

## 1. Purpose

To enable Fishcare Victoria to provide a consistent and equitable response to a concern or complaint raised by a participant, parent or guardian and to meet the requirements of the Child Safe Standards.

## 2. Scope

- This policy applies to:
  - Fishcare Participants
  - Fishcare participant Parents/Guardians
  - Fishcare participant organisations

## 3. Raising a Concern or Complaint

A participant, parent or guardian can raise a concern or complaint about any aspect of Fishcare Victoria's operations or the welfare or safety of a participant.

About What/Issue	Who to Contact	How
Activity Delivery	Regional Fishcare Facilitator	By email, phone, or in person.
Activity content	Regional Fishcare Facilitator	
Complex Issues – participant welfare (including child safety matters), Child Safety reports, Staff Members, Staff Code of Conduct Breaches, Volunteer Code of Conduct Breaches, General Matters	Executive Officer	Appointments should be made for in-person contact to ensure there is sufficient time and a quiet location available to discuss the matter.

### Participants, parents, guardians and participant organisations are asked to:

- Raise their concern as soon as possible using the previous table for guidance
- Provide detailed information, which may be requested in writing
- Maintain and respect everyone's privacy and confidentiality
- Be calm, courteous, honest and sincere

### Participants, parents, guardians and participant organisations are also asked to:

- Recognise everyone has rights and responsibilities that must be balanced
- Respect and understand each other's point of view; value difference rather than judge and blame
- Realise we need to achieve an outcome acceptable to everyone involved

#### 4. Addressing Concerns and Complaints

Fishcare Victoria's response will be prompt, courteous, efficient and fair. All matters will be dealt with in-line with Fishcare Victoria Policies.

The following process will be followed in response to a concern or complaint:

- The concern or complaint will be acknowledged either in person, by telephone, or in writing
- The appropriate staff member will look into the concern or complaint and provide a response as soon as possible
- All formal discussions and actions will be recorded

#### 5. Roles and Responsibilities

Fishcare Facilitators will investigate and address concerns and complaints relating to minor day-to-day incidents or participant activity related complaints.

Fishcare Facilitators will investigate and address concerns regarding their specific activities. The Executive Officers will do so for state wide delivery (if required), or where concerns brought to the attention of a Fishcare Facilitator are not considered to have been dealt with appropriately.

The Executive Officer is responsible for investigating and addressing concerns and complaints relating to more complex matters, such as participant welfare, child safety reports, other staff members, other staff members code of conduct breaches, volunteers & breaches of volunteer code of conduct, policy, and general matters.

Where a concern or complaint involves the Executive Officer, the matter will be addressed directly by the Committee. If the Executive Officer is present at the Committee meeting, he/she shall be asked to declare a conflict of interest and remove themselves from discussion on the matter.

#### 6. Responses

Fishcare Victoria will work with the parent or guardian to find an appropriate remedy such as:

- An explanation or further information
- Mediation, counselling or other support
- An apology, expression of regret or admission of fault
- Review a decision
- Review policies, procedures or practices
- Make a report to the Department of Human Services Child Protection or Child First

All staff involved in handling complaints and grievances will take appropriate measures to ensure each matter is dealt with discretely, and that confidentiality and privacy of information is maintained in accordance with legislative requirements.

## 7. Timeframes

Timeframes for dealing with complaints and grievances will vary depending on the complexity of the matter. However, Fishcare Victoria will take all reasonable efforts to ensure that complaints are addressed;

- As promptly and efficiently as practicable
- Within a timeframe that is agreeable to the parties involved
- In a manner that supports due process and the principles of natural justice

## 8. If a concern or complaint is not resolved

If a concern or complaint raised with a Fishcare Facilitator is not satisfactorily resolved it will be referred to the Executive Officer.

- If the Executive Officer is the subject of the original concern or complaint, it will be referred to the Fishcare Committee.
- Any matter that remains unresolved after being dealt with by the Executive Officer will be referred to the Fishcare Committee.
- The Fishcare Committee will then investigate the matter and determine an appropriate outcome. If the complaint refers to an action of any person who is also a Committee member, that person shall be required to be absent from Committee deliberations of the matter.
- If required, the Committee will provide information for the participant, parent or guardian to lodge an appeal with the relevant authority if the matter still remains unresolved.

## Endorsed by Committee

17<sup>th</sup> February, 2020

*This policy can be updated as required.*