

Feedback, Compliments and Complaints Policy and Procedure

Policy Intention

The aim of this policy and procedure is to outline how anyone can provide feedback and lodge complaints regarding any aspect of Life Adore Living's operations, as well as the process Life Adore Living will follow to address or respond to that feedback and those complaints.

This policy applies to all stakeholders of the organization, including participants, families and carers, advocates, staff, volunteers, employees, other service providers, government agencies, and community members.

Issues raised by Life Adore Living staff (where applicable), volunteers, and employees will generally be addressed under the Life Adore Living Disputes and Grievances Policy. However, there may be instances where staff feedback is best handled under this policy.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Life Adore Living Complaints Policy and Procedure.

Definitions

1. Compliment: An expression of praise, encouragement, or gratitude regarding an individual staff member, a team, or a service.

2.Complaint: An expression of dissatisfaction made to or about an organization, related to its products, services, staff, or handling of a complaint, where a response or resolution is expected.

For the purpose of this policy, a complaint is defined as a minor issue that can be resolved promptly or within 24 hours and does not require a detailed investigation. Complaints may include expressions of displeasure, such as poor service, as well as verbal or written complaints directly related to the service.

1.General Complaint: Relates to any aspect of the service, such as a lost clothing item or service fees. Complaints should be addressed as quickly as possible to prevent escalation.

2.Grievance: A formal complaint that cannot be addressed immediately and involves more serious matters, such as a breach of policy or unmet care expectations.

Scope

Compliments, complaints, and other feedback provide Life Adore Living with valuable insights into participant satisfaction and opportunities for improvement. Feedback is taken seriously and is viewed as a chance for growth.

Life Adore Living effectively records and manages feedback to identify areas for improvement, maintain a consistent approach to complaint resolution, reduce potential future complaints, and facilitate efficient resource allocation.

Resolving complaints quickly and respectfully can restore a person's confidence in Life Adore Living's services and help prevent further escalation. A responsive and fair complaint management system is essential for achieving this.

Life Adore Living has a comprehensive feedback, compliment, and complaint handling system that emphasizes visibility, accessibility, responsiveness, assessment and investigation, feedback, continuous improvement, and service excellence.

Life Adore Living's approach ensures:

- Stakeholders understand their rights and responsibilities.
- Information on the feedback, compliment, and complaint management process is easily accessible.
- Increased satisfaction among participants regarding the management of their feedback and complaints.
- Data recording to identify trends or systemic issues.
- Staff demonstrate awareness of the feedback, compliments, and complaints management processes.

- Staff develop the necessary skills to manage compliments, complaints, and feedback.
- An organizational culture focused on effective, person-centered complaint resolution and continuous improvement.

Procedure

The Director of Life Adore Living will promote best practices, continuous improvement, and a culture that encourages staff, participants, and other stakeholders to voice complaints and concerns without fear of retribution. This will be evaluated during annual performance reviews of management staff.

Upon joining, all staff will undergo an induction program that includes information on staff retention strategies and their rights to access feedback, complaints, and dispute resolution processes. They will also be trained on this policy and procedure, as well as how to provide stakeholders with relevant information.

Annual performance reviews will assess staff awareness of this policy and their roles and responsibilities in handling complaints from service users. Additional on-the-job and formal training will be provided as necessary, with informal monitoring by supervisors and managers.

Team meeting agendas will include a standing item on Continuous Improvement, focusing on staff and participant feedback and complaints.

The Life Adore Living Participant Handbook, website, and a dedicated Feedback, Compliments, and Complaints brochure will offer participants, their families, carers, and all stakeholders accessible information about this policy and procedure. This will include details on how feedback and complaints will be addressed and contacts for external agencies, including advocacy and support services. Information will be clearly displayed and provided by staff upon request.

Any participant or stakeholder wishing to submit feedback or a complaint will be provided with information about this policy. Information on providing feedback and making complaints will be available in various formats, including Easy English and alternative languages. Interpreters and referrals to advocates can be arranged.

Life Adore Living staff will provide this policy and procedure to all participants, their families, and carers upon their initial access to the service and will continue to remind them of their right to complain without fear of service repercussions.

