

Complaint Management Policy – Board Directors and CEO

27 May 2025

Purpose

This policy outlines the process for handling complaints made against Board Directors or the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). It ensures that complaints are addressed in an equitable, transparent, accessible, predictable and timely manner, promoting accountability and maintaining the integrity of the organisation in a way that is rights compatible.

Scope

This policy applies to any individual or entity (staff, stakeholders, or members of the public) who wishes to lodge a complaint against a Board Director or the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) regarding their behaviour, performance, or conduct in the course of their duties.

Policy Statements

Transparency

The process will be transparent, ensuring all parties involved understand the steps and outcomes.

Equitable

Complaints will be assessed fairly, impartially, and due process will be followed in investigating and resolving the issue on informed and respectful terms.

Confidentiality

All complaints and related information will be handled with strict confidentiality to protect the identities of all parties involved.

Accountability

Board Directors and the CEO are held accountable for their conduct, and this policy provides clear procedures for addressing any breaches or misconduct.

Timeliness

Complaints will be acknowledged promptly, and steps will be taken to resolve the issue within a reasonable timeframe.

Complaint Submission Process

Submission

Complaints should be submitted in writing to:

- the Board Chair and Chair of the People and Culture Committee (for complaints against a Board Director or the CEO);
- the Chair, People and Culture Committee (for complaints against the Board Chair)
- the Board Chair (for complaints against the Chair, People and Culture Committee) (**Designated Officer**).

The complaint should include:

- The nature of the complaint;
- Specific incidents or behaviours that are the basis of the complaint; and
- Any supporting evidence or documentation.

Correspondence address:

By post:

CONFIDENTIAL

For the attention of [insert title of Designated Officer]

The Benevolent Society

National Office

2e Wentworth Park Road

Glebe NSW 2037

By e-mail:

theproperofficer@benevolent.org.au

Please include in the subject line: CONFIDENTIAL Attn [insert title of Designated Officer]

In serious cases, the complainant can also refer their concerns to authorities and regulators.

Acknowledgement and Notification

The Designated Officer will notify the Board of receipt of the complaint within 2 business days and provide regular updates to the Board.

The Designated Officer will arrange an acknowledgment of receipt of the complaint within 5-10 business days, confirming the next steps in the process.

Preliminary Assessment

The Designated Officer will arrange a review of the complaint to determine whether it falls within the scope of this policy and if further investigation is required. If the complaint is deemed outside the scope, the complainant will be informed of this decision.

Investigation

If the complaint is accepted and determined to fall within the scope of the policy, an impartial investigation will be conducted. The Designated Officer may appoint an independent investigator to ensure fairness. The approach to an investigation is at the discretion of the Designated Officer allowing optimal course of action to be determined by the nature and severity of the complaint.

The investigation will include:

- Gathering relevant evidence and testimonies;
- Allowing the individual subject to the complaint an opportunity to respond.

Resolution

Findings and Actions

Following the investigation, the findings will be documented and presented to the Board.

The Board will review and if appropriate, endorse a recommended outcome. The person who is the subject of the complaint should not be present when the Board is considering the complaint including any meeting when the Board is making a decision.

Possible outcomes may include:

- No action if the complaint is not substantiated;
- A formal apology or mediation if appropriate;
- Disciplinary action; and/or
- any other action the Board deems appropriate.

Notification of Outcome

The complainant will be informed of the outcome in writing. The person or party against whom the complaint was made will also be informed of the outcome and any subsequent actions.

Records and Documentation

All records related to the complaint will be kept confidential and securely stored.

Responsibilities and policy owner

The Board owns this policy

Directors are responsible for communicating the policy principles within their area of responsibilities

All managers are responsible for communicating the policy to employees

All Benevolent employees must follow this policy

Related Policies

Code of Conduct

Whistleblower Policy

Consultation and approval

The following were consulted in the development of this policy:

The Benevolent Society Board
Executive Leadership Team

This policy has been approved by:

The Board of The Benevolent Society