

<b>POLICY #</b> <b>External Complaints</b>	THOMPSON NICOLA CARIBOO UNITED WAY
	Effective Date: June 2017
	Revised: n/a
	Page 1 of 3

## PURPOSE

Thompson Nicola Cariboo United Way welcomes feedback from all sources, and recognizes the value of listening and responding to complaints as an important component of its corporate culture. Feedback enables the organization to improve the quality of its work, identify areas of work that need to be improved, and enhance the trust and confidence of stakeholders.

## POLICY

Thompson Nicola Cariboo United Way will ensure that the process for handling complaints and feedback is fair, effective, safe, timely, confidential and accessible to all stakeholders without prejudice. Every effort will be made to resolve the complaint in a satisfactory manner and, if requested or deemed appropriate, to keep the complainant's identity private.

This policy and procedure applies to external complaints received about the organization's activities, programs, services, staff or volunteers.

## GUIDELINES AND/OR PROCEDURES

### a. Guiding Principles

- It is in the interest of all parties that complaints are dealt with promptly and resolved as quickly as possible.
- Review of complaints is fair, impartial and respectful to all parties.
- Complainants are advised of their options to escalate their complaint to a more senior staff person if they are dissatisfied with either their treatment or the outcome.
- Complainants are provided clear and understandable reasons for decisions relating to complaints.
- Updates are provided to complainants during review processes.
- Complaints are used to assist in improving services, policies and procedures.

### b. Types of Complaints

**Definition:** A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about the service, actions, or lack of action by Thompson Nicola Cariboo United Way as an organization, or by a staff member or volunteer acting on behalf of United Way Thompson Nicola Cariboo.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- actions or behaviour that is perceived to be unethical;
- failure to observe policy or procedures;
- egregious error made by a staff member/volunteer;
- failure to complete a critical, agreed-upon task or;
- unfair or discourteous actions/statements by staff member/volunteer.

Anyone personally affected can make a formal complaint to the organization, and his or her complaint will be reviewed in accordance with this procedure.

<b>POLICY #</b> <b>External Complaints</b>	THOMPSON NICOLA CARIBOO UNITED WAY
	Effective Date: June 2017
	Revised: n/a
	Page 2 of 3

**c. Complaint Receipt, Handling, and Acknowledgement**

- 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 staff member who has the primary relationship with the complainant, or one who has the specific knowledge that is needed to resolve the problem. It is the responsibility of the person who receives the complaint to either resolve it or transfer it to another person who can resolve 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 the complaint is transferred, the person to whom the complaint is transferred must acknowledge to the complainant that the complaint has been received.
- In addition to details about the complaint, basic contact information should be collected from the complainant, including the complainant's name, phone number and email address. All information should be documented immediately (process outlined below). If a timeframe for action can be determined, that information should be included in the acknowledgement.

**d. Resolving the Complaint**

- Every effort should be made to resolve complaints received in a timely fashion. When receiving a verbal complaint, staff should listen and seek to understand the complaint, and may attempt to resolve it immediately if it is within their ability or area of responsibility. Complaints received in writing should be acknowledged within 2 business days. Staff should make every attempt to resolve the matter within 7 business days.
- Where a complaint cannot be easily resolved, it should be escalated to the Executive Director. If the Executive Director cannot resolve the complaint, it will be escalated to the Board Chairperson. Complainants should be kept informed of the status of their complaint. Every attempt should be made to resolve escalated complaints within an additional 7 business days.
- The complainant will be advised of the resolution in writing.

**e. Documenting the Complaint**

- It is necessary to keep a record of any external complaint, with particular attention to those that involve a dispute over money or those that cannot be quickly resolved with a routine explanation or sharing of general information about the organization's services or practices.
- Complaints must be recorded on the *Complaints Tracking Worksheet*. Information recorded on the worksheet includes a description of the complaint, who handled the complaint, what was done to resolve the complaint, timeframe, and a description of the resolution.

<b>POLICY #</b> <b><i>External Complaints</i></b>	THOMPSON NICOLA CARIBOO UNITED WAY
	Effective Date: June 2017
	Revised: n/a
	Page 3 of 3

- A summary of the complaints received including number and type will be reported to the Thompson Nicola Cariboo United Way Board of Directors annually for review and discussion.