

# Agency General Operations

## Policy and Procedure Manual

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| <b>Administration</b><br><b>AGO 308 External Complaints Policy</b><br><br><i>Authority:</i> Board of Directors, Executive Director(s),<br>Director of Service Delivery, Manager | <b>Adopted:</b> June 2022               |                                        |
|                                                                                                                                                                                 | <b>Reviewed:</b><br><b>January 2024</b> | <b>Revised:</b><br><b>January 2024</b> |
| <b>References:</b><br>BGCC Operating Standards A5.1<br>BBBSC National Standards COM 2                                                                                           |                                         |                                        |

### POLICY

The Agency is committed to responding promptly to a complaint and making every reasonable effort to investigate it and address it as soon as possible. A complaint by youth, caregivers, volunteers, Employees, board members, partners, donors and external stakeholders will be addressed in an ethical and courteous manner.

### DEFINITIONS

Types of Complaints:

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about the service, actions, or lack of action by the Agency as an organization or a Employee, board member or volunteer acting on behalf of the Agency.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- perceived failure to do something agreed upon;
- failure to observe policy or procedures;
- error made by a staff member/volunteer; or
- unfair or discourteous actions/statements by staff member/volunteer;

Anyone personally affected can complain and their complaint will be reviewed in accordance with this procedure.

### GUIDELINES

- A. This policy and procedure applies to complaints received by Employees or Board Members of the Agency about our activities, programs, services, employees, or volunteers.
- B. It is in the interest of all parties that complaints are dealt with promptly and address as quickly as possible.
- C. Review of complaints is fair, impartial and respectful to all parties.
- D. Complainants are advised of their options to escalate their complaint to a more senior employee if they are dissatisfied with treatment or outcome.
- E. Complainants are provided clear and understandable reasons for decisions relating to complaints.
- F. Updates are provided to complainants during review processes.
- G. Complaints are used to assist in improving services, policies and procedures.

### PROCEDURES

#### 1. Complaint Receipt and Handling

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A complaint may be received verbally (by phone or in person) or in writing (by mail, fax, email). An employee or volunteer who receives a complaint should first determine the proper person to handle it. This will generally be the person who has the primary relationship with the complainant or has the specific knowledge that is needed to address the problem. It is the responsibility of the person who receives the complaint to either address it or transfer it to another person who can address it. If the complaint is transferred, the recipient must acknowledge to the transferor that he/she has received it and will act on it.

The person who initially receives the complaint should acknowledge to the complainant that the complaint has been received and will be acted on either by him/herself or another employee. If a timeframe for action can be determined, that should be included in the acknowledgement. Basic contact information including name, phone number and email address should immediately be recorded.

### **2. Addressing the Complaint**

Every effort should be made to address complaints received in a timely fashion. When receiving a verbal complaint, employee should listen and seek to understand the complaint and may attempt to address it immediately. Complaints received in writing shall be acknowledged within two business days, and staff shall attempt to address the matter within ten business days.

Where a complaint cannot be easily addressed, it shall be escalated to the Supervisor or Manager of the department. If the Supervisor or Manager cannot address the complaint, it shall be escalated to the Director of Service Delivery or Executive Director(s). If the complaint is about the Executive Director(s), it shall be handled by the Chair of the Board. Complainants should be kept informed of the status of their complaint. Every attempt should be made to address an escalated complaint within an additional ten business days, such that the complaint is addressed within a month of having been received.

If the complaint may pose a reputational risk, it shall be brought to the Board Chair immediately.

### **3. Documenting the Complaint**

It is necessary to keep a record of any complaint that involves a dispute over money as well as any complaint that cannot be addressed on the same day that it is received. Information about such complaints must be recorded on the complaints form on the Agency SharePoint Site. Information recorded on the template is to include a description of the complaint, who handled it, what was done to address the complaint, timeframe, and a description of the address.

4. All complaints related to Service Delivery are to be sent to the Director of Service Delivery. All complaints related to Finance and Technology, Fund Development, Marketing, Facilities, Human Resources or Agency Management are to be sent to the Executive Director(s).
5. A summary of the complaints received, including number and type, shall be compiled annually by the Assistant to the Executive Director(s) and then reported to the Board of Directors annually.