



# FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT POLICY

The policy on how feedback and complaints are managed

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## 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 As the peak body for Aboriginal child, young people, families and communities in New South Wales, AbSec – NSW Child, Family and Community Peak Aboriginal Corporation (“**AbSec**”) is dedicated to the welfare of our young ones, ensuring that their rights are upheld and supported within their communities. We recognise and value feedback and complaints as an opportunity to enhance the work that we do, including that of our subsidiaries, to ensure our advocacy meets the needs of our community. This is how we fulfil the principles that guide us in pursuit of our vision.
- 1.2 This policy sets out how we handle feedback, both positive or negative, as well as complaints, in a transparent, fair, and timely manner in relation to the work of AbSec.

## 2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy applies to all stakeholders who engage with AbSec. It also applies to the Board, employees, volunteers and contractors of AbSec.
- 2.2 This policy does not apply to:
- Workplace grievances or employment-related disputes, which are managed under the [Workplace Grievance Policy](#);
  - Complaints commenced through litigation; or
  - Feedback received via feedback forms and/or surveys.

## 3. POLICY

### Feedback and complaint management principles

- 3.1 Together with our organisational principles that guide us, our feedback and complaints management process is guided by the following principles which is overarched by a stakeholder-focussed approach, ensuring that all feedback and complaints are handled with empathy, fairness and respect:

<b>Commitment</b>	We maintain a transparent and effective feedback and complaints handling process that supports continuous improvement in our advocacy for the Aboriginal children, young people and families in New South Wales.
<b>Accessibility and empowerment</b>	Our feedback and complaints process is easy to access and understand by all individuals. We empower our stakeholders without any barriers, from raising feedback, complaints or seeking resolutions.
<b>Responsiveness</b>	We acknowledge feedback and complaints promptly and strive to resolve issues efficiently.
<b>Fair and impartial</b>	We handle all feedback and complaints openly, honestly, and without bias, ensuring that all parties have the right to be heard and that decisions are based on objective evidence.
<b>Confidentiality</b>	We respect the privacy of individuals and managed complaints with sensitivity in compliance with privacy laws.
<b>Accountability</b>	We maintain clear roles and responsibilities for complaints handling. Our senior management review feedback and complaint trends and outcomes to ensure accountability and improvements in the way that we deliver our work.

<b>Continuous improvement</b>	We use feedback and complaints as opportunities to enhance our advocacy and operations.
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## Providing feedback

3.2 Anyone can provide feedback, including compliments, suggestions, or concerns on our work. Feedback can be submitted by:

- Sharing in person with our team.
- Our online form at <https://absec.org.au/contact-us/>.
- Sending an email to [admin@absec.org.au](mailto:admin@absec.org.au).
- Calling AbSec on (02) 9559 5299.
- Writing a letter to AbSec – NSW Child, Family and Community Peak Aboriginal Corporation at PO Box 3045, Redfern NSW 2016.
- Posting on our social media platforms.

3.3 We respect the right of individuals to provide feedback anonymously. If you prefer to remain anonymous or use a pseudonym, you can submit your feedback without identifying details however this may limit our ability to follow up with you directly. We will still take your feedback seriously and use it for our continuous improvement.

## Complaint management process

### Types of complaints

#### ***Informal complaints***

3.4 Informal complaints involve low-level concerns that are often resolved quickly through discussion. This is the most effective way to resolve a problem. Informal complaints may be raised verbally or in writing and do not require a formal investigation.

#### ***Formal complaints***

3.5 Formal complaints are concerns which are more serious in nature or relate to ongoing issues and require a structured response. Formal complaints must be submitted in writing.

### Lodging a complaint

3.6 A complaint regarding our work can be made by:

- Sharing in person with our team for informal complaints only.
- Our online form at <https://absec.org.au/contact-us/>.
- Sending an email to [admin@absec.org.au](mailto:admin@absec.org.au).
- Calling AbSec on (02) 9559 5299. Our staff will document the details accurately and respectfully.
- Writing a letter to AbSec – NSW Child, Family and Community Peak Aboriginal Corporation at PO Box 3045, Redfern NSW 2016.

## Handling complaints

- 3.7 We follow a structured process to manage and resolve complaints in a fair and timely manner. The key steps include:

<b>Acknowledgement</b>	We acknowledge receipt of the complaint immediately or within two business days.
<b>Assessment</b>	We assess the nature of the complaint to determine the respondent.
<b>Investigate</b>	Where an investigation is required, we gather relevant information, consult with involved parties, and review policies and regulations in line with the principles of procedural fairness.
<b>Resolution</b>	We aim to resolve complaints that require an investigation within twenty (20) <sup>1</sup> business days.
<b>Outcome</b>	We inform the complainant of the resolution and any actions taken.
<b>Escalation</b>	If the complainant is not satisfied, the matter can be escalated to an external body.

