



# Milpara Community House Inc.

## Grievance Policy

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### **POLICY**

People will work towards resolving conflict, grievances or complaints by negotiation and discussion between those involved. Attempts will be made by all parties involved to resolve conflict at the lowest level and at the earliest possible time in the interests of maintaining harmonious relationships remembering the golden rule for effective conflict resolution. "Don't let anything go for more than a day."

It is recognised that it is not easy to deal with conflict or to voice a complaint. This policy is intended to protect the rights of everyone involved and to make it easier to deal with any grievance.

This grievance policy and procedures are based on an understanding that grievances may be caused by:

- misunderstandings and lack of clarity;
- lack of (or inappropriate) communication and consultation;
- lack of (or inappropriate) planning and processes;
- frustration and stress and
- industrial issues such as sexual harassment and changes to working conditions.

House users and workers have the right for any grievance to be heard through all levels of the management structure. They also all have the right for this to take place in ways which are respectful of their privacy and confidentiality.

Milpara's Committee of Governance is committed to ensuring that issues raised through grievances are fed back into the other policies, procedures and practices here via regular planning, review and evaluation.

This policy should be read in conjunction with Milpara's Registered Rule No. 47 dealing with grievance procedures concerning members of Milpara Community House.

### **PROCEDURES**

This policy is freely and publicly available to all house users, workers and management group members, as well as to funding bodies, relevant organisations (such as the ACFE Sub-regional Network, Neighbourhood Houses Gippsland Inc. and our peak body the Neighbourhood Houses Victoria Inc., and any other professional associations/individuals called upon to assist with conflict resolution and mediation processes. Copies are available at the registered office.

When grievances arise between house users and workers, between workers themselves, or between workers and the management group, or when house users have some more general concerns about the House and its services, then the following steps will apply:



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1. The complainant will talk directly to the other person/people involved to see if the concern can be resolved through discussion between them.
2. If not resolved - or if it is inappropriate for those involved to speak directly (for example, in cases of sexual harassment) - the complainant will approach the House Manager or President or nominated delegate of the Committee of Governance. This may allow negotiation or support in discussing the concern. Individuals may choose an advocate at this stage.
3. If still not resolved, the complainant will put their concern in writing to the Committee of Governance, requesting a written response. This response will be provided by the President or Secretary within 14 days of receipt. The written response will include the decision and reasons for that decision.
4. If there is an appeal against the decision, mediation and conflict resolution processes, assisted by an objective third party, will be arranged at mutually convenient times and places. Any mediation costs will be shared by all parties to the grievance.
5. Complainants may, if still unsatisfied, choose to take their grievance to an outside party such as the Regional Neighbourhood House Network, a funding body or a professional association. Contact names and numbers of these will be made readily available to all involved.
6. All documentation is to be retained in the grievance file.