What isn't included in this policy?

This policy does not apply to a grievance, which is a formal, internal complaint made by a Girl Guides Victoria member about another Girl Guides Victoria member or decision. The **Grievance Policy and Procedure** outlines the necessary steps to be taken in cases of grievances.

This policy does not apply to allegations of abuse and neglect of Girl Guides. **The Child Protection Policy and Procedures** outlines the necessary steps to be taken in response to these concerns.

Grievance, Allegation and Complaint



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PROCEDURE

How do complaints get resolved?

In the first instance, a volunteer or staff member who has a Girl Guide, family or community member wishing to make a complaint will immediately speak with the complainant and see if the matter can be simply resolved. If the matter does not appear simple to resolve, then the following process will apply:

1. The person making the complaint will be assisted to document their concerns on the Girl Guides Victoria 'Complaint Form'. In the event that the person is unwilling or unable to complete the Complaint Form, the volunteer or staff member should write down the complaint as expressed to them. The details will be read back to the complainant, who will then be asked to sign the Complaint form.
2. The Complaint Form will be lodged with the Chief Executive Officer at Guide Centre. In the event that the grievance is about or involves the Chief Executive Officer, the Governance Chair or State Commissioner, the grievance will be investigated by an Executive member or a nominee of the Executive.
3. Where a complaint appears to identify a risk to a person and/or Girl Guides Victoria, the matter will be escalated to the Chief Executive Officer immediately.
4. The Chief Executive Officer, or nominated reviewing officer, will investigate the complaint as a matter of priority. This may involve forwarding a copy of the complaint to any persons mentioned in or involved in the circumstances of the complaint. The reviewing officer may seek a written or verbal response to the complaint.
5. The reviewing officer will speak directly with all parties involved in the complaint to determine an outcome.
6. If in the opinion of the reviewing officer it is appropriate for parties named in the complaint to meet (whether in person or by teleconference), the complainant will be offered to bring a support person to the meeting. The meeting will be chaired by the reviewing staff member. The reviewing staff member will speak with all parties with the view to reaching mutual agreement between parties. If a resolution cannot be reached at the meeting, the complaint will be referred to the Chief Executive Officer for further review and discussion with the complainant. If the Chief Executive Officer

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is not able to achieve resolution of the complaint, the outcome will be confirmed in writing to the person who made the complaint.

What is the timeframe for resolution of complaints?

All complaints will be investigated as quickly as possible, generally within 5 working days of the complaint being lodged, unless an alternative timeframe has been agreed between parties.

All complaints will be resolved as quickly as possible, within a timeframe agreed between parties.

The person who has made the complaint will be kept informed of progress on a regular basis.

What documentation is required?

Accurate documentation of the complaint will be maintained by Girl Guides Victoria. Completed records of a client complaint will be recorded on iMIS.

What is expected of the person making the complaint?

When a complaint is made, a resolution is more likely to be reached if the complainant is encouraged to:

- Give a clear idea of the problem and the solution they want;
- Give all the relevant information they have, at the time the complaint is made;
- Treat Girl Guides Victoria volunteers and staff members with appropriate respect.

If necessary, a person making a complaint will be reminded of these expectations.

What if the complaint is about me?

It is naturally concerning to find out that someone has lodged a complaint that involves you. In these situations you can rest assured that Girl Guides Victoria will investigate the matters raised fairly and sensitively and will seek your views about the claims being made. The focus is on resolving the problem that has led to the person lodging the complaint. While this is not necessarily a pleasant experience it is in the best interest of the Unit and the organisation that any issues are resolved before they get worse.



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Supporting documents

- **Code of Conduct**
- **Grievance Policy and Procedure**
- **Child Protection Policy and Procedure**



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Complaint Form

Personal Details of person lodging the complaint:

Name: _____

Contact Address: _____

Telephone (W): _____ Telephone (M): _____

Email : _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name of person, if applicable, assisting with the complaint:

Contact telephone: _____ Email: _____

Nature of complaint wishing to be resolved (please attach more details or relevant papers if needed):



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Please comment on how you think this complaint could best be resolved:

Is there anything else we should know about you or your situation that will help us resolve this complaint?



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<p>Received by: _____</p> <p>Position: _____ Date: _____</p> <p>Please return a signed copy of this document to the person making the complaint upon receipt</p>