All personal information collected to manage feedback or complaints will be handled in accordance with privacy legislation and the Life Adore Living Privacy and Confidentiality Policy. Feedback and complaints will be treated confidentially and discussed only with those directly involved. All information related to feedback and complaints will be securely stored in compliance with the Life Adore Living Records and Information Management Policy.

Complaints and feedback can be submitted by a third party on behalf of another individual, provided that consent has been given.

The Director will track and analyze feedback and complaint data to identify ongoing issues. Feedback, complaints, and dispute resolution matters will be reported to the Director monthly as part of the Continuous Improvement report.

Feedback

Feedback can be provided to any staff member at any time and in any format by any stakeholder, including:

- A staff member (where applicable);
- Feedback and Complaint Forms;
- Staff planning days and Director meetings (with participant and stakeholder representatives);
- participant forums;

- staff collection of participant feedback after major interactions with the service (e.g., initial assessment, planning, reviews, exit);
- annual participant service delivery and satisfaction surveys, which all participants will be asked to complete; and
- annual staff and stakeholder satisfaction surveys, with staff invited to participate and stakeholders selected randomly.

If feedback is provided verbally, the receiving staff member will document it on a Life Adore Living Feedback and Complaint Form.

Providing feedback through any Life Adore Living channels is voluntary.

Life Adore Living Complaints Management Process

The complaints management process can be simplified into five steps:

1. Receive

Individuals are encouraged to speak directly to a staff member first to resolve the matter informally. Staff will:

- Listen openly to the complainant's concerns.
- Ask what outcome the complainant is seeking.
- Clearly inform the complainant about the complaint process, timelines, and set realistic expectations.
- Be accountable and empathetic towards the affected person.
- Assess situations posing immediate threats or requiring

specialized responses.

All complaints will be referred to the Director for resolution. The Director will discuss minor complaints directly with the parties involved. If a complaint cannot be resolved promptly, it will be treated as a grievance, with the complainant advised of their rights to lodge a formal grievance with support if needed. A Feedback and Complaints Form will be available, though not mandatory, for lodging grievances.

Grievances can be lodged:

- Directly with a staff member (verbally or using a completed form);
- By email; or
- In writing.

Individuals can also lodge complaints directly with external agencies such as the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) or the NSW Ombudsman.

Participants making complaints are encouraged to use an advocate of their choice. If a complaint alleges criminal activity or abuse, it will be referred to the Director immediately, who will report it per the Life Adore Living Incident Management Policy.

Staff will ensure that complainants are not adversely affected by their complaints.

2. Record

The Director will:

- Record all relevant information about the compliment or complaint in its original and simplest form in the Life Adore Living Complaints and Grievances Register.
- Securely store the register, accessible only to the Director.

3. Acknowledge

The Director will:

- Acknowledge receipt of the grievance within two working days to build trust with the complainant.
- Offer anonymity if requested, which may limit contact.
- Set realistic expectations and refer the matter to other organizations if appropriate.
- Avoid conflicts of interest by appointing an unrelated investigator if necessary.
- Provide timeframes and expectations to the complainant whenever possible.

4. Resolve

To resolve a complaint or grievance, the Director will:

- Involve the complainant and keep them informed about

progress.

- Request additional information as needed, with set timeframes for submission.
- Consider extensions only when necessary and communicate these to the complainant.
- Record all decisions and actions taken during the investigation in the Complaints Register.
- Focus solely on the identified complaint issues.

Investigations will not be conducted by someone involved in the complaint. The Director will appoint an appropriate investigator if needed.

5. Communicate Resolution

Life Adore Living will respond to all complaints as soon as possible and within 28 days of acknowledgment. If a full response cannot be provided within this timeframe, an update will be given to the complainant.

The Director (or delegate) will:

- Discuss the outcome verbally with the complainant before providing written advice.
- Include information on available recourse for further action.
- Offer a review process to assess the initial investigation and

allow for additional information to be considered.

- Relay outcomes to relevant areas for service improvement.
- Seek feedback from the complainant about their experience with the complaints process.

Support will be available to assist complainants in understanding correspondence related to their complaints.

Possible responses to complaints may include:

- Explaining processes.
- Rectifying issues.
- Providing an apology.
- Ongoing