

LIONS AUSTRALIA

Complaint Handling Procedure

lionsaustralia
we serve



www.lionsclubs.org.au



COMPLAINT HANDLING PROCEDURE

Definitions

Complainant: Party making the complaint.

Respondent: Party that is being complained about.

Multiple District 201: Multiple District 201 of Lions Clubs International Inc. is the legal entity of Lions Australia. Its purposes, under its constitution are:

“To promote the Purposes of the International Association applicable to Multiple District 201.

To hold manage and control an annual convention of the Multiple District.

To take appropriate action on all matters relating to the Multiple District consistent with the Constitution and By-Laws of the International Association and the policies of the International Board.

To establish and maintain Trusts and Foundations for the purpose of rendering help and assistance in the fields of community aid, emergency relief and international understanding.”

Multiple District personnel: Members of Multiple Districts Committees as published in the “Terms of Office” document, members of the Management Group as defined in the Constitution, and members of the Multiple District Council when acting in that capacity.

Districts: The Multiple District is made up of 19 Districts, led by a District Governor. This structure is determined by the International Constitution of Lions Clubs International, and each District is administered independently of the Multiple District.

Introduction

The National Office is a contact point for members of the public.

The National Office provides services to the Multiple District Council (Board), Committees of Council responsible for approved national projects and the Management Group.

It also provides a referral point for members of the public to contact Foundations, Districts and Clubs that operate independently.

Staff and management are committed to continual improvement of processes and services and welcome information from members and the Council about issues, problems and difficulties, as well as comments about positive experience.

Structure of Lions Clubs in Australia

The structure of Lions Clubs within Australia and internationally, though appearing hierarchical, does not have the expected decision-making tree of hierarchical organisations. This influences how complaints are managed.

Directing complaints depends on identifying that part of the organisation that can respond to the complaint.

Revision No.	2.0	Relates to:	All complaints
Revision Date	29 August 2019	Applies to	All
Author	Rob Oerlemans	Authorised by	MD201 Council



Lions Clubs International based in Chicago, USA: The parent organisation establishes the Constitution, by-laws and other rules to which all Lions Clubs must subscribe. Lions Clubs International controls the charter of a Lions Club. A club may not operate without a charter approved by Lions Clubs International.

Lions Club: Each local Lions Club once chartered by Lions Clubs International, operates independently provided it follows the rules of Lions Clubs International including payment of dues (fees). Many Lions Clubs within Australia are incorporated as Associations.

Lion Member: Membership of a Lions Club is by invitation. Only the member club has the right to accept or terminate the membership of a Lion, subject to its rules.

Districts: 60-100 Lions Clubs are organised into a District, led by a District Governor that is elected at the District Convention. The District organises clubs within the District but does not control them. Districts have responsibility for District Programs and activities authorised by the District Convention or Cabinet.

Multiple District: 19 Districts are organised into the Multiple District. The Council (Board) of the Multiple District is the 19 District Governors and the elected Council Chairperson. In Australia, Multiple District 201 is an Incorporated Association. The Multiple District organises and coordinates clubs and Districts within Australia and PNG but does not control them. The Multiple District has responsibility for Multiple District Programs and activities authorised by the Multiple District Convention or Council.

National Office: The Secretariat of the Multiple District, located in Newcastle, NSW.

Revision No.	2.0	Relates to:	All complaints
Revision Date	29 August 2019	Applies to	All
Author	Rob Oerlemans	Authorised by	MD201 Council



Procedure

- 1) Who can make a complaint?
 - a) Complaints may be received from members of the public, representatives of government departments, media, commercial organisations and members of Lions Clubs within Australia and overseas.

- 2) How to make a complaint?
 - a) Complaints may be received through online enquiry form, mail, e-mail, social media or verbally by telephone or in person.

 - b) Where complaints are made verbally, the complainant will be encouraged to submit the complaint in writing. The reason for this is to ensure that the complaint is accurately documented according to the view of the complainant to avoid future misunderstandings.

 - c) If the complainant does not wish to document their complaint in writing, it will be documented by the staff member receiving the call, with a notation to that effect.

- 3) Who will be told about the complaint?
 - a) The complaint will be recorded by the staff member taking the call.
 - b) The complaint will be recorded in the complaint register.
 - c) The complaint will be referred to the Lions representative responsible for investigating the complaint. (See “Who will be responsible for handling the complaint?”)
 - d) Complaints may be reviewed by the Multiple District Executive.

- 4) Who will be responsible for handling the complaint?

Complaints will be managed by the Lions body that is accountable for the project or activity.

- a) Multiple District projects, activities and personnel: - Complaints against adopted Multiple District projects and activities and Multiple District personnel will be managed by the Executive Officer, in consultation with the Executive. (In the case of complaints about the behaviour, actions and omissions of the Executive Officer, these will be referred to the Council Chairperson.
- b) Foundations: Complaints against Lions Foundations, other than those that are adopted as Multiple District Projects, will be referred to the Foundation Chairperson.
- c) Districts: Complaints against District Administrations, projects and activities will be referred to the relevant District Governor.
- d) Clubs: Complaints against individual Lions Clubs will be referred to the President of that Lions Club, and a copy forwarded to the District Governor for information. Complaints about the Club President will be referred to the Board of Directors of that Club.

If the complaint has been escalated due to the inaction of the club, or if the decision of the club is being appealed, those complaints will be referred directly to the relevant District Governor.

Revision No.	2.0	Relates to:	All complaints
Revision Date	29 August 2019	Applies to	All
Author	Rob Oerlemans	Authorised by	MD201 Council



- 5) Complaint risk assessment: The Lions Customers Service Officer will conduct a preliminary risk assessment to assess whether the substance of the complaint is likely to result in immediate harm to any persons. If so, that complaint will be escalated to the Executive Officer for further assessment and action.

Note: Special procedures are documented below in the case of risk of harm to children.

[Refer to the Lions Australia Child Safe Policy.](#)

- 6) Feedback and documentation of outcomes.
- a) Where the Multiple District is accountable for the complaint, the outcome will be documented in the complaint register. Complainants will be advised by e-mail or letter of the outcome of the complaint.
 - b) Where other parties are accountable for the complaint, they will be requested to provide feedback about the outcome, and asked to advise the complainant of the outcome. Any feedback would be provided to the Lions Customer Service Officer for recording in the complaint register.
- 7) Appeal and review
- a) Where the District or Club is accountable for the outcome, any review or appeal may only be referred to the District Governor.
 - b) Any appeal or review of a complaint to an independent Lions Foundation is governed by their trust deed or constitution.
 - c) Any appeal or review of a decision of the Executive Officer is to the Council Chairperson who may, at his or her absolute discretion, refer the matter to the Multiple District Council.
- 8) Anonymous complaints
- a) Anonymous complaints will be logged in the complaint register.
 - b) Investigation of any anonymous complaints will be at the discretion of the Executive Officer.
- 9) Disputes
- a) Not every complaint results in a dispute.
 - b) Disputes between members of the Lions family – Members, Lions Clubs, Leos Clubs, Lioness Clubs, District and Multiple Districts should follow the procedures set out by Multiple District 201 and Lions Clubs International.
 - c) Multiple District 201 has developed a [Club Grievance procedure](#) and encourages each club to adopt and use this procedure.
Lions Clubs International has developed [Dispute Resolution Guidelines](#) that should be used. (ATTACHMENT 4.2B)

Revision No.	2.0	Relates to:	All complaints
Revision Date	29 August 2019	Applies to	All
Author	Rob Oerlemans	Authorised by	MD201 Council

Figure 1 - Complaint handling



