



## Policies and Procedures Rescare Homes Trust Incorporated

Policy no. 1.9

### COMPLAINTS

**Policy:** Rescare Homes Trust is committed to treating complaints seriously and dealing with them promptly and fairly. Every complaint is an opportunity to improve the quality of our service. RHT has a complaints management system that complies with the Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers Rights Act 1996. All complaints will be documented, maintained in a complaints register and thoroughly investigated to ensure a resolution for all involved.

This policy applies to all workers employed by Rescare Management Limited (RML) who work for Rescare.

For the purpose of this policy a complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction. A complaint can be written, verbal or expressed anonymously. All complaints, whether verbal, in writing or anonymously received will be documented, investigated, and tracked through to resolution.

#### Procedure:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure:

- A clearly documented process is implemented for the identification and management of complaints.
- The complaint management process is clearly communicated to the people we support, family/whanau, staff and another other person.
- The complaints process and forms are easily accessible to those who require it.
- The complainant is always informed of their right to have an independent advocate with cultural needs taken into consideration if/when required.
- The complaint management process is linked to the quality management system to facilitate feedback and improvements.

#### Responsibilities:

It is the responsibility of all staff to familiarise themselves with the complaints process which is an important component of Rescare's orientation and quality management system.

#### Training:

All staff will receive training on the complaint process as part of:

- a. New workers orientation into RHT



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- b. Staff training
- c. When changes to the policy or procedure are implemented as a result of a review
- d. A performance management process

All residents, where appropriate will also receive training on the complaint process.

### Complaints Process:

When a verbal complaint is received by any member of staff, person we support or family/whanau it will be acknowledged immediately and if able to be simply resolved, all attempts will be made to do so at the time. A written complaint, be in on '[the complaint form](#)' or email, will be acknowledged in writing by the appropriate line Manager within 5 working days of receiving the complaint. Unless it has been resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant.

- All verbal complaints will be documented on a '[complaint form](#)'. This must be completed by staff as soon as practicable after the complaint occurs but before the staff member goes off duty.
- When investigating a complaint, the appropriate line manager needs to alert the HSQE manager to add it to complaints register, assign a [risk score](#) and assess if investigation is required.
- If no further action is required.
  - The complainant will receive a written response within ten working days, from the 'no further action being required' date to update the complainant of the outcome and ensure the complaint has been successfully resolved.
  - If time frames are likely to be greater than 20 days, the complainant should be informed of the progress of the complaint and reasons for any delay by the person undertaking action
  - The HSQE manager will update the complaint register.
- If action is required:
  - The Service Manager in consultation with the CEO will ensure the appropriate person is dealing with the complaint.
  - Develop an action plan
  - Put into place actions to avoid a reoccurrence if possible
  - Notify appropriate line manager of actions if they are not dealing with the complaint
  - Upon the termination of investigation the complainant will receive a written/ verbal response (where appropriate) within ten working days.



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- If the complainant is satisfied the HSQE manager will update the complaint register
- If the complainant is not satisfied the previous steps will be repeated until actions are sufficient to resolve the complaint. Should the complaint become 'protracted', the complainant will receive regular updates on a monthly basis. Once resolved HSQE will update the complaint register.
- If the complainant remains unhappy with the outcome and wishes to pursue the matter further he/she should be advised to escalate the complaint to the appropriate person e.g the H&DC.

At all times throughout the process independent advocacy will be offered to the complainant as an option for resolution. An independent advocacy service may be chosen, or an appropriate support person contacted from the details enclosed in the H&DC pamphlet which is given/sent on first contact.

If a staff performance issue is implicated in either a verbal or written complaint, the complaint will be passed on to the appropriate line manager. The line manager will follow up with the staff member concerned. If necessary the line manager will elevate the complaint to the CEO who will ensure the appropriate performance management process is followed.

### Meetings held in relation to a complaint:

Where a meeting is held in relation to a complaint with the complainant:

- a) Minutes must be taken which includes documentation of outcomes and actions
- b) Copies of the minutes are held in the complaints folder
- c) Copies of the minutes will be supplied to the attendees if requested.

### Evaluation:

The following actions will be undertaken in relation to complaints:

- All complaints are entered into the complaints register and reviewed monthly for trends.
- Number of complaints, issues regarding complaints, actions and outcomes are reported to the Quality committee quarterly meetings.
- Number of complaints are reported to the Board of Directors monthly
- Feedback and improvements is communicated back to all relevant staff

### Responses:

The following internal and external responses are required for this policy:



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### Internal:

- Complaints register
- Complaint form/ reportable event form

External: N/A

Definitions: N/A

**Complaint:** Is an expression of dissatisfaction. A complaint can be written, verbal or expressed anonymously. All complaints, whether verbal, in writing or anonymously received will be documented, investigated and tracked through to resolution.

**Complaint – Employment matters:** When a complaint is regarding a staff member, which could result in disciplinary proceedings, the complaint is not able to remain anonymous under Employment Law. The Privacy Officer can discuss further with the complainant or their representative.

**Conflict of interest:** When a conflict of interest is declared or apparent, investigation processes will be managed externally to Rescare Homes Trust.

### References:

Health and Disability Commissioner (Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers Rights Regulations 1996). Retrieved from <https://www.hdc.org.nz/your-rights/about-the-code/code-of-health-and-disability-services-consumers-rights/>

### Quality Indicators:

Number of complaints – trend analysis

Number of complaints unresolved and requiring escalation at time of report

Number of complaints unresolved