



Shed West Community Men's Shed (Inc)

Grievance Policy & Procedures

This policy defines Shed West related grievances and describes how they are to be handled. It advises on:

- The responsibilities of members,
- How to raise a grievance,
- The expected outcomes of the process and
- Documentation.¹

Rationale

The management of Shed West is committed to this policy and its implementation to ensure a healthy, safe and harmonious environment. A harmonious environment in our shed is free from intimidation and harassment and affords equality of opportunity.

We want members to express concern about Shed- related issues and to raise concerns with other members on an informal basis, in the first instance, and, if not resolved, to seek recourse to more formal grievance and dispute procedures.

Shed West is an association committed to fair grievance handling. The grievance handling process will be conducted in a way that ensures procedural fairness is upheld, confidentiality is maintained, and that steps are taken to eliminate victimisation.

All proceedings in relation to any complaint, grievance or concern are to be conducted in strict confidence. To avoid issues of slander and potential defamation, all correspondence should be expressed in a way to minimise any false imputation concerning individuals. No correspondence or expressions of opinion should be shared publicly in any format.

Shed West's Constitution takes precedence over Policies and Procedures described in this document.

Definitions

Complaint

A complaint is a concern, dissatisfaction, or frustration with an aspect of Shed West. This could include an issue relating to a policy or procedure or the behaviour of another individual or group of individuals.

¹ This policy is based on the AMSA's 2017 Policy. ShedWest Version 1 (22/3/2023)

Grievance

A Shed related grievance is any type of problem, concern or complaint where a member believes that he/she has received unreasonable treatment from the Shed management, or from another member. This could include an issue relating to a policy or procedure or the behaviour of another individual or group of individuals.

Contact Person

The Shed West Management Committee may appoint a person as an authorised person with whom complaints or grievances can be lodged and who is able to provide information about procedures.

Principles

Confidentiality:

Only the people directly involved in investigating or making decisions about a complaint will have access to information about the matter. A summary report including details of the complaint and actions taken will be recorded by the Management Committee in confidence.

Impartiality:

All parties involved will have the opportunity to provide details regarding the matter. No assumptions will be made and no action will be taken until all relevant information has been collected and assessed. Complainants using this process are protected from any detrimental action, including victimisation.

Timeliness:

All matters will be dealt with in a timely manner. All relevant parties will be kept informed of developments. An informal meeting will be held between the member/s and the Manager to discuss the grievance or dispute and the remedy sought. If the grievance cannot be resolved informally, the matter will progress to the formal stage and be resolved in a timely manner. What constitutes timeliness will depend on the nature of the grievance and the recognition that the Shed Management Committee meets monthly. The contact person if managing the grievance will report on progress in confidence to the Management Committee about each case.

Fairness:

This policy endeavours to provide procedures by which aggrieved persons may receive prompt, fair and consistent consideration of complaints.

Procedures

Who is accountable for handling grievances?

The Shed's Management Committee or appointed contact person is responsible for responding appropriately to grievances and managing the process according to the Shed's policies, principles and procedures.

Stage 1: Reporting a grievance

A member who has a problem or concern with a Shed member is encouraged to initially attempt to discuss and resolve the issue directly with the member who is the subject of the concern. Inform the member directly that they are acting in an inappropriate way and that their behaviour is unacceptable to the complainant. An opportunity is provided for them to stop and change behaviour before the matter becomes a formal grievance.

Stage 2: Initial Response to a Reported Grievance

The Committee will, if possible, attempt immediate resolution. If the grievance is resolved in this manner, the Committee will document the actions taken and advise the complainant of the outcome.

Stage 3: Acknowledgement/Further Assessment of Grievance

If an immediate resolution was not possible or achieved, the Shed Management Committee or authorised person will ask the complainant to put the grievance in writing and the Committee or authorised person will undertake a further assessment of the grievance and the Committee or authorised person will advise the complainant of the grievance resolution procedure.

Stage 4: Notification to Respondent

The Committee or authorised person will inform the respondent in writing that a grievance complaint has been made against them and provide them with a copy of the grievance complaint. The Respondent will also be advised of the grievance resolution procedure.

Respondents will be advised by the Management Committee or authorised person that they will be given every opportunity to respond to the allegations.

The Management Committee or authorised person will advise the respondent that they will be informed regularly of progress towards resolution, and that they must observe the principle of confidentiality. The respondent must not contact the complainant about the grievance during the resolution process.

Investigation of Grievance and Interview Preparation

The Committee or authorised person will undertake an investigation of the grievance. Investigations might include interviews, a review of relevant documentation and if relevant a documentation of the location, and any other actions, which will assist in determining what further action is required.

The Management Committee or authorised person will review all additional and specific details requested from, and provided by, the complainant, and advise the respondent in writing of each specific allegation that has been made, seeking a written response to each allegation.

As much detail as possible should be given to the respondent who will be given an appropriate period of time to respond to the allegation/s

The Management Committee or authorised person will provide interviewees with at least 24 hours' notice prior to the interview and will advise them of the nature and purpose of the interview.

Interviews

1. If interviews are required, the complainant and the respondent will be interviewed separately, and each given the opportunity to present their respective cases.
2. Each party may have a support person present during their interview; however, support persons take no active role in the interview.
3. The interviews will be held in privacy and conducted impartially.
4. During the interview process, each specific allegation will be put to the respondent to allow them to respond and provide his/her version of events, and comment on any relevant issue.
5. Records of each interview will be taken, and each interviewee provided with a copy of the record of interview as soon as possible after the interview.

In some matters it may be necessary for interviews to be recorded. This will only occur with the interviewee's knowledge and permission. The interviewee will be provided with a copy of the unedited recording of the interview.

Outcome of Investigation

At the conclusion of the investigation the Management Committee or authorised person will prepare a report determining whether the grievance was substantiated, outlining the supporting evidence for the conclusion.

The Management Committee or authorised person will decide what action will be taken and it will be determined whether:

The matter is substantiated (it happened)

The following actions may be required from the person who caused the grievance, and which will be appropriate to the behaviour complained about:

1. A written apology
2. An official warning
3. The offending member will be required to familiarise themselves with the Shed's Code of Conduct
4. Possible expulsion/exclusion of membership in accordance with Section 9 of the Shed Constitution.

The matter is not substantiated (there is not enough proof)

The following actions may be required:

1. Parties involved will be asked to familiarise themselves with the Shed's Code of Conduct
2. Monitoring the member's behaviour

The matter was frivolous, vexatious or contrived (i.e. it did not happen)

The following actions may be required:

1. The complainant will be asked to familiarise themselves with the Shed's Code of Conduct
2. An official warning

The person lodging the grievance will be advised of all outcomes as will any other relevant party. If the matter remains unresolved the Management Committee or authorised person should provide the member/s with a written response. The response should include the reasons for not implementing any proposed remedy.

Monitoring the Outcome

The Management Committee or authorised person will monitor the outcome of the grievance resolution process. If the grievance was substantiated, monitoring will occur to ensure the solution is working satisfactorily. If not, the Manager will take appropriate corrective action.

Appeals (Stage 5)

If a member wishes to appeal about the process and the outcome of the grievance resolution, they should do so in writing to the AMSA.