YAFA CARE PTY LTD
info@yafacare.com.au | +61 401 449 998

COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURE

How we receive, investigate and resolve complaints

Document	Complaints Management Policy and Procedure (participants and staff)	**Version**	2.0
Effective date	01 / 01 / 2026	**Next review**	Every year/ Sonner if Law changes
Applies to	Participants, families, representatives, management, support workers, contractors, volunteers	**Approved by**	Director, YAFA Care Pty Ltd

PART A POLICY What we promise

1. Purpose and scope

This document explains how YAFA Care receives complaints, keeps people safe, investigates fairly, fixes problems and learns from them. It follows the NDIS Practice Standards and the NDIS (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018. It works in both directions: participants, families and representatives can complain about workers or our services, and workers can complain about a participant's behaviour, an unsafe situation, a colleague or management. Workers can also complain about each other.

2. Our commitments

- **Easy to complain.** Verbally, in writing, through an advocate or anonymously. The form is optional.
- **Safety first.** Keeping participants and workers safe comes before everything else.
- **Fair to everyone.** Participants and workers have the same right to be heard and supported. A complaint is never used to punish a participant or silence a worker.
- **No payback.** No one is punished, threatened or loses supports for complaining. Nobody may retaliate against a participant or a worker for complaining.
- **Private and supported.** We share information only with people who need it. We provide interpreters, easy read, a support person or an independent advocate.
- **We learn.** We use every complaint to make our services safer and better.

3. Who does what

All staff	Listen. Take every complaint seriously, whether it is about a worker or a participant. Staff can also raise their own complaints through the Business Manager or Director. Make sure the participant is safe. Tell the Business Manager the same day. Write down accurately what was said. Never discourage anyone from complaining.
Business Manager (Complaints Officer)	Receives and records complaints, checks safety, sorts them into categories, acknowledges them, investigates Category A and B complaints, keeps people updated, makes sure actions are done, and keeps the Complaints Register.
Director	Oversees Category B and C complaints, approves outcomes and major actions, decides on reporting to the NDIS Commission, deals with any complaint about the Business Manager, and reviews complaint trends.
Independent investigator	An outside person appointed for Category C complaints, or whenever no one inside YAFA Care can be fair (for example, a consultant, NDIS quality adviser or lawyer).

PART B PROCEDURE What we do when a complaint comes in

4. How people can complain

All the following count as a complaint and are handled the same way:

- **YAFA Care Complaints & Feedback Form** (optional)
- **Email:** info@yafacare.com.au **Phone:** +61 401 449 998
- **Verbally or in person** to any staff member, who must write it down and pass it on the same day
- **Through someone else**: family, guardian, nominee, advocate, support coordinator or another service
- **Staff complaints**: workers give them to the Business Manager, or the Director if the complaint is about the Business Manager. A complaint about a participant or a colleague is recorded in the same way.
- **Anonymously**. We still assess it and act where there is enough information.

5. Timeframes at a glance

These are our working targets. If we cannot meet one, we tell the person why and agree a new date.

Same day	2 business days	Every 7 days	14 / 21 / 30 days
Record the complaint. Make the participant safe.	Acknowledge the complaint (1 business day for Category B and C).	Update the complainant while we investigate.	Outcome target for Category A / B / C.

6. The eight steps

	Step	What we do	Who	When
1	**Receive**	Listen calmly. Do not argue, blame or promise an outcome. Thank the person. Ask what help they need to be heard. Write down what they say in their own words, then tell the Business Manager.	Any staff member, or the person complaining	**Same day**
2	**Make safe**	Safety comes before the investigation. Is anyone, participant or worker, in danger or at risk of harm, abuse, neglect, injury, a medication error, or money being misused? If in danger, call 000. Then get medical help, move the person away from the risk, change the worker or the way support is given, or increase checks. Keep records and evidence safe. Keep the participant's supports going wherever possible.	Business Manager	**Immediately**
3	**Record & acknowledge**	Enter it in the Complaints Register: reference number, date, who, what, risks, actions taken. Contact the person (if we can) to say we have it, who is handling it, when they will hear from us, and that they can use an advocate or contact the NDIS Commission.	Business Manager	**Acknowledge in 2 business days**
4	**Assess & categorise**	Sort the complaint into Category A, B or C (see below). Check for conflicts of interest and choose the investigator. Check whether it is also a reportable incident (Section 10). If it is, start that process now.	Business Manager, Director for B and C	**Within 2 business days**
5	**Investigate**	Speak to the complainant and, with the right communication support, the participant. Speak to anyone named and give them a fair chance to respond. Review shift notes, rosters, messages, incident reports and other records. Work out what happened and why. Base findings on evidence, not assumptions.	Investigator	**Update every 7 days**

	Step	What we do	Who	When
6	**Decide & act**	Decide the finding: substantiated, partly substantiated, not substantiated, or unable to determine. Decide the actions needed, even if the complaint is not substantiated (see action table). Follow employment law and procedural fairness for any staff action.	Investigator, Business Manager, Director for B and C	**Before outcome date**
7	**Tell the person**	Explain what we looked at, what we found, and what we will do, in a way they understand. Put it in writing if they ask. Protect other people's privacy (for example, staff disciplinary details). Remind them they can ask for a review or go to the NDIS Commission.	Business Manager	**A: 14 days B: 21 days C: 30 days**
8	**Check, close & learn**	Check the actions were done and the participant feels safe and heard. Close the register entry: finding, actions, who is responsible, date closed. Look for the cause and fix it (training, rostering, procedures).	Business Manager	**Within 14 days of outcome**

7. Categories and who investigates

Decide the category on day one. If you are unsure, use the higher category.

