

POLICY NAME: Complaints and Disputes

1.0 Policy Statement

Peckys Limited ensures that each client accessing our service, their families and significant others are provided an environment where complaints, concerns, compliments and feedback are welcomed and viewed as an opportunity for recognition, improvement and learning.

Individuals are free to raise, and have resolved, any complaints or disputes he or she may have regarding the organisation or one of its services.

People have the right to make comments and complaints and are encouraged to exercise their right in a blame free and resolution focused culture; respecting an individual's right to privacy and confidentiality.

- 1.1** Peckys Limited will follow the principles of procedural fairness and comply with the requirements under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018. All complaints are treated as confidential, recorded in writing and processed in accordance with a structured procedure.
- 1.2** Peckys Limited ensures that when making a complaint, a person will:
- Receive support when reporting a complaint or dispute;
 - Be encouraged to raise any problem, complaint or dispute they have without fear of punishment;
 - Be listened to, treated with respect and have their problem, complaint or dispute resolved within agreed timeframes;
 - Receive access to interpreter services as required;
 - Be able to nominate the person they want within Peckys to act as the key contact regarding the complaint.
- 1.3** Clients accessing Peckys Limited services will receive ongoing information about the complaints and feedback procedure.
- 1.4** Information is made available about relevant external independent services that deal with complaints and disputes.
- 1.5** Our annual surveys, regarding service satisfaction, provide an additional means for people to report complaints and disputes.

2.0 Purpose

This policy ensures Peckys Limited receives and acts on feedback about its service. It complies with the service provider policy for the NDIS funded disability service providers including National Disability Insurance Scheme (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018.

3.0 Definitions

Complaint: Expression of dissatisfaction with Peckys Limited support, service or staff. Can include how a previous complaint was handled.

Feedback: Information received about Peckys Limited support, service or staff that serves to reinforce current practice or seeks to change an element of practice in the spirit of continuous improvement. Feedback is recorded on a Complaints and Feedback Form and added to the register.

Informal complaint: An expression of dissatisfaction, usually verbally, that can be resolved immediately and to the satisfaction of the person making the complaint. Does not need to be documented on the Complaints and Feedback Form.

Formal complaint: An expression of dissatisfaction, made verbally or in writing, that cannot be resolved immediately and may require further investigation. Any complaint made via the Complaints and Feedback form is considered a formal complaint.

Document References

- Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (NSW)
- Disability Inclusion Regulation 2014
- Community Services (Complaints, Reviews and Monitoring) Act 1993 No 2
- NDIS (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018

Forms

- Incident report
- Complaints and Feedback

1.0 Procedure

Peckys Limited ensures all clients are aware of how to provide feedback or make a complaint on joining the service and again at regular intervals, including their right to contact relevant external independent services that deal with complaints.

1.1 All staff are trained in how to manage complaints and feedback.

1.2 Complaints or feedback may be made by:

- Employees,
- Participant,
- The public,
- An advocate,
- Family member,
- Carers, or
- Anonymously.

1.3 Complaints and feedback can be made through:

- Contacting a member of staff verbally or in writing. The member of staff must offer to document the complaint on behalf of a participant (if required);
- Using the Complaint / Feedback Form;
- Using the Contact form on the Peckys website www.peckys.org.au;
- Contacting the CEO, verbally or in writing;
- Responding to questionnaires and surveys;
- Attending client meetings;
- Contacting external complaint agencies;
- Oral communication, in writing or any other relevant means.

2.0 Complaint Management

Peckys Limited aims to minimise areas where complaints may arise by having sound management systems and procedures.

2.1 Clients, carers/parents are welcomed and encouraged to discuss any concerns, complaints or give feedback to any Coordinators, Managers or staff members.

2.2 Peckys Limited promotes an environment that responds positively to feedback and ensures objectivity when managing complaints or disputes.

2.3 Peckys Limited will utilise any service feedback to examine the current systems and make amendments to ensure a quality service.

2.4 Peckys Limited recognises that complaints can be resolved at an informal level eliminating the need to follow a formal complaint procedure.

2.5 If a complaint cannot be resolved at an informal level, or a complaint or feedback is received on the Complaints and Feedback form, then the formal process must be followed.

3.0 Processing formal feedback and complaints

A person providing a formal complaint or feedback, or the staff member receiving the complaint or feedback, should document it on Peckys Limited Complaint and Feedback Form.

3.1 If possible, the Coordinator may be able to respond to the complaint or feedback at this level.

3.2 If a complaint has not been resolved at this level, it is to be referred to the Manager for that service. The Manager will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within two working days.

3.3 Peckys Limited will inform the complainant of support regarding their right to an interpreter, stages of decision making, mechanisms to protect privacy, and their ability to complain to the NDIS Commission.

3.4 Clients will be offered support of an advocate at any step of the procedure (see *1.8 Advocacy and Support*). Once an advocate becomes involved, they support the person throughout the whole process.

3.5 A complaint investigation plan is developed and documented in conjunction with the person raising the complaint. The plan will cover:

- Summary of the issues;
- Identification of other people to be consulted or interviewed;
- Documents or files to be reviewed;
- Timeframe for completion.

3.6 Investigations will adhere to the principles of impartiality, privacy, confidentiality, transparency and timeliness.

3.7 Complaints will not be discussed with anyone who does not have a genuine responsibility for resolving the issue.

3.8 Following an investigation a summary report with any recommendations and actions is to be completed.

- 3.9** After investigation and a satisfactory response has been documented the Manager for that service will:
- Ensure that the complaint investigation has been satisfactorily completed;
 - Determine if the complainant is satisfied with the outcome;
 - Follow up and consult with complainants about any concerns;
 - Consider if there are any systemic issues.
- 3.10** Complaint and Feedback Forms are generally not closed until the problem, complaint or dispute is resolved. An outcome of the complaint is to be given to the person within two weeks.
- 3.11** Complaints will be closed if no progress is made after three months. A complaint will be considered closed if the initial investigation has not resulted in a resolution within this timeframe.
- 3.12** All information is recorded in the Complaints and Feedback Register. Complaints are considered confidential and retained in a file in the CEO's office.
- 3.13** If Peckys Limited Management is unable to resolve the complaint; it is to be given to the Board of Directors for further support, information, resolution and referral.
- 3.14** Information is made available to clients and their families about relevant independent services which deal with complaints and grievances:
- 3.15** Clients and their families/carers/guardians receive information about the Peckys Complaints and Feedback procedure at the time of joining and at regular intervals.
- 3.16** Peckys Limited conducts annual surveys regarding service satisfaction. Surveys are anonymous and feedback is provided to clients and families.
- 3.17** Information is made available to clients and their families about relevant independent services which deal with complaints and grievances:
- NSW Ombudsman – 1800 060 409
 - Intellectual Disability Rights Service – (02) 9698 7277
 - NDIS Commission - Ph: 1800 035 544