

**GRIEVANCE AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION POLICY****Lake Baroon Catchment Care Group Inc**

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Drafted by	Manager	Scheduled review date	As required

Policy adapted from <https://www.communitydirectors.com.au/icda/policybank/>

Introduction

Lake Baroon Catchment Care Group encourages its employees and volunteers to resolve any issues or concerns that they may have at the earliest opportunity with their immediate supervisor.

The preferred process involves employees and volunteers being able to resolve issues to their satisfaction internally, without feeling they have to refer to external organisations or authorities for assistance.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide an avenue through which employees and volunteers, and their managers, can resolve work-related complaints as they arise.

Policy

Lake Baroon Catchment Care Group will establish mechanisms to promote fast and efficient resolution of workplace issues.

Open communication and feedback are regarded as essential elements of a satisfying and productive work environment. Employees and volunteers should feel comfortable with discussing issues with their manager or supervisor in accordance with the procedures outlined below.

All formal avenues for handling of grievances will be fully documented and the employee/volunteer's wishes will be taken into account in the determination of appropriate steps and actions.

No employee will be intimidated or unfairly treated in any respect if they utilise this Policy to resolve an issue.

This Policy applies to permanent and part-time paid employees and volunteer workers.

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of **Management and Supervisors** to ensure that:

- they identify, prevent and address potential problems before they become formal grievances
- they are aware of, and are committed to the principles of communicating and information sharing with their employees and volunteers
- all decisions relating to employment practices are made with consideration given to the ramifications for the individual, as well as the organisation in general
- any grievance is handled in the most appropriate manner at the earliest opportunity
- all employees and volunteers are treated fairly and without fear of intimidation

It is the responsibility of **Employees (including Volunteers)** to ensure that:

- they attempt to resolve any issues through their immediate supervisor and through internal processes at the earliest opportunity

Procedure

Employment Practices

All Managers and Supervisors should be aware of the possible ramifications of their actions when dealing with employee/volunteer issues. They must ensure that all employees/volunteers are treated with fairness, equality and respect.

If there are any doubts or queries in relation to how to deal with a particular set of circumstances, Managers or Supervisors should consult with Management Committee members and/or the President for advice at the earliest opportunity.

Where a grievance or dispute has been brought to a Manager's attention, he/she should assess whether the employee involved is covered by an Employee Contract, and if so should refer to that document for grievance procedures. If the employee/volunteer involved is not covered by such a document, the guidelines below should be followed.

Grievances and Dispute Resolution

An employee or volunteer who considers that they have a dispute or grievance should raise the matter with their immediate supervisor as a first step towards resolution. If this is not possible the employee or volunteer can appoint any person to act on their behalf.

The two parties should discuss the matter openly and work together to achieve a desired outcome.

The Manager or Supervisor should check for clarification of the issue to ensure they fully understand the complainant's concern. Managers should follow the standard procedure of offering the employee/volunteer the opportunity to have an independent witness at the discussion, ensuring they follow the steps outlined below:

- If more than one person is present, establish the role of each person
- Outline the process that is to be followed
- Inform the parties that any information obtained in the conduct of the review is confidential

- Listen to the complainant and diagnose the problem
- Ensure both parties have an opportunity to be heard
- Take accurate and detailed notes of all conversations (including dates, people involved) and attach any supporting documentation
- If deemed necessary, provide the employee/volunteers with a written summary of the meeting and clarification of the next steps to be taken

The Manager must ensure that the manner in which the meeting is conducted will be conducive to maintaining positive working relationships, and will provide a fair, objective and independent analysis of the situation.

All parties are to maintain complete confidentiality at all times.

If the matter is not resolved, the issue should be discussed with Management Committee members and/or the President. Again, the matter is to be discussed openly and objectively with management to ensure it is fully understood. If the matter can still not be resolved unbiased mediation must be allowed.

If the grievance/dispute is one of a confidential or serious nature involving the Employee/Volunteer's Manager, the complainant may discuss the issue directly with the Management Committee members and/or the President.

The resolution must be decided by an agreed on unbiased person or persons.

If a resolution cannot be agreed on either party may apply to the Supreme Court to make a decision on the dispute.