

## Policy: Feedback and Complaints

### 1. Policy

Incite Collective is committed to ensuring that participants, members, and contractors are well-informed about our feedback and complaints policy and process. This will be communicated proactively through our induction processes.

#### *Key Elements of the Policy:*

- **Communication:** Participants, members, and contractors will be informed of the feedback and complaints policy and process during their induction.
- **Complaint Handling:** All complaints will be recorded, responded to, and investigated appropriately. Complaints about the collective or service access will be managed fairly, promptly, and without retribution.
- **Advocacy and Special Requirements:** Whenever required, the complainant's choice of advocate will be involved. Special requirements for individuals making complaints, such as communication difficulties and impaired decision-making, will be considered.
- **External Support:** Where appropriate, information about and/or referral to an external support agency will be provided.
- **Continuous Improvement:** All feedback and complaints received will be utilised to develop and maintain a system that reflects all aspects of service delivery, supporting a culture of continuous improvement.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all members, contractors, clients, service recipients, or stakeholders who wish to provide feedback or lodge a complaint regarding the services provided by Incite Collective.

### 3. Purpose:

This Complaints Management Policy aims to ensure that all complaints received by Incite Collective are handled promptly, fairly, and effectively. We are committed to addressing and resolving complaints in a participant-centered and transparent manner while continuously improving our services based on feedback.

#### *Key Principles:*

- ***Notification of the Complaint:*** Complaints should be reported and processed by a Collective member who is independent of the participant to ensure impartiality.
- ***Accurate and Consistent Documentation:*** All circumstances related to the complaint must be documented accurately and consistently to support a thorough review and resolution process.
- ***Risk Identification and Evaluation:*** Risks associated with services must be identified and evaluated to prevent recurrence and ensure the safety of all involved.
- ***Safety and Well-being:*** The safety and well-being of participants, Collective Members, and stakeholders must be actively managed. Complaints should lead to improvements in practices to enhance overall safety and service quality.

### 4. Policy Statement

This policy outlines our commitment to establishing an effective and transparent feedback and complaints process that promotes fairness, responsiveness, and continuous improvement.

By adhering to this policy, Incite Collective aims to ensure that all complaints are handled in a manner that supports our dedication to high standards and positive engagement.

#### *Key Aspects of the Policy:*

- ***Effective Complaints Process:*** Establish a clear, accessible, and transparent process for handling complaints.
- ***Fairness and Responsiveness:*** Ensure that complaints are addressed promptly and impartially.
- ***Continuous Improvement:*** Use feedback from complaints to drive improvements in service delivery and operational practices.

## 5. Guiding Principles

### 5.2 Open and Accessible Process:

- We strive to maintain an open and accessible process for receiving and handling complaints.
- Individuals are encouraged to provide feedback and lodge complaints through various channels, including in-person, by phone, email, or our designated feedback mechanisms.
- We ensure that individuals have access to clear and user-friendly information on how to submit a complaint.

### 5.3 Fair and Impartial Handling:

- All complaints are treated impartially and without bias.
- Designated personnel will acknowledge, review, and investigate every complaint with the necessary expertise and independence.
- We do not discriminate against any individual based on their complaint and take no retaliatory action against complainants.

### 5.4 Timely and Transparent Communication:

- We acknowledge receipt of complaints promptly and provide regular updates throughout the complaint-handling process.
- We strive to resolve complaints within a reasonable timeframe and communicate outcomes to complainants clearly and understandably.

- If additional time is needed for the investigation, complainants will be informed of the reasons and provided with an estimated timeline for resolution.

#### **5.5 Confidentiality and Privacy:**

- We maintain confidentiality and privacy during the complaints process.
- All personal information and sensitive data are handled in accordance with applicable privacy laws and regulations.
- Confidentiality is maintained to the extent possible while ensuring a thorough investigation and resolution of complaints.

#### **5.6 Investigation and Resolution:**

- Each complaint is thoroughly investigated, considering all available evidence and relevant information.
- We strive to identify the root causes of complaints and take appropriate corrective actions to address them.
- Resolutions may include explanations, apologies, rectifications, and process improvements.

