



Gladstone Gymnastic Club Inc

ABN 38 937 705 859
Email; office@gladstonegymnastics.org.au
Website: gladstonegymnastics.org.au

PO Box 460 Gladstone Q 4680
Phone 07 4972 0300
Fax 07 49769333



COMPLAINTS HANDLING POLICY

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| Related Documents | GGC Member Protection Policy GGC Behaviour Management Policy GGC Staff Dispute Resolution Policy |
| Policy Date | November 2018 |
| Date of Next Review | November 2020 |
| Authorised by | President |
| Approved by | Adopted at Gladstone Gymnastic Club Committee Meeting Dated 29 th November 2018 |
| Version | 1.0 |
| Responsible Officer | Human Resources Manager |

* The Gladstone Gymnastics Club Inc. will from here on in be referred to as GGC or 'The Club'.

1.0 PURPOSE:

Gladstone Gymnastics Club encourages an environment that fosters open communication between members and the club. If a member feels that an issue has not been satisfactorily resolved, or that GGC's policies or practices have not been fairly, uniformly or correctly administered, members may lodge a complaint in accordance with this policy.

2.0 AIM OF POLICY:

Decisions need to be made at Gladstone Gymnastics Club on a daily basis. Sometimes Committee, Administrators, Managers and Coordinators will make decisions following extensive consultation and involvement. At other times, they will need to make decisions or take action quickly, and without consultation. In either case, decisions can be made that suit some, but not others.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that a member can raise any problem, concern or complaint relating to club operations without fear of victimisation or retribution.

The club will manage complaints with confidentiality, timeliness and respect for all concerned. Member concerns will be dealt with in a fair, honest and constructive way.

While a complaint is being resolved, it is important that the business of the club continue as usual, unless the matter involves a serious Workplace Health and Safety matter where club activities must be immediately changed due to the presence of a high-risk situation.

We also request that members maintain the need for confidentiality while a complaint is being resolved. Discussions should be limited to the direct parties only, on a need-to-know basis. Unsubstantiated or premature gossip is not conducive to a healthy resolution.

3.0 RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

If you have an individual or collective complaint, please use the following procedure.

Step 1: Discuss the problem with the person/people concerned in the table below. Tell them:

1. What concerns you.
2. The impact it has on you personally (or collectively).
3. What you feel GGC needs to do to resolve the matter.

| Issue | Contact Person |
|--|---|
| Fees, charges, payments | Office staff / Club Administrator |
| Parent | Program Coordinator, Coach or Human Resources Manager |
| Venue | Office staff / Club Administrator |
| Training program, competition, team selection | The Program Coordinator. i.e. WAG Coordinator, MAG Coordinator, ACRO Coordinator, Kindy Gym / General Gym Coordinator, Rhythmic Coordinator. |
| Gymnast | Your coach |
| Gym equipment | Your coach |
| Coach or staff member | Human Resources Manager or direct supervisor of the employee |
| Human Resources Manager | President or Committee Member |
| Committee of Management/Board member or decision | President or Gymnastics Queensland. |
| President | Vice President or Gymnastics Queensland. |
| Harassment / Sexual Harassment / Discrimination | Please refer to the Member Protection Policy initially. There are internal and external ways to register your complaint of this nature. Internal – President, Human Resources Manager, Program Coordinator. External – Gymnastics Queensland, Anti Discrimination Commission of QLD, The Commission of Children and Young People, and The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission. |

Step 2: If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint or suggestion, outline the details of your complaint in writing and submit it to our main email office@gladstonegymnastics.org.au alternatively you can hand deliver to our office who will pass your complaint onto the relevant person/s. This person will consider the decision or appoint an alternative person/group to review the decision.

The reviewer will consider the matter and provide a written response to you and outline the process to appeal the decision.

4.0 STEPS THE GLADSTONE GYMNASTICS CLUB WILL TAKE TO RESOLVE A COMPLAINT

Step 1: Acknowledge Complaint

Complaints can be made formally (i.e. in writing) or informally (verbally), or anonymously. An example of a complaint form members can utilise or the information that the Club will need to assist in resolving your complaint is included in this policy as Attachment A however it is not compulsory to use this form (considered as a guide / prompt for the information required).

