
Feedback and Complaints Policy



Supporting women.
Defeating poverty.

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The PDF version of this document is the final, approved version.

1. Purpose of Policy

Policy Statement

CARE Australia (CA) is committed to high standards of honesty, integrity and accountability. In line with our Values and Code of Conduct, we promote and support a culture of respect and ethical behaviour, corporate compliance and good governance.

Receiving feedback and responding to complaints is an important mechanism for CA to monitor and improve performance and be accountable to our stakeholders including our donors, members of the communities where activities are implemented, and our partners.

Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to

- provide a process for any person to provide feedback, make a complaint or lodge an appeal
- outline the way in which CA manages and resolves feedback and complaints.

2. Scope

What is a complaint?

We define a complaint as an expression of dissatisfaction about the standards of service, actions or lack of action by CA or its staff, partners or anybody directly involved in the delivery of our work.

Complaints could include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a criticism relating to the quality of programme delivery
- dissatisfaction from a supporter about a particular fundraising approach or campaign
- a concern about the standards of service provided by staff, volunteers or contractors, suppliers, partners and others acting on behalf of CA.

What is feedback?

Feedback is information offered in relation to our activities or performance, with the view to improve our services. Feedback may:

- be general in nature, for example outlining a barrier or limitation to our offering

- be neutral or positive (compliments)
- suggest improvements

Who does this policy apply to?

Feedback or complaints can be made by any supporter, partner organisation, community or individual with whom we work or any member of the public whether an individual, civil society organisation, government, company or other entity.

CA employees have a separate avenue for raising concerns or providing feedback and should refer to the CA HR Policy Manual.

This policy applies to CA's operations globally and to stakeholders in both Australia and the countries where we work.

Each CARE International (CI) country has its own Feedback and Accountability Mechanism. If your feedback or complaint relates to the operations of another CI member or affiliate please contact that respective organisation. You can find a full list of all members and affiliates [on the CI website](#).

What is not covered by this policy?

- Any concerns of misconduct, as defined in the CA Whistleblower Policy. This includes but is not limited to dishonest, fraudulent or corrupt behaviour, abusive or exploitative behaviour, serious misuse of information and any discrimination or harassment.
- Complaints by staff about other staff or a personal work related grievance which are covered under CA's internal grievance process
- Communication to CARE's Supporter Care team by a supporter to amend or change their record details, amend or change their communication preferences, manage their transaction history or cancel their gift subscription
- Request for refunds

3. Policy details

Principles

CA values and encourages all forms of feedback and complaints. We believe that all our stakeholders can help hold us to account and that their feedback and voice will improve the quality of our work. CA is committed to:

- providing the opportunity for people to safely express their opinions or dissatisfaction in an easy and accessible way
- fairly, responsively and efficiently handling complaints or concerns
- using information collected through feedback, complaints and appeals to continuously improve our services
- not adversely affecting anyone as a result of making a complaint or a complaint being made on their behalf

How to provide feedback or make a complaint

Feedback and complaints can be made via

- email : complaints@care.org.au
- phone: 1800 020 046
- in writing: address letters to CARE Australia Feedback and Complaints, PO Box 372, Collins Street West, Melbourne Victoria 8007
- in person: to one of CA's employees

A complaint may be done anonymously, though CA's ability to resolve it may be affected if no contact is possible with the complainant.

If your concern relates to misconduct, please refer to the process outlined in CA's Whistleblower Policy, and other relevant policies, including the CARE International (CI) Fraud and Corruption Policy, the CI Safeguarding Policy, and the CA Child Protection Policy.

How will a complaint be managed?

Everyone who makes a complaint to CA will be treated with courtesy and respect. In return, CA expects people who make a complaint to communicate their concerns fairly and appropriately. We expect that all parties involved in a complaints process will act respectfully throughout and maintain confidentiality during the process. Any form of interference during the process of following up a complaint, such as harassment or abusive behaviour, may impact the outcome of the complaint.

CA will:

- acknowledge the feedback or complaint received within 5 working days
- assess the complaint:
 - determine whether the concern raised is in scope of this policy. If the concern is an allegation of misconduct or a staff grievance, it will be referred to the appropriate person in line with CA policies

- assess the complaint for severity, complexity and impact to decide by whom the complaint should be managed.
- review and resolve complaints within 30 business days. The person responsible for managing the complaint will:
 - communicate with the complainant where required to get clarity about the outcome they are seeking and gain further information as to the context of the complaint
 - review the activity or behaviour that is the subject of the complaint, including engaging with any person being complained about and other relevant stakeholders to gain a full understanding of what happened
 - where appropriate, apologise for any wrong, and take action to address or rectify the issue
- inform the complainant and the CA employee who received the complaint of the outcome, acknowledging details may not be provided to comply with confidentiality and privacy obligations.
- maintain accurate records of all communications.
- use information and outcomes to identify continuous improvement opportunities for CA services.

Appeal and escalation process

If you are unsatisfied with CA's response to your complaint, you may seek a review of that response.

Internal appeal

The relevant Director will review all information pertaining to that complaint, to determine whether due process was followed and whether the resolution was appropriate. If they were involved in the initial management of the complaint, then the appeal will be reviewed by another Director, by default the Director Strategy & Enabling Services. This will be completed within 30 business days of a request. The outcome will be communicated to the person who lodged the appeal.

External escalation

CA is a member of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID). Complaints relating to breaches of the ACFID Code of Conduct by CA [can be made to the ACFID Code of Conduct Committee](#).

CA is a charity registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission (ACNC). You can [raise concerns with the ACNC](#) about the operation of CA.

As a member of the Fundraising Institute of Australia (FIA) CA complies with the FIA's Code's Principles and Standards of Fundraising Practice. You can [make a complaint to FIA](#) relating to breaches of that Code.

Privacy & Confidentiality

CA respects your privacy and will treat information that is collected through the feedback and complaints process confidentially. Information will only be shared with consent from the complainant, or where required to assess and resolve a complaint or appeal.

4. Related Policies and Procedures

- CA Privacy Policy & Collections Statement
- CA Fundraising Charter
- CA Fundraising and Marketing - Vulnerable Persons Policy
- CA Values and Code of Conduct
- CA Complaint Management Procedure

5. Supporting documents and references

Legislation

- Privacy Act 1998

CARE Australia or CARE International documents

- CI Accountability Framework
- CA Donation Refund Policy
- CA Whistleblower Policy
- CA Child Protection Policy
- CA HR Manual
- CI Policy of Fraud and Corruption
- CI Safeguarding Policy

Other supporting documents

- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) Australian NGO Accreditation Guidance Manual (indicator 2.4)
- Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) Quality Assurance Framework (section 7.3.3)
- Fundraising Institute of Australia (FIA)'s Code of conduct.

6. Policy owner

This policy is owned by the Director of Fundraising and Marketing.

7. Implementation and communications

CA is committed to ensuring the accessibility and transparency of its Feedback and Complaints Policy. This policy will be published on CA's website.

Information about feedback and complaints will be included in induction and orientation (including orientation of partners). People in charge of handling complaints will be trained in doing so.

8. Policy details

- Date of the policy: January 2023
- Version history of the policy: Version 3, which replaces version 2 dated March 2021
- This policy is scheduled for review every 5 years