



# Complaints Policy

Applicable to External Stakeholders

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*"Fair, respectful, transparent, and timely complaint handling"*

Approved by the Board: May 2, 2026

# Purpose and Scope

## 1. Purpose

- ✓ Provide an accessible and transparent process for raising complaints.
- ✓ Ensure complaints are handled fairly, respectfully, and promptly.
- ✓ Support accountability to donors, partners, and the public.
- ✓ Identify corrective actions and drive organizational improvement.
- ✓ Ensure annual Board reporting on external complaints.

## 2. Scope

### Who it applies to:

Donors, beneficiaries, partner organizations, community members, suppliers, contractors, and any external party interacting with the organization.

### Matters covered:

- Program quality
- Fundraising practices
- Privacy concerns
- Staff/Volunteer conduct
- Misuse of resources
- Digital engagement

# Definition and Guiding Principles



## What is a Complaint?

An expression of dissatisfaction about an action, decision, omission, service standard, behaviour, communication, or practice where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.

## Distinct From:

- General inquiries or info requests
- Routine service requests
- Suggestions without investigation
- Internal employment grievances

## 7 Guiding Principles



### Accessibility

Easy to make through clear and available channels.



### Timeliness

Acknowledged and addressed as promptly as possible.



### Fairness

Reviewed objectively and without bias.



### Respect

Complainants treated courteously and professionally.



### Confidentiality

Information handled with appropriate discretion.



### Non-retaliation

No reprisal for raising a complaint in good faith.








### Improvement

Support corrective action and organizational learning.

# How to Submit & Information Needed

## How to Submit

-  Email
-  Website contact / complaints form
-  Telephone
-  Written correspondence
-  In person (where appropriate)

*\*Instructions are publicly available on our website.*

## Information to Include

**Please provide the following where possible:**

- ✓ Name and contact information
- ✓ Nature of the complaint
- ✓ Relevant dates, location, or context
- ✓ Individuals or activities involved (if known)
- ✓ Supporting documents or evidence
- ✓ Desired outcome or response

**⚠ Note:** Anonymous or unclear complaints may limit our ability to investigate fully, though all complaints are reviewed.

# Receipt, Review, and Timeline

The organization is committed to handling complaints fairly and efficiently. Our process is designed to be transparent, ensuring that every concern is reviewed by the appropriate level of authority and resolved in a timely manner.

1



## Receipt & Acknowledgment

**Within 5 Business Days**

Complaint is logged and receipt is acknowledged. Anonymous or unclear complaints may limit follow-up capabilities.

2



## Review & Assessment

**Assigned based on Impact**

Reviewers range from staff to Board based on severity. Assesses scope, risk, immediate needs, and necessary escalation.

3









## Resolution & Timeline

**Within 15 Business Days**

Aim to provide a substantive response. If more time is needed, the complainant will be informed with an updated timeframe.

# Outcomes and Escalation

## Possible Outcomes

-  Explanation or clarification
-  Apology where appropriate
-  Corrective action
-  Operational improvements
-  Referral to another process
-  Unsubstantiated or insufficient info


*\*Outcomes are determined based on the investigation findings and the nature of the complaint.*


## Escalation & Serious Matters

### Immediate Escalation Required

Issues involving fraud, safeguarding, legal risk, or reputational harm must be escalated promptly to senior authority.

#### Allegations Against Leadership

 **CEO:** Refer to Board Chair or Board Committee.

 **Board Member:** Refer to Board Chair or Authorized Leader.

#### Frivolous or Vexatious

Engagement may be limited if complaints are abusive, repetitive, or made in bad faith, while still assessing substantive issues.

# Confidentiality, Anonymity & Records

## Confidentiality & Anonymity

### Handling Information

- ✓ Shared strictly on a **need-to-know basis** for investigation and resolution.
- ⚠ Absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed if disclosure is legally required or needed to manage risk.


### Anonymous Complaints

- 🔍 Will be reviewed if **sufficient information** is provided to proceed.
- 📄 Investigation capability and outcome communication may be limited without contact details.

## Recordkeeping






### Key Information Recorded

- ▶ Date received
- ▶ Complainant category
- ▶ Nature of complaint
- ▶ Person responsible
- ▶ Actions taken
- ▶ Response date
- ▶ Outcome / Status
- ▶ Lessons learned

 **Security:** Records are maintained in a secure manner consistent with confidentiality, privacy laws, and organizational practices.

# Board Reporting, Posting & Review

## Annual Report to the Board

-  Number & categories of complaints
-  Status and outcomes of cases
-  Any serious or material complaints
-  Trends or recurring issues identified
-  Actions taken to improve practices


*Management presents this report to the Board of Directors annually to ensure oversight and drive organizational learning.*

## Governance & Transparency



### Public Website Posting

This Complaints Policy shall be posted in a readily accessible location on a dedicated public webpage.

### Policy Review Cycle

-  Reviewed at least **every 5 years**, or earlier if required by changes in law, risk, or stakeholder expectations.

### Current Status

-  **Last Approved: May 2, 2026**  
By the Board of Directors
-  Next review due: May 2031