



Angelsea SLSC Policy Document

Reference: 033

Reviewed:

TITLE: Grievance Policy

BACKGROUND

This procedure explains what to do if you have a grievance about anything to do with the Angelsea Surf Life Saving Club (ASLSC). A grievance means any type of problem, concern or complaint about your participation in Club activities or the environment in which you are involved. For example, grievances might pertain to:

- How a Club issue has been handled
- The Club environment
- Safety in the workplace
- Treatment by an official, officer or a member
- Bullying
- Discrimination
- Development and training availability
- Harassment

ASLSC recognises you have a right to feel safe and be free from harassment and discrimination within the club environment, and this document sets out what a member should do if they believe they have a grievance.

RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

This policy should be read in conjunction with the ASLSC Member Protection Policy. It is also adapted from Surf Life Saving Australia's Grievance Procedure Policy 6.06 which should be referred to in case of dispute.

KEY PRINCIPLES

Confidential – only the people directly involved in the grievance or seeking to resolve it can have access to information and documentation pertaining to the grievance. See the section headed “Record Keeping” for more information about where and how records will be kept.

Impartial (fair) – all sides get a chance to tell their side of the story. No-one makes any assumptions or takes any action until all relevant information has been collected and considered. All sides have access to support or representation if they want or need it.

Free of unfair repercussions or victimisation – club officials will take all necessary steps to make sure people involved in a grievance are not



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victimised for coming forward with a grievance or helping sort it out. If anyone victimises anyone else for making a grievance, they may be disciplined. However, if you use this grievance procedure to make up a grievance against someone that is not true, you too can be disciplined.

Sensitivity – any club official given the responsibility to investigate and resolve grievances will do so in a professional manner and always treat the matter with sensitivity.

Timely – we aim to deal with all grievances as quickly as possible. However, Club officials responsible for managing the grievance will ensure that due process is undertaken and is not jeopardised for the sake of deadlines. The managing official will ensure all participants are kept informed of progress and estimated time for completion.

Member Protection Officer (MPO) – is a position that is appointed under the constitution of the ASLSC and is responsible for addressing any grievance against activities of ASLSC and/or members of the ASLSC. This can involve gathering details of any grievance, investigating and gathering facts, coordinating responses, communicating with the ASLSC Board and finalising the grievance. The MPO may refer the grievance to the ASLSC President for assistance and a Review Panel under certain circumstances.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE A GRIEVANCE

STEP 1:

If you feel safe to, and are willing and able, try to sort it out yourself with the person or people involved.

On most occasions' grievances can be sorted out by a simple explanation or apology. If possible, you should approach the person or people involved as soon as possible.

If you aren't sure how to handle the problem yourself, refer the matter to the ASLSC MPO or a Club Director if the MPO is unavailable.

STEP 2:

The MPO will:

- Gather full information about the grievance including details of other persons involved (person/s that caused the grievance and any witnesses to the grievance).



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- Explain how the grievance procedure works, (including what will be done to protect you from victimisation). The MPO will also refer you to people who can provide you with advice or support if needed.
- Inform the ASLSC President (unless the grievance relates to him/her) of the details of the grievance matter and the steps to be taken to resolve it. The ASLSC President is required to keep this information strictly confidential.
- Decide with the ASLSC President whether the MPO is the appropriate person to continue handling the grievance, determine if there might be a real or perceived conflict of interest, and whether the MPO has the necessary expertise to manage the grievance. The ASLSC President may determine whether additional assistance is required to mediate the grievance and delegate a member of the ASLSC Board for this purpose.

STEP 3:

The MPO must contact all parties involved to clarify details or gather additional information. In the event of needing to speak with witnesses, confidentiality will be maintained at all times.

The party bringing the grievance claim must not discuss the matter with anyone other than the MPO and must not under any circumstances, approach any of the witnesses to the claim.

STEP 4:

The MPO will decide how the grievance should be resolved and inform all relevant parties.

Where the grievance involves an allegation of a less serious nature *and* the main facts *are not* in dispute, the MPO will offer to “mediate” it. This means they will help you come to a joint agreement about how the grievance should be resolved. If the person making the complaint does not want mediation, the MPO will discuss other processes (e.g. letter of apology, counselling, etc.) with you.

The MPO will keep a confidential record of the agreement reached and no further action will be taken, unless one party complains that the agreement has been breached.

Where the grievance involves an allegation of a more serious nature, such as a major breach of discipline, a child protection issue, or a criminal act, the MPO will immediately refer the matter to the ASLSC President who will convene a Review Panel consisting of the President, MPO and two



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Directors to determine appropriate action and advise all parties involved. All claims, evidence and witness statements will be reviewed by the Panel and a decision on action determined by it.

NOTES:

KINDS OF REMEDIAL ACTION AVAILABLE

Remedial action might include:

- Further mediation by the President's review panel
- A request for a formal written apology by the person/s determined as causing the grievance to the aggrieved party
- Counselling
- Mandatory training course attendance

RECORD KEEPING

The MPO will maintain a record of:

- interviews with all parties to a grievance; and
- the action taken to resolve the grievance

These notes will be kept confidential by the MPO in a designated secure place and in a secure database (password protected). This will also enable systemic problems to be identified and trends reported on.

APPEALS

Should the aggrieved party or the person/s accused with creating the aggrieved complaint consider that the grievance procedure has not been followed, or if the result is unfair, he/she/they have the right to appeal the decision and proposed action.

Appeals should be made to the MPO who will refer the matter to the ASLSC President and determine whether it should be the subject of a new hearing by the Review Panel.



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In such cases the Review Panel will be the final arbiter.

SUPPORT

The MPO is someone appointed by ASLSC who has been trained in providing such support.

Both the aggrieved and accused parties are entitled to support from the Club's MPO, other persons within ASLSC, or a friend or relative. Supporters provide moral / emotional support for the person involved but with exception of the MPO, support people may attend grievance hearings but cannot participate in discussion at hearings unless the MPO decides that they might have evidence or information material to the case. In such circumstances, they can be called upon by the MPO if she/he considers that this will assist the hearing.

In all circumstances support persons are also bound by confidentiality.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Related policies and procedures include SLSA's Grievance Procedure (Policy 6.06) and SLSA's Member Protection Policy (Policy 6.05). Reference can also be made to SLSA Regulations which provide guidance on judiciary and disciplinary procedures.

The contact details of the Member Protection Officer are available on the ASLSC website.