

Grievance Process

Policy

The Carers ACT Mental Health Carers Voice Program (MHCV) strives to create and maintain friendly practices that enable a culture of mutual care and support and where people feel valued and happy.

The Grievance Policy is governed by the principle that complaints and grievances must be dealt with at the appropriate level, and in a manner that promotes natural justice and fairness for all parties.

The objective of this policy is to ensure that grievances are resolved fairly, by negotiation and discussion between the parties. It is the responsibility of both Carers ACT and all relevant people to make all reasonable attempts to resolve the grievance or dispute in the shortest practicable time.

All people have the right for a grievance to be heard. Any person about whom a grievance has been made, or who has made a complaint, will have all their rights respected, including the right to reply to any complaint. All parties will be kept informed throughout the process of resolving the issue.

A participant and/ or representative will not have their membership affected in any way by the instigation of the grievance and dispute resolution procedure.

At any stage in the grievance and dispute resolution procedure, all people may obtain assistance from an advocate they nominate, and/ or have a support person present in any discussion.

Procedure

In the event of a dispute/ grievance arising whilst carrying out participation or representation duties the procedure to be followed to resolve the matter will be as follows:

1. In the first instance the person may attempt to resolve the grievance with the other concerned party. This applies to situations involving other participants, representatives, Carers ACT staff, or Carers ACT.
2. If the situation is not resolved then:
 - a. If the grievance is with another MHCV member, then the Carers MHCV Officer is to be informed.
 - b. If the grievance is with the Carers MHCV Officer, then the Carers ACT Policy Manager is to be informed.
 - c. If the grievance is with Carers ACT, then the Chief Executive Officer is to be informed.

This will mean that the grievance will be dealt with at a more formal level.

3. If the grievance is still not resolved then either:
 - a. the CEO is to be informed, if the grievance is with a person, or
 - b. the Carers ACT Board of Directors is to be informed, if the grievance is with Carers ACT.

The grievance will be dealt with at a very formal level.

4. If, having exhausted all these steps, the grievance is still without resolution, mediation can be initiated. A professional mediator will be engaged for this process. A representative may be present at the request of either party during this stage.
5. It is hoped that steps 1) to 5) of this process will take place within 10 working days.
6. If a substantial grievance still exists after mediation, or the grievance is complex, the matter may be referred to the Human Rights Commission for further mediation, conciliation or arbitration.
7. **The result of this step will be accepted by all parties as ending the matter.**

Please note:

- While these discussions are taking place and/ or until the grievance is settled, all people will continue to participate as usual.
- No resolution will be prejudiced by the person continuing to participate.
- At any stage during these processes, any person can request that a support person be present at any meetings.