- 3.8 At any stage, the complainant may choose to have a support person to provide emotional, cultural, and practical support to help ensure they feel safe, understood, and empowered to participate fully.
- 3.9 If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of a complaint, the matter can be escalated to the [Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations](#), the [Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission](#), [NSW Department of Communities and Justice](#) or [NSW Fair Trading](#).
- 3.10 The [Enquiry, Feedback and Complaint Management Flowchart](#) included at Attachment “A” provides a visual overview of the process including our response timeframes.

## Staff training

- 3.11 We ensure that all relevant staff receive appropriate training in feedback and complaints management including:
- Handling of feedback and informal and formal complaints.
  - Principles of fairness and impartiality.
  - Confidentiality and privacy obligations.
  - Accurate record keeping.
- 3.12 Training will be provided at employee induction and refreshed annually, or as required.
- 3.13 Training will be evaluated for its effectiveness.

## 4. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 4.1 The Board is responsible for the approval of this policy.
- 4.2 The Executive Team are responsible for the periodic review of feedback and complaints trends.
- 4.3 All staff are responsible for understanding and complying with this policy.

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<sup>1</sup> Target timeframe.

## Compliance, monitoring and review

- 4.4 The Director, Corporate Services is responsible for the:
- Development, periodic review and implementation of this policy.
  - Periodic reporting of trends relating to feedback and complaints.

## Reporting

- 4.5 Reports relating to feedback and complaints are reported periodically to the Executive Team and AbSec Board to identify trends, systemic issues and for continuous improvement to enhance our practices. This may include summarised and de-identified complaint reports, which may be shared with governing bodies to inform decision-making.

## Records management

- 4.6 Feedback and complaints are recorded securely in accordance with legal, regulatory, and best practice requirements for a minimum of seven (7) years from the date of the outcome.
- 4.7 Access to complaint records including personal information is restricted to authorised staff involved in the complaint resolution process and will remain confidential, shared only on a need-to-know basis, or as required by law.
- 4.8 Records be will securely disposed of when no longer required as part of AbSec's data retention policy.

## 5. DEFINITIONS

**Complaint:** an expression of dissatisfaction about AbSec's work, actions, or decisions, where a structured response or resolution is expected.

**Complainant:** a person or persons that submit a complaint or raises a concern about AbSec's work, decision, or conduct.

**Feedback:** any comments, suggestions, compliments, or concerns about AbSec that can either be positive or negative.

**Formal complaint:** a more serious or complex concern that requires a structured investigation and documented response.

**Informal complaint:** a concern raised that is typically easily resolved without a formal investigation.

## 6. RELATED LEGISLATION, STANDARDS AND DOCUMENTS

- 6.1 Relevant legislation includes:
- *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* (Cth)
  - *Fair Trading Act 1987* (NSW)
  - *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006* (Cth)
  - *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* (NSW)
  - *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth)
- 6.2 ISO 10002 Quality Management: Customer Satisfaction which guides organisations to effectively receive, manage and resolve customer complaints.

6.3 Relevant AbSec documents include:

- [Code of Conduct](#)
- [Risk Management Policy](#)
- [Communications and Media Policy](#)
- [Information, Records Management and Document Control Procedure](#)
- [Workplace Grievance Policy](#)

## 7. BREACHES

7.1 Any breaches of this policy must be reported to the Director, Corporate Services and may result in disciplinary action.

## 8. FEEDBACK

8.1 Feedback about this document can be emailed to the Director, Corporate Services at [governance@absec.org.au](mailto:governance@absec.org.au).

## 9. APPROVAL AND REVIEW DETAILS

<b>Document Name</b>	Feedback and Complaints Policy	<b>Document Number</b>	-
		<b>Version Number</b>	2.2
<b>Department</b>	Corporate Services	<b>Approved by</b>	AbSec Board
<b>Effective Date</b>	29 May 2025	<b>Date Approved</b>	29 May 2025
<b>Policy Owner</b>	Director, Corporate Services	<b>Review Date</b>	Three years

Version Number	Revision Date	Author	Description
1.0	Unknown	Unknown	Initial draft.
1.0	Jul-18	Unknown	Revised.
1.0	19-Jul-19	AbSec Board	Approval.
2.0	13-Mar-25	Isabel Borg, Director, Corporate Services	Comprehensive review of policy and added to new template.
2.0	25-Mar-25	All staff	Review.
2.1	27-Mar-25	Isabel Borg, Director, Corporate Services	Minor updates.
2.1	-	John Leha, Chief Executive Officer	Endorsement.
2.2	10-Apr-25	AbSec Board	Review and minor updates.
2.2	29-May-25	AbSec Board	Approval.

## 10. Attachments

Attachment A – [Enquiry, Feedback and Complaint Management Flowchart](#)

## 11. Useful links

[Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission](#)

[Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations](#)

[NSW Department of Communities and Justice](#)

[NSW Fair Trading](#)