The Club will acknowledge receipt of a complaint and manage the expectations of the parties involved. When a complaint is lodged the Club will aim to do the following:

- Treat the complainant/s with respect, listening carefully and sympathetically to what they have to say. We will never make judgements or show bias. Where possible we will allow for a private location so the complainant can explain their concern/s privately.
- Ask the complainant to provide the following information:
 - The nature of the complaint,
 - Details of events, i.e. day, time, people present, what was said/done, documentation evidence,
 - Steps taken thus far to resolve the matter; and
 - What resolution outcomes are sought by the complainant/s?
- Assist the complainant in completing this information if they don't feel confident to do so.
- Provide the complainant/s with information about the Club's complaint handling process and how to access it.
- Discuss the process that will be taken to resolve the complaint (or alternative options) and the expected time frames involved.
- Determine whether the complainant is personally willing to participate in the resolution process (or whether they will be represented).
- Determine whether the complainant requires additional support.

Step 2: Resolve Complaint

Initial Assessment:

After acknowledging receipt of the complaint, the Club will confirm whether the issue/s raised in the complaint is/are within our control. We will also consider the outcome/s sought by the complainant, where there is more than one issue raised determine whether each issue needs to be addressed separately. When determining how a complaint will be managed, the Club will consider:

- How serious, complicated or urgent the complaint is
- Whether the complaint raises concerns about person's health and safety
- How the person making the complaint is affected
- The risks involved if resolution of the complaint is delayed, and
- Whether a resolution requires the involvement of other organisations.

Informal resolution

Most complaints are successfully resolved informally at the frontline and our staff will aim to assist our members in resolving these as quickly and seamlessly as possible.

Formal resolution

When informal resolution has failed, is not appropriate or possible, the complaint can be escalated to a formal resolution process. Formal complaints are best handled through written documentation which offers more rigour than a verbal exchange that can be misunderstood or misrepresented.

After a preliminary assessment, formal complaints can be resolved by:

- Facilitated or mediated resolution (where a person not connected with the complaint reviews the matter and attempts to find an outcome acceptable to the relevant parties); and/or
- Investigation of the complaint (if more serious and/or if unlawful behaviour might be involved). This process relies on written statements and formal interviews from the parties and relevant witnesses involved before a decision is made.

The process to resolve a complaint needs to consider the nature and merits of the complaint, the skills and resources available to the Club, and the expectations of the parties.

Step 3 – Communicate decision

Once all the information regarding the complaint has been assessed, a decision on the matter should be communicated to the parties involved. The decision maker should be independent of the complaint.

The decision maker should

- Offer an explanation to the person making the complaint.
- Communicate the outcome and any action taken.
- Provide reasons for the decision.
- Provide options for redress or review.
- Take appropriate follow-up action to ensure the problem has been resolved.

Step 4 – Appeal of decision

Where a person making a complaint is dissatisfied with the club decision, an independent review or appeal process could be offered, if appropriate.

Internal Appeal - In this case a person who is completely independent of the complaint, could be asked to review the decision and confirm whether they believe the outcome was appropriate in the circumstances. This person could be a senior internal person, Committee member or someone external to the organisation that the Club selects.

External Appeal – In some cases, external bodies can provide an appeal avenue if the matter is within their mandate i.e. Statutory Authority, Mediation Service, Tribunal or industry body. Gymnastics Queensland may provide review services in technical matters or with matters falling under member protection policies.

5.0 VOLUNTEER COMPLAINT

GGC encourages open communication channels between volunteers and club management. If you wish to make a complaint that relates to your volunteering experience, please notify our Office Administrator in writing of your concerns indicating the actions and outcomes you expect the Club to take to resolve your complaint or grievance. If your complaint involves the Office Administrator, please contact the Human Resources Manager.

6.0 STAFF DISPUTE / GRIEVANCE

Please refer to our Staff Grievance Policy for staff related disputes and grievances. Staff can contact the Human Resources Manager for further information on this policy alternatively speak with the Club's President.

7.0 FAIRNESS AND OBJECTIVITY

Offering fair, objective and transparent processes are important in complaints handling to reduce the influence of preconceived decision making, conflict of interest, or bias.

