



Bangalow Koalas Inc. Grievance Policy 2021



Introduction

This document provides information on handling grievances at Bangalow Koalas Inc. including how to make a complaint, how to deal with a complaint / grievance and how to support persons through the grievance process. It is inevitable that conflict can occur in the workplace. It is important that there are established procedures to deal with such occurrences quickly to protect the people involved and also to protect our organisation.

What is a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of concern, dissatisfaction or frustration with the quality or delivery of a service, a policy or procedure, or the conduct of another person.

Who can make a complaint?

Any person can make a complaint. This can include staff, volunteers, landholders, community members or committee members.

How can complaints be made?

Most complaints are reported as verbal grievances about minor matters that can be resolved informally. Ideally, these should be resolved informally with the relevant person.

If there is a feeling that the complaint needs to be formalised, the complaint must be lodged within 20 business days of the source of the cause or trigger for the complaint.

All grievances should be dealt with according to "Best practice" see Appendix 1.

What happens when a complaint is received?

With an initial complaint, the Complaints Resolution Officer is able to provide initial advice on how an issue is to be dealt with + to assist with resolution, if necessary.

If a formal complaint is lodged, the Complaints Resolution Officer or Committee / Board will determine whether it is a matter that can be resolved informally, or whether it should be dealt with by the Committee / Board. The President or responsible person will set up a process to facilitate this, if necessary.

After initial consultation with differing parties, the Committee / Board will convene a meeting of the persons involved. All parties are entitled to have a support person present including the President or responsible (if desired). Detailed minutes of these meetings together with the original complaint and other documentation will be kept. Copies of documents related to all formal complaints will be kept securely by Bangalow Koalas Inc.

All parties to a complaint must treat the matter confidentially. This means that all parties ensure that information is restricted to those engaged in the resolution.

The person managing the complaint is responsible for monitoring the well-being of all parties involved in, or affected by, the complaint.

Complaints should be dealt with as quickly as possible. It is reasonable that informal attempts to resolve a complaint should take place within a week.

Definitions

Grievance – an actual or perceived wrong considered as grounds for complaint.

Complaint – an expression of concern, dissatisfaction or frustration with the quality or delivery of service, a policy or procedure, or the conduct of another person.

Harassment – any form of ongoing behaviour that is not welcome, not asked for or not returned, and that offends, intimidates or humiliates a person. It includes sexual harassment.

Workplace Bullying – an employee is subject to workplace bullying if the person is subjected to repeated behaviour by another person, including the employee's supervisor, a co-worker, committee / Board member or a member of the community that:

- is unwelcome + unsolicited;
- the person considers to be offensive, intimidating, humiliating or threatening; and
- a reasonable person would consider to be offensive, humiliating, intimidating or threatening.

Appendix 1: Grievance handling Best Practice (this section is based on Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW guidelines)

All grievances must be handled:

- confidentially
- impartially
- fast
- according to a clear policy/procedure that everyone knows about.

If you have to handle a grievance, you should keep the above rules in mind – always.

Then you should go through the following steps:

1. Get full information from the "complainant" about their grievance and how they want it resolvedlisten, listen, listen.
2. Decide whether you are the appropriate person to continue handling the grievance.
3. If yes, put the information you've received from the complainant to the person/people they're complaining about and get their side of the story.
4. Decide whether the complaint is valid or not (this may involve talking with others/witnesses).
5. Decide how the complaint should be resolved (again this may involve talking with others – eg, management committee).
6. Act on your decision, letting both parties know what is going to happen and why, and telling them about other/external avenues of complaint if they are not happy with your decision.
7. Monitor the outcome.

Authorisation

This version was approved on: 27th January 2021

This version takes effect on: 4th February 2021

Authorised by: Linda Sparrow

President: Linda Sparrow

President or responsible person signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Linda Sparrow", is written over a horizontal line.