

## 1. Policy Reference

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8-001 Complaints Policy

## 2. Related Documents

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The following documents either contain references to this procedure or are referred to in this procedure:

- 4-008 Occupational Health and Safety policy
- 8-003 Complaints Record Form
- 8-004 Complaints Register
- Membership Welcome Information
- Board Information on website
- Staff Induction Checklist

## 3. General Guidelines

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This document describes a step-by-step process for managing complaints at Linkwest. It should be read in conjunction with 8-001 Complaints Policy.

- A member, associate, or stakeholder can raise a complaint with any Linkwest employee.
- A complaint can be made orally or in writing.
- If a complaint is about the CEO, it should be made directly to the Chair of the Linkwest Board.
- Records will be kept of all complaints and any action taken by Linkwest in relation to them.
- While a complaint is current, these records will be available only to staff or board members who are directly involved in handling the complaint.
- The records will be retained in secure locations and kept confidential.
- General information that does not identify individual complainants may be provided to the Board for information or used for continuous improvement or planning purposes.
- When a complaint is received, the staff member who receives it will immediately advise the CEO, who will follow the process set out in section 4. of this document.
- The CEO is responsible for monitoring the progress of the handling of the complaint to ensure that it is dealt with according to the Complaints Policy and this procedure, and in a timely manner.
- If the complaint relates to health and safety, staff will ensure appropriate measures are immediately taken (see Linkwest 4-008 OHS Policy and related procedures).
- All staff can assist a complainant with complaints within their capacity and role.
- We expect that complaints will be made in a respectful manner.
- If, in the process of handling a complaint, a staff member experiences threatening or abusive behaviour, they will not continue to try to resolve the complaint until the environment is without threat.

## 4. The Complaints Procedure

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Action		Responsibility
Step 1	<p>Receive the complaint and advise the CEO.</p> <p>If <b>complaint is made orally</b>, a record must be created on 8-003 Complaints Record Form.</p> <p>If a <b>complaint is made by any other means</b> – email, letter, webform submission etc – a record must be created on 8-003 Complaints Record Form and the letter, copy of email etc. attached to the form.</p> <p>Note: If the complaint is about the CEO, then it should be forwarded in writing to the Chair of the Linkwest Board.</p>	Any staff member
Step 2	Determine whether the complaint is appropriate for Linkwest or should be referred to another party.	CEO
Step 3	Allocate the complaint to a staff member – who is then the Complaints Officer for this complaint.	CEO
Step 4	Enter the complaint details onto the Complaints Register.	Complaints officer
Step 5	<p>Contact the complainant in writing and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledge that the complaint has been received</li> <li>• Advise them that you will be handling the complaint</li> <li>• If the complaint was received orally, provide them with a copy of the complaint as written by the person who recorded it, and ask for verification that the details are correct.</li> <li>• Obtain further details from the complainant about their complaint – what they are dissatisfied with, who was involved, when events occurred, and what response they are seeking from Linkwest. Record this information onto the Complaints Record Form</li> <li>• Provide complainant with copies of the Complaints Policy and this procedure</li> <li>• Advise complainant that at any stage during the process they can be supported by a representative of their choice if they wish – this may be a family member, interpreter or other trusted person</li> <li>• Advise complainant that they have the right to contact an external agency for advice or help at any stage of the process, including if they are unhappy with the way the complaint has been resolved.</li> </ul>	Complaints officer
Step 6	Gather any other information required in relation to the complaint.	Complaints officer
Step 7	Determine what Linkwest's response to the complaint should be – discuss this with the CEO before advising the complainant.	Complaints officer

Action		Responsibility
Step 8	<p>Advise the complainant of the proposed resolution to their complaint.</p> <p>If the complainant <b>is satisfied</b> with the resolution: Ensure that the response is implemented: that a record of the complaint and the resolution is placed on the appropriate confidential file, and complaint is marked as <b>Closed</b> on the Complaints Register.</p> <p>If the complainant <b>is not satisfied</b> with the resolution, explore alternative avenues for resolution. If the complainant is still not satisfied go to <b>Step 9</b></p>	Complaints officer
Step 9	If the complaint can't be resolved, provide all records relating to it to the Chair of the Linkwest Board.	CEO
Step 10	Review the records relating to the complaint and obtain any further information needed.	Chair, Linkwest Board
Step 11	Determine what the Linkwest response to the complaint should be.	Chair, Linkwest Board
Step 12	Discuss with the complainant Linkwest's response to the complaint.	Chair, Linkwest Board
Step 13	<p>If the complainant <b>is satisfied</b> with the response: Ensure that the response is implemented and that a record of the complaint and the resolution is placed on the appropriate confidential file. Mark the complaint as <b>Closed</b> on the Complaints Register.</p> <p>If the complainant <b>is not satisfied</b> with the response, go to <b>Step 14</b></p>	Chair, Linkwest Board
Step 14	<p>Convene a sub-committee to investigate the complaint.</p> <p>This sub-committee may call for any witnesses, reports or expert help that is necessary.</p>	Linkwest Board
Step 15	<p>Notify the findings and make recommendations as appropriate to the CEO and the complainant.</p> <p>This must be done within 15 working days of the receipt of the matter by the sub-committee.</p>	Linkwest Board
Step 16	<p>If the complainant <b>is satisfied</b> with the response: Ensure that the response is implemented and that a record of the complaint and the resolution is placed on the appropriate confidential file. Mark the complaint as <b>Closed</b> on the Complaints Register.</p> <p>If the complainant <b>is not satisfied</b> with the response, go to <b>Step 17</b></p>	CEO
Step 17	If the complaint/concern is not satisfactorily resolved through the processes set out above, the participant will be referred to an external agency (refer Section 6.) to pursue the complaint.	CEO

## 5. Timelines

Complaints should be resolved as quickly as possible.

Linkwest will contact complainants within one working week of receipt of a complaint, acknowledging receipt of the complaint and providing information as set out above.

Any meetings should be arranged at the earliest possible date.

Complainants will be informed regularly about the progress of their complaint and will be advised when any unavoidable delays occur.

## 6. External Agencies

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If the complaint/concern is not satisfactorily resolved through the processes set out above, the participant will be referred to an external agency to pursue the complaint. Some of these agencies include:

- Ombudsman WA  
Level 2, Albert Facey House  
469 Wellington Street, Perth WA 6000  
Phone: (08) 9220 7555
- Citizens Advice Bureau – Mediation Services  
Phone: (08) 9221 5711

## 7. Document History

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Document name:			
Version number	Version date	Approved by	Description of changes
3.0	9 Dec 2019	CEO	<p>In 2. <i>Related Documents</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Added document numbers t</li> <li>• Removed Bullying and Harassment</li> <li>• Added OHS policy</li> </ul> <p>In 4. <i>Complaints Procedure</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Added Complaint Form creation requirement to Step 1</li> <li>• Incorporated Step 6 into Step 5</li> <li>• Adjusted Step numbers thereafter.</li> <li>• Added Step 17. Referral to external agency.</li> </ul>
2.0	27 Feb 2018	CEO	<p>Document Format Changes Separation of complaints and grievance procedures Complaints procedure modified to mirror that of CCSA</p>
1.0	21 Mar 2013	CEO	Adopted