Procedural fairness includes ensuring that:

- All parties accused have the right to be informed of the complaint and given a fair opportunity to respond to it (formal right of reply);
- The person appointed to review or investigate a complaint is not the person whose conduct is the subject of the complaint; and
- The process allows for independent review of an internal decision. That is, the ability for the complaint to be reviewed (and determined) by a second, credible, independent person or group not personally connected to, or affected by, the complaint. In some cases, this may require seeking assistance from external people and organisations.

Gladstone Gymnastics Club commits to the above principles of procedural fairness when processing and handling complaints.

8.0 FRIVOLOUS OR VEXATIOUS COMPLAINTS

An organisation does not need to accept a complaint that:

- Has no merit i.e.
- Has no serious purpose or value
- Is carefree, irresponsible or superficial
- Is tabled without sufficient information or evidence
- Is unlikely to succeed;
- Has been lodged purely to cause annoyance or injure another person; and/or
- Demands that unlawful action be taken.

Gladstone Gymnastics Club may consider disciplinary measures towards a person's membership if they make a frivolous or vexatious complaint.

9.0 SAFETY, RESPECT AND NO DETRIMENT

The Club acknowledges the importance of creating an environment where complainants feel safe to lodge a complaint and know that their complaint will be handled respectfully, courteously and sympathetically. Complainants must also be assured that they will not be disadvantaged or adversely impacted because they have taken (sometimes very brave) steps to make a complaint (or simply offer a suggestion).

It is sometimes necessary to protect the identity of people who have made a complaint. Information regarding the nature of the complaint and those involved should only be disclosed on a need-to-know basis, to support the complaint resolution process.

Complaints should be resolved as soon as possible, the Club will aim to be realistic about how long it might take to resolve a complaint as timeframes will vary and be open and honest with the parties involved on these timeframes.

During the complaint resolution process, the Club will ensure the parties are regularly updated about the steps being taken to resolve the issue, and inform them of any delays.

10.0 ANONYMOUS COMPLAINTS

Anonymous complaints can be accepted if there is a compelling reason to do so and sufficient information has been provided to enable the complaint to be properly considered. If the matter potentially involves unlawful behaviour, GGC has an obligation to investigate the matter further in order to satisfy itself of the validity of the complaint.

11.0 COMPLAINTS ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION

It is important to continually evaluate and improve organisational policies and procedures, including a complaints management system. GGC will maintain a complaints register to regularly review complaints. This information will be used proactively to facilitate improvement within the Club and measure success.

12.0 COMPLAINTS DEALING WITH HARASSMENT, SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION

The Gladstone Gymnastic Club Inc is committed to providing a sport and work environment free of harassment and discrimination. We believe that anyone who works for us or represents us, and everyone with whom we deal, has the right to be treated with respect and dignity. The Gladstone Gymnastic Club Inc will not tolerate harassment or discrimination in our organisation. We will take all complaints of harassment and discrimination seriously, and will ensure they are dealt with promptly, seriously, sensitively and confidentially.

The Club has adopted a Member Protection Policy that specifically addresses complaints of this nature and would recommend complainants read this policy initially to assist them with making a complaint related to Harassment, Sexual Harassment or Discrimination.



**ATTACHMENT A:
COMPLAINTS FORM**



This form is designed to assist you in recording a complaint – this is not compulsory to fill in just an aid to use. If more space is required, please attach additional pages.

Your details

Name:

Address:

Email Address:

Phone contact:

Your Complaint/Grievance

Please note all information that you think is relevant to your complaint in chronological order. Please give a brief description of the events that have taken place leading up to you making this complaint including

- What happened.
- When it happened?
- Who was involved? Witnesses?

How has this affected you?

What action have you taken, if any, to resolve this complaint?

Please attach copies (not originals) of any documents that may help us to review your complaint (for example, any correspondence or records of conversations you have had to support your complaint).

Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that:

1. The information contained within this document is true and correct.
2. The documentation provided is a legitimate copy of original document/s.
3. The details contained within this document may need to be discussed with the person/people concerned.

Signature:

Date: