



Feedback, Compliments and Complaints Policy and Procedure

Policy Intention

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to set out how any person can provide feedback compliments and complaints about any aspect of Eyre Futures Inc. operations and the process that Eyre Futures Inc. will take to address or respond to feedback and complaints.

This policy and procedure applies to all stakeholders of the organisation, including Participants, families and carers, advocates, Employees, other service providers, government agencies and members of the community.

Issues raised by Eyre Futures employees would generally be dealt with under Eyre Futures HR Policies, however from time to time employees may raise issues or provide feedback that is best dealt with under this policy.

Definitions

Compliment - an expression of praise, encouragement or gratitude about an individual employee, a team, product or a service.

Complaint - an expression of dissatisfaction made to or about an organisation, related to its products, services, employees for the handling of a complaint, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.

For the purpose of this policy and procedure, a complaint is defined as an issue of a minor nature that can be resolved promptly or within 24 hours, and does not require a detailed investigation. Complaints include an expression of displeasure, such as poor service, and any verbal or written complaint directly related to the service (including general and notifiable complaints).

Dispute - A dispute exists when one or more people disagree about something and the matter remains unresolved. Often disputes can be settled quickly and informally in the course of everyday work.

General complaint - addresses any aspect of the service e.g. a lost clothing item or the service's fees. The complaint must be dealt with as soon as is practicable to avoid escalation of the issue.

Grievance - a formal statement of complaint that cannot be addressed immediately and involves matters of a more serious nature e.g. the service is in breach of a policy or the service did not meet the care expectations of a family.

Feedback - information about reactions to a product, a person's performance of a task, etc. which is used as a basis for improvement

Scope

Feedback compliments and complaints provide Eyre Futures with valuable information, participant satisfaction and an opportunity to improve upon all aspects of its service. Feedback is taken seriously by Eyre Futures and seen as an opportunity for improvement.

Eyre Futures records and handles feedback effectively in order to identify areas for improvement, coordinate a consistent approach to complaint resolution, reduce the potential for future complaints and allow for reporting and efficient allocation of resources.

Resolving complaints at the earliest opportunity in a way that respects and values the person's feedback can be one of the most important factors in recovering the person's confidence about Eyre Futures services. It can also help prevent further escalation of the complaint. A responsive, efficient, effective and fair complaint management system will assist Eyre Futures to achieve this.

Eyre Futures has an effective feedback, compliment and complaint handling system that addresses the principles of visibility and accessibility, responsiveness, assessment and investigation, feedback, continuous improvement and service excellence.

Eyre Futures approach to feedback, compliments and complaints management ensures:

- people understand their rights and responsibilities;
- information on the feedback, compliment and complaint management process is easily accessible;
- increased satisfaction of Participants in the management of their compliments and complaints;
- the recording of data to identify existing or emerging trends or systemic issues;
- employees demonstrate an awareness of Eyre Futures feedback, compliments and complaints management processes;
- employees develop the range of skills and capabilities required to manage compliments, complaints and feedback; and
- an organisational culture that is focused on effective, person-centred complaints resolution and utilising feedback for continuous improvement.

Procedure

Eyre Futures Manager will promote best practice, continuous improvement and an open, supportive, respectful culture that encourages and supports employees, clients and other stakeholders to make complaints and report concerns without fear of retribution. This will be assessed Employee Performance Reviews.

Upon commencement, employees will undergo an induction and receive a copy of the Employee Handbook, which will include information on the Feedback, compliments and complaints Policy and Procedure. They will undertake internal training in this policy and procedure and in providing our stakeholders with information about feedback, compliments and complaints. Annual Performance Reviews will assess employees' awareness of this policy and procedure and their roles and responsibilities when service users make complaints. Additional on-the-job training will be provided where required. This will also be monitored by supervisors and managers.

The Agenda for Board meetings will include a standing item on Continuous Improvement, including employee and client feedback and complaints.

Eyre Futures' *Welcome (Onboarding) email* provides Participants, their families and carers and all other stakeholders with information about this policy and procedure, inclusive of easy format short videos. This includes information on how feedback compliments and complaints will be addressed and who to contact to provide them for or to external agencies/services, including external advocacy and support agencies.

Information will be clearly displayed in Eyre Futures and provided by employees when requested.

Any Participant or other stakeholder wishing to lodge feedback compliment, or a complaint will be provided with information regarding this policy, printed if requested otherwise accessible via the Eyre Futures Website .

Eyre Futures employees will provide all clients, their families and carers with this policy and procedure when they first access the service and, throughout service delivery, remind them of the policy and their right to make a complaint without fear of affecting their service.

All personal information Eyre Futures collects to manage feedback or complaints will be handled in accordance with privacy legislation and Eyre Futures' *Feedback Compliments and Complaints Policy and Procedure*.

Feedback compliments and complaints will be dealt with in a confidential manner and will only be discussed with the people directly involved. All information regarding feedback compliments and complaints will be kept securely in accordance with Eyre Futures *Records and Information Management Policy and Procedure*.

Feedback compliments and complaints can be lodged by a third party on behalf of another person, if their consent has been provided.

The Manager will track and analyse feedback and complaint data to identify any ongoing issues. Feedback compliments and complaints will be reported to the Board on an ongoing basis, as part of the Managers report on Continuous Improvement.

Feedback

Feedback can be provided to any employees at any time in any way by any stakeholder, including through:

- Forms
- Board meetings
- Team meetings
- Client forums;
- collection of Client feedback after each major interaction with the service (e.g. initial assessment and planning; reviews; exit);
- in person during delivery

Where feedback is provided verbally, the receiving employee will transcribe the feedback onto an Eyre Futures *Feedback compliments and complaints Form*.

Provision of feedback through any of Eyre Futures channels is voluntary.

Eyre Futures complaints management process

Eyre Futures complaints management process can be simplified into **five steps**:

1. *Receive*

To lodge a complaint, individuals are encouraged to speak directly to an employee first, as an attempt to resolve the matter without recourse to the complaints handling procedures.

Employees will:

- Listen – openly to the concerns being raised by the complainant.
- Ask – the complainant what outcome they are seeking.
- Inform – the complainant clearly of the complaint process, the time the process takes and set realistic expectations.
- Be accountable – and empathic towards the affected person and action all commitments made.
- Assess – situations that pose an immediate threat or danger, or require a specialised response.

All complaints and grievances will be referred to the Manager for resolution.

The Manager will discuss minor complaints directly with the party involved as a first step towards resolution.

If the complaint cannot be resolved promptly or within 24 hours, the Manager will treat it as a grievance (advising the individual of their right to lodge a grievance if they have not already done so, with the assistance of a support person or advocate if they wish).

A *Feedback compliments and complaints Form* will be made available to the individual to lodge their complaint, however it is not mandatory that they use the form. The form can also be used to make anonymous complaints.

Complaints can be lodged:

- directly with a employee, either verbally or by providing a completed *Feedback and Complaints Form*;
- by email to: The Manager, kerrieharrison@eyrefutures.com.au
- by phone on: 0438 863 733
- in writing to: PO Box 3337, Port Lincolns SA 5606

At any time – a COMPLAINT can be made directly to the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA);

All Clients making a complaint will be encouraged to use an advocate of their choice to act on their behalf if they wish. The advocate may be a family member or friend, or sourced (with the assistance of a employee if required) through the National Disability Advocacy Program.

If a complaint alleges actual or possible criminal activity or abuse or neglect, it will be referred to the Manager immediately. The Manager will report the complaint as per Eyre Futures *Incident Management Policy and Procedure* and work with the relevant authority to investigate the allegation.

Employees will take all reasonable steps to ensure a complainant is not adversely affected because a complaint has been made by them or on their behalf.

2. *Record*

The Manager will:

- Record – all information that is relevant to the compliment or complaint, in its original and simplest form, in Eyre Futures *Feedback compliments and complaints Register*.

- Store and protect – the Eyre Futures *Feedback compliments and complaints Register* in a secure file, accessible only to the Manager.

3. **Acknowledge**

The Manager will:

- Acknowledge – receipt of the grievance within 2 working days to build a relationship of trust and confidence with the person who raised the complaint.
- Provide anonymity – a person may request to remain anonymous in their lodgement and therefore contact may not be possible or expected.
- Seek desired outcomes – provide realistic expectations and refer the matter to other organisations where identified as being more suitable to handle.
- Avoid conflict of interest – by appointing a person unrelated to the matter as an investigator if necessary.
- Provide timeframes and expectations – to the complainant where possible.

4. **Resolve**

In resolving a complaint or grievance, the Manager will:

- Involve the complainant – keep them informed of the progress of the complaint and discuss any disparities identified in the information held.
- Request additional information – when required but apply a timeframe that limits when it is to be provided by.
- Consider extensions – only where necessary and always communicate any additional time requirements to the complainant with an explanation of the need.
- Record – all decisions or actions of the complaint investigation in Eyre Futures *Feedback compliments and complaints Register*.
- Focus on the identified complaint matters only. A complaint is not an opportunity to review a whole case.