#### **5.7 Continuous Improvement:**

- Complaints are viewed as opportunities for learning and improvement.
- We analyse complaint data, identify trends, and implement measures to prevent recurrence of similar issues.
- Feedback from complaints is used to enhance our products, services, processes, and customer experience.

#### **5.8 Review and Accountability:**

- We regularly review our complaints process to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with relevant laws and NDIS regulations.
- We hold ourselves accountable for implementing this policy and monitor our performance in handling complaints.
- Designated personnel responsible for managing complaints receive appropriate training and support to fulfill their roles effectively.

## 6. Definitions

**6.2 Complaint:** A complaint can be filed by a client or service recipient expressing dissatisfaction, concern, or grievance regarding the services, programs, or conduct of Incite Collective. To ensure proper documentation and handling, a complaint must be formalised through our Complaints Form.

### 6.2.1 Assistance with Complaints Form:

- Members of the Collective are available to assist participants in filling out the Complaints Form (What's Working/What's Not Working).
- Assistance is provided to ensure that challenges or barriers to completing the form do not prevent participants from lodging complaints.

**6.3 Feedback:** Feedback to the Collective refers to information, comments or suggestions provided by stakeholders, participants, members of the collective and the public regarding the services process or overall performance of Incite Collective. Feedback is a valuable tool for continuous improvement and can be submitted through various channels to help enhance our operations and service delivery.

## 7. Complaints Handling Process

### 7.1 Receipt of Complaints

- Complaints can be submitted in writing or verbally through the Collective's designated complaint channels, such as a dedicated email address or online complaint form.
- The Collective will provide accessible and user-friendly information on submitting a complaint, including alternative formats or assistance for individuals with diverse communication needs.
- Complaints can be received from participants, their representatives, or other stakeholders involved in the NDIS services.

### **7.3 Acknowledgement and Initial Assessment**

- Upon receiving a complaint, Incite Collective will promptly acknowledge receipt within a specified timeframe (e.g., 2-7 business days).
- A Collective Member independent of the participant will be allocated to address the complaint.
- The complaint will be reviewed to determine its nature, urgency, and the appropriate level of response.
- The complainant will be given an acknowledgment of their complaint, including information on the expected timeline and process.

### **7.4 Investigation and Resolution**

- The complaint will be assigned to a designated Collective Member responsible for conducting a thorough investigation.
- The Collective Member will gather relevant information, evidence, and records necessary to assess and address the complaint.
- Incite Collective will aim to resolve the complaint fairly, reasonably, and promptly.
- During the investigation, the complainant may be contacted for additional information, clarification, or to seek their perspective on the complaint.
- The complainant will be kept informed of the progress of their complaint and any expected delays or changes in the resolution timeline.

### **7.5 Decision and Outcome Communication**

- Once the investigation is complete, the Collective will communicate the decision and proposed resolution to the complainant clearly and understandably.
- The complainant will be informed of the reasons behind the decision, any remedial actions to be taken, and any available avenues for review or appeal.
- Incite Collective will provide the complainant with information on providing feedback or expressing any concerns about the resolution process.

## **7.6 Escalation and Review**

- If the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution or handling of the complaint, they will be provided with information on how to escalate their complaint to a higher level within the NDIS.
- The Collective will have an internal review mechanism to reassess complaints that could not be resolved initially.
- Information will be provided to complainants regarding external avenues for complaint resolution, such as relevant NDIS Commission, ombudsmen, or regulatory bodies.

## **7.6 Documentation and Reporting**

- The Collective will maintain records of all complaints received, including relevant details, actions taken, and resolutions.
- Regular reporting will be conducted to analyse complaint trends, identify areas for improvement, and monitor the effectiveness of the complaints-handling process.
- The Collective will use feedback from complaints to implement changes, enhance service delivery, and improve the participant experience under the NDIS.

## **8. Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure compliance with NDIS safeguard protocols, legislation, and best practices. Feedback from Incite Collective Members, participants, and stakeholders will be actively sought to enhance its effectiveness.

## **9. Policy Dissemination:**

This policy will be communicated to all Incite Collective Members. It will be accessible through organisation communication channels and other appropriate means, including induction and onboarding for members and participants.

