

# Complaints, Compliments & Feedback Policy

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Lifeline Mid Coast actively seeks and values all feedback to support our continuous improvement. We endeavour to receive compliments, complaints and feedback openly and intend to respond with sensitivity, confidentiality and respect.

## 2. PURPOSE

This policy provides a formal avenue for members of the public, service participants, partners, and governing bodies to express satisfaction or dissatisfaction with Lifeline Mid Coast (LLMC), including feedback related to our services, staff, complaint handling processes, or use of our trademark. LLMC's approach to handling complaints and feedback is guided by the principles of fairness, accessibility, responsiveness, and efficiency.

## 3. APPLICATION AND REPRESENTATION

LLMC is committed to ensuring that information on how to submit compliments, complaints, or general feedback is clearly communicated and easily accessible, particularly through our website. Our feedback and complaint handling processes are designed to be inclusive and user-friendly, with consideration given to individuals who may require support.

If a person prefers or needs assistance from a representative to submit or resolve a complaint, LLMC will communicate through their nominated individual, provided consent is given. Representatives may include advocates, family members, legal or community representatives, members of Parliament, or other organisations

## 4. SCOPE

This policy does not apply to complaints raised by LLMC workers, refer to the Workers Grievance Policy if you are an employee, volunteer or consultant.

## 5. DEFINITIONS

Complaint	An expression of dissatisfaction made to or about us, our services, staff, trademark or the handling of a complaint where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required. (AS/NZ 10002:2014).
Dispute	An unresolved complaint escalated either within or outside of our organisation.

Complaint handling procedure	All the procedures, practices, workers, hardware and software used by LLMC in the management of complaints.
Feedback	Opinions, comments and expressions of interest or concern, made directly or indirectly, explicitly or implicitly, to or about us, about our services or complaint handling system where a response is not explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required.
Compliment	An expression of praise or admiration made to or about us, our service or our workers.

## 6. CODE OF PRACTICE AND ETHICS

- Complaints will be addressed with integrity, equity, objectivity, and impartiality.
- The person handling the complaint will not be the subject of the complaint.
- Actual or perceived conflicts of interest will be managed responsibly.
- Internal reviews will be conducted by someone other than the original decision-maker.
- LLMC staff are empowered to resolve complaints promptly and informally where appropriate.
- Flexible approaches will be adopted to enhance accessibility for complainants and their representatives.
- Each complaint will be assessed on its merits, with involvement from the complainant and/or their representative where possible.
- The identity of complainants will be protected where practical and appropriate.
- Personal information will only be disclosed or used in accordance with privacy laws and confidentiality obligations.
- For complaints involving multiple organisations, LLMC will coordinate communication to ensure clarity and consistency.
- Internal coordination will be maintained for complaints involving multiple departments.

## 7. POLICY

### How to Submit a Complaint, Compliment or Feedback

Submit via our website [www.lifelinemidcoast.org.au](http://www.lifelinemidcoast.org.au) and fill in the feedback form under "Contact Us". Alternatively, you may call reception on 02 65812800 or email [feedback@lifelinemidcoast.org.au](mailto:feedback@lifelinemidcoast.org.au).

### Receiving Complaints, Compliments and Feedback

All Lifeline Mid Coast workers are expected to respond to compliments, complaints, and feedback in alignment with LLMC's core values of respect, integrity, excellence, flexibility, and compassion. Any worker can receive, or assist the lodging of a complaint, compliment or feedback. Where it is within the workers jurisdiction, they may respond

through the above code or practice and ethics. All complaints must be passed to supervisors, managers or the next person in charge.

#### Responding to Complaints

Managers are responsible for responding to complaints effectively and efficiently. This includes:

- Using active listening and empathetic, clear communication.
- Identifying the root cause of the issue.
- Offering appropriate solutions guided by the preferences of the complainant.
- Following up with the complainant where necessary to ensure resolution.

Complaints involving serious allegations, such as breaches of LLMC policies including the Code of Conduct, bullying prevention, sexual harassment, or anti-discrimination, must be reported immediately to the manager's direct supervisor and/or Human Resources.

LLMC accepts anonymous complaints and feedback. All such submissions will be followed up as far as reasonably possible, based on the information provided.

#### Confidentiality

When a complaint involves allegations against a specific worker, confidentiality must be maintained to protect the individual's rights and reputation. Personal information will be handled in accordance with relevant privacy laws and LLMC's confidentiality obligations.

#### Review and Monitoring

LLMC is committed to the regular monitoring and review of its complaint handling processes as part of its broader risk management and continuous improvement framework. Managers are expected to use complaints, compliments, and feedback constructively to support team development and operational enhancements.

Trends in complaints will be analysed to inform practice improvements and will be integrated with LLMC's Continuous Improvement Policy.

## **8. RECORD KEEPING**

Managers are responsible for maintaining records of all complaints, compliments, and feedback they receive. In cases where a complaint leads to disciplinary action, operational changes, or other significant outcomes, managers must ensure detailed documentation is completed and submitted to their direct supervisor. All records should be stored securely and in accordance with LLMC's confidentiality and data management protocols.

## 9. CONSEQUENCES OF BREACH OF THIS POLICY

Breaches to this policy may result in disciplinary action such as performance management and warnings.

## 10. AUTHORISATION

Authorised by the CEO, C.Vaara, CEO, on behalf of UCA Lifeline Mid Coast.