



Sport Matters Complaints Policy

This policy will apply to all activities and operations of Sport Matters.

1. Commitment to Good Complaints Handling

Sport Matters takes complaints seriously and is committed to listening to and resolving complaints in a timely, transparent and efficient manner. All feedback is welcomed as we are committed to continuous quality improvement of our service delivery. Our complaints handling procedures are confidential and accessible to all stakeholders, regardless of gender, status or background and without prejudice to their future participation.

2. Scope of Policy

This complaints policy applies to any complaint regardless of who makes it and how big or small the complaint. We regard a complaint as any expression or dissatisfaction about our organisation, our staff, our volunteers, our partners, our contracted service providers or anyone else acting on our behalf.

This policy also applies to Sport Matters partner organisations implementing overseas aid and development activities, their staff, Board members, volunteers and contractors.

A complaint may be made by a person to whom we deliver services or who is affected by our services, a partner, a local organisation with which we work, our staff, volunteers, donors or a member of the public.

This policy applies, for example, if:

- A local person or partner raises with us concerns about one of our programs or activities.
- A member of the public contacts us to express their concern about the way in which we have conducted a fundraising campaign

A complaint is not:

- A general inquiry about our work, policies or procedures
- A request to amend our records, for example, to be added to or removed from a mailing list
- A request for information
- An employee or volunteer grievance
- A dispute under a commercial agreement

For the purposes of this policy, a representative of Sport Matters is a director, employee, consultant, contractor, volunteer, visitor or other person acting on behalf of Sport Matters.

If a complaint does not fall within the scope of this policy, the CEO or Chair will determine the appropriate action to be taken, including whether the complaint should be referred to the appropriate entity which is the subject of the complaint.

3. Working with Partners

This policy also applies to Sport Matters partner organisations to ensure that all partner organisations and their board members, staff members, volunteers and contractors implementing aid and development activities funded by, or through, Sport Matters, comply with all relevant legislation and Sport Matters policies, inclusive of this policy.

Sport Matters management are responsible for communicating this policy to all partner organisations, and ensuring that partner organisations communicate this policy to their board members, staff, volunteers and contractors implementing aid and development activities funded by, or through, Sport Matters.

This Policy will be included in all contracts and memorandums of understanding with Partner Organisations, and included in in-country training and monitoring and evaluation processes.

Partner organisations implementing aid and development Activities funded by, or through, Sport Matters are required to establish locally-appropriate complaints and feedback mechanisms that are safe, discreet and accessible for all stakeholders, including children and young people, and consistent with this policy.

4. Publicising this Policy

Sport Matters will ensure that our complaints policy is readily available on our website or by contacting our office to request a copy to enable those who wish to make a complaint access to the information describing how to do so and what to expect. Sport Matters commits to assist and enable people from the field and complaints from children or disadvantaged groups to have their grievances heard and facilitate their participation in the complaints handling process.

Sport Matters recognises that many beneficiaries are children and young people. Children and young people must feel that they can express themselves in connection with our work otherwise there is a risk that if harm or another issue of concern is occurring, it will remain undiscovered and ongoing.

Sport Matters recognises the importance in asking children and young people when they feel safe, and when they feel unsafe. Children and young people are welcome and encouraged to make a complaint themselves or appoint an advocate to speak on their behalf. Sport Matters will take special care to facilitate complaints from vulnerable populations including children and young people. Children and young people will be

taught and encouraged, during training and through communication materials, that they can make a complaint to any staff member or volunteer.

Sport Matters management is responsible for:

- Ensuring that staff members, volunteers and contractors are trained in providing accurate information and handling/resolving complaints including induction, ongoing and pre-departure training
- Publicising the policy with partner organisations
- Provide information to all stakeholders, including to members of the communities where activities are implemented, and the reporting and complaints procedure

Sport Matters board has oversight of communications and reporting on complaints in the program management cycle.

5. Complaint Lodgement

There are two designated points of contact to receive complaints:

- Sport Matters CEO: Jackie Lauff jackie.lauff@sportmatters.org.au
- Sport Matters Board: Christine Walton christine.g.walton@gmail.com

Complaints can be made via phone, fax or email through our office. There is also a form on our website that provides an opportunity for online feedback:

Address: Level 32/1 Market Street Sydney NSW 2000 AUSTRALIA

Phone: +61 2 8090 2343

Fax: +61 2 8076 8605

Website: www.sportmatters.org.au

Complaints may also be made orally in-person to Sport Matters partner organisations, or any representative that is representing the aid and development activities that Sport Matters fund or deliver, to ensure the complaints mechanism is effective in contexts where literacy may be a constraint and to ensure it is accessible for children and other vulnerable people.

If an oral complaint is complex, we may ask for the complaint to be put in writing. Sport Matters will provide assistance to a complainant if they need help to do this. If a complaint is made in person, the complainant may have a support person with them (and at any subsequent meeting which may be held to discuss or attempt to resolve the complaint).

It is helpful if the complainant provides their name and contact details. In some instances, a complainant may request that their identity is not divulged or may seek to make a complaint anonymously, but this may restrict our ability to investigate and resolve the complaint. A complainant may request that records of a complaint and its resolution be de-identified.

