

EXTERNAL COMPLAINTS POLICY

Introduction

Suicide Prevention Australia is committed to transparency, accountability and respectful engagement with its Members, partners and the broader community.

As the national peak body for suicide prevention, Suicide Prevention Australia recognises that concerns or complaints may arise in relation to its activities, services or conduct. Suicide Prevention Australia encourages feedback and complaints as an opportunity to improve organisational practices and strengthen trust in the organisation's governance and operations.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure there is a clear and accessible process for Members, supporters, partners and members of the community to raise complaints regarding Suicide Prevention Australia's services, activities or operations.
- Establish the principles that guide Suicide Prevention Australia's approach to receiving and responding to complaints from external parties.
- Ensure complaints are managed in a fair, transparent and timely manner.
- Support organisational accountability and continuous improvement.

Scope

This policy applies to complaints made by individuals or organisations that are external to Suicide Prevention Australia.

This policy does not apply to internal staff grievances, which are managed through Suicide Prevention Australia's internal grievance or employee procedures. This policy does not apply to disclosures made under Suicide Prevention Australia's **Whistleblower Policy** or matters that fall within formal regulatory or legal processes.

Policy

1 Principles

Suicide Prevention Australia's approach to managing external complaints is guided by the following principles:

- **Fairness and impartiality:** complaints will be assessed and managed objectively and without bias.
- **Transparency and accountability:** Suicide Prevention Australia will communicate clearly and act in a way that supports accountability.
- **Confidentiality:** information will be handled appropriately and in accordance with privacy obligations.
- **Respect and safety:** all parties will be treated with respect and without victimisation.
- **Timeliness:** complaints will be addressed as promptly as practicable.

Suicide Prevention Australia will not tolerate victimisation or adverse treatment of any person who raises a complaint in good faith.

2 Complaints Process

Suicide Prevention Australia will manage complaints in accordance with the following:

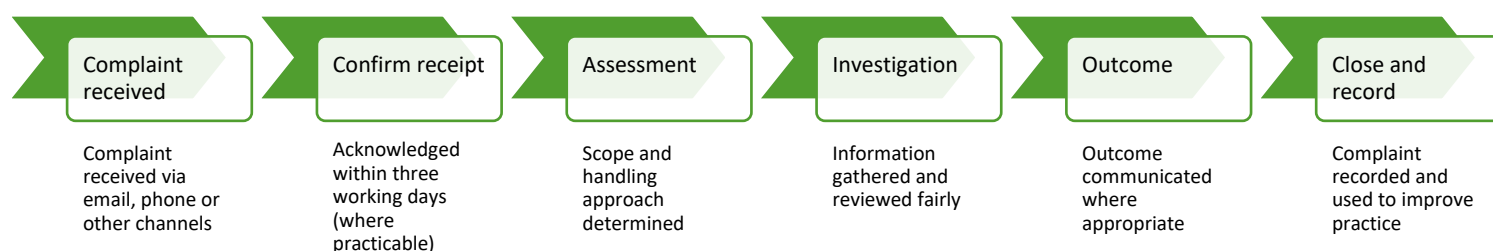
- Make information about the complaints process available through appropriate channels, including the Suicide Prevention Australia website.

- Maintain a formal complaints procedure for receiving, recording and managing complaints.
- Accept complaints in writing or verbally.
- Acknowledge receipt of a complaint and commence action within three working days where practicable.
- Assess and investigate complaints in a fair, objective and impartial manner.
- Consider all relevant information before deciding on an outcome or action.
- Maintain appropriate records of complaints and their outcomes to support organisational learning and improvement.
- Handle complaints confidentially, subject to any legal or regulatory obligations.
- Inform the complainant of their right to be supported or represented by an advocate or support person if appropriate.
- Communicate the outcome of the complaint to the complainant where possible and appropriate.

Complaints relating to Suicide Prevention Australia staff will be addressed through appropriate management processes.

Complaints relating to Members may also be addressed in accordance with the disciplinary and dispute provisions set out in Suicide Prevention Australia's Constitution.

The following diagram provides an overview of Suicide Prevention Australia's complaints process:



3 How to make a complaint?

Suicide Prevention Australia publishes its complaints contact details and process on the SPA website. Complaints relating to the CEO are referred to the Chair of the Board; complaints relating to both the CEO and the Chair are referred to the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee.

4 Responsibilities

Responsibilities for this policy are as follows:

- **Chief Executive Officer:** the CEO has responsibility for the implementation and oversight of this policy and is the primary point of contact for external complaints.
- **Board:** if a complaint relates to the CEO, the complaint should be directed to the Chair of the Board, who will determine the appropriate process for managing the complaint.
- **Executive:** Executive management are responsible for assisting with the investigation and resolution of complaints where relevant to their areas of responsibility.

Definitions – Term	Use of term in this document
Complaint	An expression of dissatisfaction made by an external party regarding Suicide Prevention Australia's services, operations, conduct or decisions
Supporting documents	Related documents and links
Constitution of Suicide Prevention Australia Risk Management Policy Delegated Authority Policy Code of Conduct – Engagements in Suicide Prevention Privacy Policy	

Whistleblower Policy External complaints procedure					
Title	External Complaints Policy	Administrator	Exec GM	DoA approver	GC
Version	Description of amendments	Consultation	Approved by	Date	Review 3y
2.2	Revision	GC	GC	Mar 2023	2026
3	Revision	GC	GC	23 Mar 2026	Mar 2029