

## Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to establish accessible processes for participants, families, customers, staff, and volunteers to lodge a complaint or dispute regarding Cahoots services or processes. This policy applies to all aspects of the organisation's activities, and all staff are expected to comply with this policy.

For the purposes of this policy, the definition of participants will include participants, customers, and all those legally empowered to act on behalf of participants i.e., parents, carers, and guardians. The definition of staff will include staff, leaders, volunteers, Board Directors and contractors.

All persons involved with Cahoots have the right to raise grievances regarding any aspect of the service and to do so with full support and understanding, without fear of retribution in any form.

All persons involved with Cahoots will be made aware of the policy and procedures for resolving grievances, and in particular of their rights to raise these grievances. All members have right of access to a copy of this policy. At all times, the environment must be maintained to ensure everyone feels able to raise and have resolved any complaint/dispute that they have without fear of retribution.

ALL complaints or problems will be handled in the strictest confidence and will not influence the participant, or staff's future attendance or involvement in future Cahoots' services.

All persons involved with Cahoots have the right to access external avenues for complaint resolution should internal processes be ineffective in any instance, and in doing so should have no fear of retribution.

Where complaints are regarding perceived inadequacies or inefficiencies in service provision a review of the relevant services will be conducted and submitted, with any recommended changes, to the General Manager.

Records will be kept of any complaints raised, action taken, outcomes reached, method of resolution and feedback from the complainant.

## Procedures

To reduce the potential for any grievances arising, and to protect persons as much as possible from any unnecessary conflict or discomfort, it is essential that all persons involved with Cahoots are provided with as much information as is necessary in regard to the structure and nature of Cahoots and their role within that structure.

Grievances pertaining to any aspect of Cahoots' services (before, during or after) can be directed to the Facilitator, Team Leader or Coordinator who will elevate to the correct staff member or CEO when appropriate. These can be made through a direct phone call, conversation or stated in writing. All efforts will be made to ensure grievances are handled sensitively and in the strictest confidence by Cahoots staff.

Participants have a range of options open to them for resolving a complaint or dispute, including

- Approaching the person(s) with whom they have a complaint/dispute.
- Asking a staff member to help resolve the issue (refer contact us on website).

- Submitting via Cahoots website

Where a participant chooses to exercise his or her right to make a formal complaint, they must be informed that the matter cannot remain entirely confidential. All aspects of the complaint and information should be appropriately documented and shared with appropriate Cahoots staff, and external authorities when necessary.

All parties have the right to have an advocate of their choosing to be involved at any stage of the complaints/dispute process.

Where a formal complaint is made, it must be reported to the CEO. The CEO will keep the Board of Directors informed of the nature of any complaints while keeping individual information confidential where possible.

Allegations of abuse and neglect must be reported to the CEO immediately. Such allegations must be responded to as soon as possible, but no later than 3 working days and must include strategies for protecting the person from further abuse.

Any allegations regarding the CEO must be reported to the Board Chairperson.

## Contact details for Cahoots office

[Info@cahoots.org.au](mailto:Info@cahoots.org.au)

## Reference and Related Documents

- Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk
- Risk Management Policy

## Versions

Version Number	Date	Description of Amendment
1.0	30/10/2015	Created CEO
2.0	25/07/2017	Reviewed
3.0	31/8/2018	Reviewed
4.0	09/08/2020	Reviewed