6. Complaint Handling

The CEO or Chair (as appropriate) is responsible for the initial review and triage of a complaint.

In determining the seriousness of an alleged misconduct, the CEO or Chair may take into account the risks to the complainant, others in the community, Sport Matters or the wider non-government organisation sector, whether the alleged misconduct involves vulnerable people (including children) or critical aspects of Sport Matters' operation (eg. financial wrongdoing), health, safety and systemic implications and need for immediate action.

Reports or allegations relating to safeguarding (including child safeguarding) will be dealt with in accordance with the Sport Matters Child Protection Policy, including referral to child protection officers or other safeguarding focal points (as appropriate).

The CEO or Chair will assess whether the Police (if the alleged behaviour is criminal) or any relevant statutory agencies need to be notified in relation to the allegations.

If a complaint does not fall within the scope of this policy, the CEO or Chair will determine the appropriate action to be taken, including whether the complaint should be referred to the appropriate entity which is the subject of the complaint.

The CEO or Chair will determine whether a complaint should be delegated to another member of staff to investigate and resolve or whether the CEO or Chair should be responsible for the particular complaints handling process.

To ensure fairness and transparency in the complaints handling process, personnel/teams identified in the complaint will not be involved in the decision-making process of complaints handling. If the complaint requires investigation, then the responsible staff member must hold interviews with all relevant parties in order to establish the facts and gather the relevant information.

A person alleged to have acted inappropriately will generally be informed of the allegations and given an opportunity to explain his or her version of events.

The responsible staff member will endeavour to ensure that the complaint is resolved amicably.

Where Sport Matters was at fault:

- (a) the responsible staff member should take steps to ensure that the complainant is adequately appeased, for example through a formal letter of apology
- (b) Sport Matters must ensure that steps are taken to avoid a recurrence of the event which caused the complaint, for example, by modifying practices and procedures and/or by undertaking remedial training
- (c) Sport Matters must ensure that appropriate disciplinary action is taken where warranted.

Where a child or children are involved in a complaint, whether as the complainant, the subject of the complaint or interviewed as a result of the complaint, the safety and well-being of that child or children is paramount whilst the investigation is being conducted.

7. Our Response

Each complaint must be acknowledged as it is received. If an oral complaint is received the staff member should take the name and contact details so the outcome can be communicated. Once the complaint has been considered and, if necessary investigated, the complainant will be advised of the outcome.

If it is determined that no action is required as there is no real basis for the complaint, the reasoning for this will be communicated clearly to the complainant. If the complaint is upheld, this will be communicated, together with any appropriate remedial action to be taken.

A complainant who is not satisfied with the outcome of Sport Matters' complaints process may make a complaint to the ACFID Code of Conduct Committee (details below).

8. The ACFID Code of Conduct

Complainants will be informed of the ability to make a complaint regarding any alleged breach of the ACFID Code of Conduct directly to the ACFID Code of Conduct Committee.

Chair, ACFID Code of Conduct Committee

Email: code@acfid.asn.au

Website: <https://acfid.asn.au/content/complaints>

Sport Matters agrees to be bound by the independent, accessible, fair and confidential ACFID Code complaints handling process, will comply with the Code of Conduct Committee's requests for information, and will comply with any corrective or disciplinary action agreed with the Code of Conduct Committee.

9. Our Timeframes

All complaints will be acknowledged in writing within 5 business days of receipt. We will endeavour to resolve complaints which are not complex, within 10 business days of receipt. We will endeavour to resolve complex complaints as soon as possible, but in any event, within 20 business days.

Where there are extenuating circumstances which mean it will not be possible to meet these timeframes, we will provide the complainant with a revised timeframe as to when the complainant can expect to hear from us. The timeframe for resolving complaints will involve balancing the concerns of the complainant with the need to investigate the circumstances of the complaint thoroughly and formulate the appropriate course of action to respond to the complaint, if it is substantiated.

10. Confidentiality

All information relating to complaints (including the names of people involved and the details) will remain confidential and any disclosure will be on a “need to know” basis, or when Police (or other applicable authority) is notified of the incident or allegation, or as required by law.

11. Recording & Reporting Complaints

All complaints made either verbally or written, Sport Matters will maintain a register of complaints, either verbal or written, that will capture the following fields: date received, type of complaint, name of complainant, dedicated contact persons, action taken, outcome of any interviews, date resolved). All complaints will be captured on the register and reported to both the management and the Board of Directors.

Any changes to Sport Matters policies, practices or services as a result of a complaint will be communicated to our board, management and internal stakeholders. The Board shall analyse complaint information and processes annually, and at board meetings as necessary.

12. Resources

For further information on complaints handling please refer to:

- **ACFID Code of Conduct:** Complaint-handling within signatory organisations
- **Australian Standard:** Customer satisfaction – Guidelines for complaints handling in organisations (ISO 10002:2004)

This policy will be implemented through Sport Matters compliance procedures, Board and staff management processes and across our program management systems.

The Board and management of Sport Matters are fully committed to the principles of this policy. Any breach of strategic significance or any material risk associated with this policy will be reported to the Board in a timely manner.

POLICY REVIEW

Date Policy reviewed and effective	29 November 2021
Date for Policy to be reviewed	29 November 2023
Date Policy reviewed and approved	28 th March 2024