

Policy Number: OS02
Policy Area: Organisational Integrity and Standards
Policy Title: OS02 Complaints Handling Policy



1. Overview

Global Mission Partners is committed to a transparent and efficient process of handling complaints.

2. Purpose

GMP's Complaints Policy is to ensure stakeholders, including staff, volunteers, partners and supporters, are able to express their concerns and provide feedback and that these matters will be addressed in a fair, timely and efficient manner.

3. Scope

This policy addresses complaints regarding:

- a. Actions of GMP
- b. Actions of a partner organisation
- c. Behaviours of GMP staff, Board, volunteers and contractors

This policy addresses complaints of all types, including sexual harassment, abuse and exploitation and whistle blower complaints.

4. Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the CEO, Senior Leadership and Board to manage the performance of this policy.

5. Background

Handling complaints provides GMP with opportunities to respond to concerns and learn from stakeholder feedback. Psalm 142:1-2 encourages to bring our complaints to God; *“I cry aloud to the LORD; I lift up my voice to the LORD for mercy. I pour out before him my complaint; before him I tell my trouble.”*

Jesus himself gives instructions on how to healthily complain about another's conduct in Matthew 18:15-17 and the Bible is full of examples of people who expressed concern about another's conduct, helping people to make behavioural changes based on constructive feedback. A good example is found in Acts 6, when Hellenistic Jewish women complained about Hebraic Jewish women in the distribution of food aid. The early church leaders identified a solution and got stakeholder approval.

6. Policy Statements

- a. Everyone has a right to be treated with respect.
- b. Everyone has a right to “due process”, i.e. the person against whom any allegation is made has the right to know what is alleged against them, the right to put their case in reply, and the right for any decision to be made by an impartial decision maker.
- c. Wherever possible a non-adversarial and non-judgemental resolution to the problem will be pursued. Conciliation is the preferred model for resolution of complaints.
- d. Complaints are treated in an impartial, sensitive, fair, timely and confidential manner.

7. Decisions in relation to complaints:

- a. Which involve breaches of the criminal code: These will be referred to the Police.
- b. Where there is a credible allegation of serious or criminal child abuse, or risk of significant harm: Such complaints will be reported to the child protection authorities or police and their advice followed.
- c. Which involve breaches of the relevant professional code of conduct by endorsed ministers: These will be referred to the endorsing Churches of Christ Conference.
- d. Regarding an employee of a partner organisation: The complainant will be supported in approaching the partner organisation directly.
- e. Which are offensive, abusive or malicious: The complaint will not be considered and if made by a staff member, discipline procedures may be initiated.
- f. Received as part of a bulk mail or an email to multiple organisations: Such claims will not be considered.
- g. Which are anonymous: In extraordinary situations the Investigation Manager may give consideration to anonymous complaints if it is evident that there are grounds for further action and anonymity is required to ensure a safe and abuse-free environment.

8. Confidentiality

- a. Complaints will be treated in confidence and, where confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, this will be clearly indicated.
- b. Accusations can be potentially defamatory, especially if confidentiality is not observed and a person’s reputation is unfairly damaged. Discussion, information and records related to complaints will remain factual and confidential.
- c. Persons raising complaints under this policy are encouraged to identify themselves and explain their concern with as much information as possible and sufficient detail to assist GMP in investigating the matter. The identity of the complainant shall be kept confidential.
- d. All communication will be confidential unless the individual raising the concern directly instructs otherwise.
- e. However, follow-up questions and the investigation may not be possible unless the source of the information is identified.

9. No discrimination or retaliation

- a. GMP will ensure that there will be no discriminatory or retaliatory action against any employee, volunteer or third party who reports a concern to GMP in good faith based on his/her personal knowledge.

- b. If a person believes that he or she has been retaliated against for reporting or participating in an investigation, he/she should immediately report such perceived retaliation to the Executive Director or to the Chair of the GMP Board. All such reports will also be investigated confidentially.
- c. Allegations of a vexatious nature and without any factual substance may result in disciplinary action if the complainant is an employee. If a GMP employee makes a malicious complaint, disciplinary measures will be taken.
- d. Complaints lodged for genuine reasons that are subsequently considered to be unfounded shall not be treated as malicious.

10. Retention of the Records

- a. Minimal documentation will be kept and documents will be kept according to the G19 Retention and Use of Records policy.

7. Procedures and related forms

- a. OS02.1 GMP Complaint Handling Process
- b. OS02.1a Child Friendly Complaints Handling Process V2
- c. OS02.1b Complaints Handling Flowchart

8. References (other policies, legislation or codes)

a. Related Policies

- i. G19 Retention and Use of Records
- ii. OS02 Complaints Policy
- iii. OS04 Sexual Misconduct Policy
- iv. OS07 Whistle Blower Policy

b. Related Documents

- i. Churches of Christ Ministers Code of Conduct (per state)
- ii. [ACNC Whistleblower Protections](#)
- iii. [ASIC Reporting Misconduct](#)
- iv. [AICD Whistleblowing Director Duties and Responsibilities](#)
- v. [ACFID Code of Conduct - Principle 9 People and Culture \(9.2.2 specifically\)](#)

TABLE 1. VERSION CONTROL TABLE

OS02 Complaints			
Version Number	Purpose/change	Author	Date
1	Adopted	Board	JUN2012
2	Amended: no details		FEB2021

Policy Title: OS02 Complaints Handling (2024)

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Amended:NOV2024

Review due:NOV2025

3	New format with Version Control table	Board	JUN2023
4	Adopted new format	CEO	NOV2024