Investigation of complaints will not be conducted by a person about whom a complaint has been made. If required, the Manager will determine and delegate the appropriate person to undertake the investigation.

5. **Communicate resolution**

Eyre Futures will respond to all complaints and grievances as soon as possible and within 28 days from acknowledgement.

If a complaint or grievance cannot be responded to in full within 28 days of acknowledgement, an update will be issued to the complainant. The update will provide the date by which a full response can be expected. The update should be provided verbally in the first instance then confirmed in writing.

The Manager (or delegate) will:

- Discuss the outcome – where possible, verbally with the complainant before providing written advice and allowing them the opportunity to make further contact following receipt of the written advice.
- Include information on recourse – what further action may be available to the complainant at the conclusion of the complaint investigation. An action of recourse may be to escalate the matter further with an external agency or for a further review within the organisation.
- Provide a further review – to enable the first investigation to be reviewed for soundness and allow additional information not available in the first complaint to be included.
- Identify opportunities – relay complaint outcomes to the appropriate area within the organisation for action to improve service delivery.

- Seek Feedback – from the complainant regarding their experience of the complaints process.

Support will be provided to assist complainants' understanding of correspondence regarding complaints and grievances where required (e.g. interpreters, referral to advocates, etc.).

Options for actions responding to a complaint include but are not limited to:

- explaining processes;
- rectifying an issue;
- providing an apology;
- ongoing monitoring of issues; and
- training or education of employees.

Eyre Futures *Feedback compliments and complaints Register* will be used by Eyre Futures Manager (or delegate) to record every complaint, track investigation progress and outcomes and how the outcomes have been communicated to stakeholders.

Complaints Escalation and Dispute Resolution

If a complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint or grievance they will be provided with the details of other agencies they can use to assist them to achieve a resolution.

Escalated complaints will be tracked in the *Feedback compliments and complaints Register* in the same manner as other complaints and the same communication processes as outlined above will be applied. If necessary, the Manager will undertake communication with the complainant instead of the Eyre Futures Manager.

Complaints to the NDIA can be lodged:

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

Commonwealth Ombudsman

Telephone: 1300 362 072

Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au **Website:** ombudsman.gov.au

Workers have the right to be safe whilst supporting clients and clients benefit from having workers who feel safe and supported. SafeWork SA is the work health and safety regulator in South Australia and has a range of advice and information which helps businesses, including clients who engage workers to create safe workplaces. For information about working safely go to: <https://www.safework.sa.gov.au/about-us>

NDIS clients purchasing products and services also have rights and protections under the Australian Consumer Law (ACL), including provisions on client guarantees and unfair contract terms. Consumer and Business Services SA provides information and advice and in some cases, dispute resolution services for client disputes under the ACL. Go to <https://www.cbs.sa.gov.au/about-us>

Monitoring and Review

Annual service delivery and satisfaction surveys will include questions regarding:

- satisfaction with Eyre Futures feedback and complaints processes;
- whether stakeholders have received adequate information about making complaints and their awareness of complaints mechanisms;
- the extent to which Clients and their supporters feel they have been included in the review of feedback and their satisfaction with this process;
- whether stakeholders have received adequate information about how the organisation will use feedback, complaints and appeals information; and
- any barriers to lodging complaints and feedback.

Eyre Futures *Continuous Improvement Plan* will be used to record how the outcomes of feedback have been communicated to stakeholders. Positive feedback will be recorded in the Plan as a way of recording things the organisation does well. If positive feedback relates to an employee, that person will be formally recognised by the Manager.

This Policy and Procedure will be reviewed annually by the Manager and incorporate client and other stakeholder feedback and simple administrative updates. Otherwise, 3 yearly by the Board.

EFI Related policy and procedures

- Choice and control policy & procedure
- Continuous improvement policy
- Continuity of service policy (NDIS)
- Feedback & complaints policy (NDIS)
- Protecting human rights policy
- Safeguarding policy (NDIS)
- EFI HR Policies and Procedures

Related legislation and policy

- Australian Consumer Law
- [AS ISO 10002-2018 Satisfaction – Guidelines for Complaints Handling in Organisations](#)
- [NDIS Code of Conduct](#)
- [Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award 2010](#)
- [Safework](#) and [Fairwork](#)
- [NDIS Rules 2018](#)
- [National Disability Insurance Scheme Quality and Safeguarding Framework](#)
- [National Disability Insurance Scheme 2013 Act: Principles and NDIS Practice Standards](#)
- [Privacy Act 1988](#) [Australian Privacy Principles](#)

Approvals

Date of EFI Board approval: 1/03/2023

Signature of Manager:

Review date 3.1.26

