



Feedback and Complaints Policy

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Overview

Purpose

This policy outlines The Salvation Army (TSA) Australia Territory's commitment to its Values and the importance of receiving and responding to feedback. At TSA, feedback includes:

- Complaints
- Compliments
- Suggestions

For the sake of certainty, a report under the Whistleblower Protections Policy should be treated differently to a complaint and the Whistleblower Protections Policy and the Whistleblower Protections Procedure should be followed in relation to any such report.

Who does this apply to?

This policy applies to:

- Anyone who engages with TSA
- All TSA personnel
- Implementing partners overseas (SAID)

Effective date

24/07/2025

Policy Statement

General Principles

Our Commitment

TSA is committed to:

- Encouraging external and internal feedback from all people, including children, young people and adults at risk
- Accepting and responding to feedback from anyone, being considerate of ethnicity, cultural background, language, disability, religious beliefs, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and intersex status
- Adopting a feedback and complaints process that demonstrates procedural fairness and is respectful, safe, accessible, inclusive and responsive
- Managing feedback in accordance with open disclosure principles
- Providing various avenues for providing feedback that supports anyone to provide feedback about people, care, services and products
- Receiving anonymous feedback. This can be received via the website or through the 13SALVOS phone line
- Ensuring that disadvantage or discrimination will not be experienced by those providing feedback.
- Handling feedback sensitively, with consideration of privacy and confidentiality
- Ensuring people who submit feedback are kept informed and supported throughout the process
- Using the feedback provided to be used to inform continuous improvement opportunities throughout TSA
- Ensuring feedback and complaints policy and procedures comply with legislation, regulation and contract obligations
- Ensuring all TSA personnel understand their role and responsibilities in receiving and managing feedback and complaints
- Providing an internal review mechanism if the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the original decision made by TSA
- Respecting the right for people to access an independent external advocacy or complaint organisation

Privacy

All personal information collected or used within the feedback or complaint management process must be managed in accordance with TSA Privacy Act Compliance Policy. This policy aligns with the Australian Privacy Principles incorporated in the Australian Privacy Act 1988.

Confidentiality

TSA must maintain confidentiality throughout the feedback process, unless:

- The individual/s involved in the matter have indicated their consent for release of information to other parties
- The disclosure is necessary for the safety of any person or to prevent harm
- The submitter has indicated that confidentiality is not required
- The sharing of the information is compelled by law

Concealed, fabricated and vexatious feedback

Deliberate concealment or fabrication of feedback or a complaint by TSA personnel will be regarded as a breach of the Code of Conduct Policy.

A vexatious 'complaint' is a groundless or false complaint or allegation that is a deliberate abuse of the complaint process and made with intent to cause annoyance, distress, detriment, harassment, reputational harm or pursue a private/malicious agenda.

If a complaint is identified as potentially vexatious, advice will be sought regarding appropriate actions and/or response.

Management Responses

All feedback received will have the owners identified according to the Feedback and Complaints Procedure. All feedback received will be recorded and actioned in a timely manner.

Withdrawal of a Complaint

Where a complainant decides to withdraw their feedback or complaint, TSA reserves the right to continue to review the feedback or complaint where it believes this is in the best interests of the complainant and/or TSA.

External Agent

TSA reserves the right to implement a review or investigation using an external agent or agency where it believes this is in the best interests of the complainant and/or TSA.

Legislative and regulatory reporting obligations

TSA is committed to compliance with all applicable legislation, government regulation and/or mandatory reporting requirements associated with the management of complaints, in addition to TSA's internal complaint notification requirements.

Roles and Responsibilities

The roles associated with execution of this policy are indicated in the table below.

General Manager Quality Improvement and Reporting and Senior Manager Feedback and Complaints	Must: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Promote awareness of the policy▪ Support implementation and improvement of this policy within TSA▪ Establish and improve systems and processes to collect, analyse and report feedback metrics▪ Promote continuous improvement opportunities
Senior TSA Representatives	Must ensure that, for all operations under their span of control: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ TSA personnel understand their obligations under this policy and comply with the policy
Personnel	Must: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Promote the feedback and complaints process▪ Support anyone to provide feedback or make a complaint

Related Documents and References

Related Policy Documents

Procedures

Feedback and Complaints Procedure

Other Related Policy Documents

Code of Conduct Policy

Incident Management Policy

Lived Experience and Participation Policy

Privacy Act Compliance Policy

Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Young People Policy

Whistleblower Protections Policy

Workplace Relations Policy

Related Legislation

Privacy Act 1988

Australian Privacy Principles

Other Relevant Documents /Resources

[Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission](#)

[Australian Human Rights Commission](#)

[Department of Employment and Workplace Relations](#)

[National Disability Insurance Scheme Quality and Safeguards Commission](#)

Definitions

Definitions are located in the [Glossary of Terms and Definitions](#).

Term	Definition
Complaint	An expression of dissatisfaction or concern with respect to an experience with TSA personnel, or with care, services or product provided by TSA.
Feedback	A Complaint, Compliment or Suggestion.
Open Disclosure Principles	The eight guiding principles of Open Disclosure are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Open and timely communication▪ Acknowledgement of the event▪ Apology or expression of regret▪ Supporting, and meeting the needs and expectations of people receiving a service from TSA, their family and carers▪ Supporting, and meeting the needs and expectations of workers involved in the care or provision of the service or product▪ Risk management and systems improvement▪ Good governance and accountability▪ Confidentiality
Personnel, TSA	A person who may be an officer, territorial envoy, aux-lieutenant, cadet, candidate, person serving under officer conditions, employee, volunteer, a contractor or subcontractor, employee of a contractor or subcontractor, employee of a labour hire company, trainee or student on placement that is engaged in any TSA mission delivery or mission expression or is a Board or Board Committee member.

Term	Definition
Procedural fairness.	A process that is accessible, fair, transparent and consistent where all participants receive: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Equitable treatment ▪ Written notice of complaint and details of the complaints process is provided ▪ The right to be heard and to respond to complaints ▪ The right to make submission and present material and information ▪ Decisions made on the balance of probability
Suggestion	A suggestion is an idea for consideration to improve outcomes of care, service or products provided by TSA.

Document Control Information

Theme	Governance	
Category	Quality Assurance	
Policy Owner	Assistant Chief Secretary	
Policy Implementer	Head of Quality and Safeguarding	
Approval Authority	Australia Territory Board	
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Next Review Date	July 2028	
Document History	Date Approved	Summary of Changes
	08/08/2019	Inaugural policy
	20/01/2020	Update to Related Policies p.8
	09/10/2020	Procedure developed into three procedures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complaints ▪ Compliments ▪ Suggestions
	2/12/2021	Content included for SAID Accreditation and assurance from Rainbow Tick Accreditation working group
	4/02/2022	Finalisation of initial review
	26/05/2022	Revised to include: NDIS, ACFID requirements; revised process for management of suggestions
	24/07/2025	Clarification of whistleblowing requirements based on external review