Category	Examples	Investigated by	Outcome target
A Standard	Communication, delayed replies, scheduling, minor dissatisfaction, suggestions.	Business Manager	**14 days**
B Significant	Repeated poor support, missed shifts, staff conduct, privacy breach, money or Centrepay concerns, unsafe accommodation. From staff: repeated abusive language, harassment, or an unsafe home. Between staff: bullying, discrimination or unfair treatment.	Business Manager, with the Director overseeing	**21 days**
C Serious / urgent	Abuse, neglect, exploitation, serious injury, threats, sexual misconduct, unauthorised restrictive practice, serious financial abuse, possible crime. From staff: violence, threats or an assault on a worker. Between staff: sexual harassment, assault, or conduct that harms a participant. Any complaint about the Business Manager or Director.	Independent person, led by the Director	**30 days, with updates every 7 days**

The investigator must not be involved in the complaint or have a close relationship with anyone in it. If nobody inside YAFA Care can be fair, the Director appoints an independent person.

Finding the outcome. Each complaint ends with a finding of substantiated, partly substantiated, not substantiated, or unable to determine. Whatever the finding, we ask whether anything needs to improve.

What we might do about it

Problem found	Possible action
Staff conduct	Supervision, coaching, performance management or disciplinary action, or removal from duties where needed.
Poor-quality support	Retraining, closer supervision, review of the participant's support instructions.
Missed or late shifts	Review rostering, arrange reliable back-up support.
Communication problems	Agree how and when we contact the person, and who is responsible.
Medication or safety risk	Put risk controls in place straight away, review procedures, retrain staff.
Privacy breach	Limit access, find out how it happened, tell affected people, and report it where required.
Money or Centrepay concern	Check the transactions, protect the participant's money, refer the matter to Services Australia or the police where needed.

Problem found	Possible action
Policy or procedure failure	Update the procedure and train the people affected.

8. When a worker complains about a participant

Workers have the right to be safe at work, and participants have the right to dignity and to keep their supports. We protect both. A worker's complaint about a participant (such as aggression, harassment, threats or an unsafe home) follows the same eight steps, plus:

- **Worker safety first.** Make the worker safe, arrange a different worker or a second worker if needed, and arrange first aid and support. Record any injury or near miss.
- **Look for the reason.** Behaviour is often a sign of unmet need, pain, confusion or poor communication. Speak with the participant (with communication support and an advocate if they want), their family or nominee, and their support coordinator. Do not assume who is at fault.
- **Support, not punishment.** The aim is a safe way to keep supporting the person: a risk assessment, changes to how and when support is given, staff training, and a referral to a behaviour support practitioner where needed. Any use of a restrictive practice must be authorised, or it must be reported (Section 10).
- **Changing or ending supports is a last resort.** Only the Director can decide, after other options have been tried, following the service agreement, with fair written notice and help to find another provider. The participant's safety and rights stay protected during this time.
- **Report it.** An assault, abuse or injury involving a participant may be a reportable incident, and the police should be contacted for a crime.
- **Treat both people fairly.** Tell the participant what was raised, give them a chance to respond, and keep both people's information private. A worker who reports in good faith must not be treated unfairly.

9. When workers complain about each other

Workers have the right to be safe and respected at work. A complaint between workers (such as bullying, harassment, discrimination, unfair treatment, or poor conduct) follows the same eight steps, plus:

- **Keep people safe.** Separate the people involved where needed, for example by changing rosters. The worker who complained must not lose shifts or be disadvantaged.
- **The right person handles it.** The Business Manager, or the Director if the complaint is about the Business Manager, or an independent person if it is about the Director. No one involved, or close to someone involved, may investigate.
- **Hear both sides.** Tell the worker complained about what was raised, give them a fair chance to respond, and allow a support person at meetings. Follow employment law.
- **Try to resolve it early where safe.** A facilitated conversation may work for minor matters, but never for sexual harassment, violence or threats.
- **Check for participant harm.** If a participant has been, or could be, harmed, treat it as Category C and report it where required (Section 10).
- **Protect and keep private.** No one may retaliate against a worker for raising a concern. Information is shared only with those who need it.

10. Reportable incidents: separate legal duty

A complaint may reveal an incident that must be reported to the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission. Reporting is required even if we have already dealt with it, and an internal investigation does not replace it. Reportable incidents include the death of a person with disability, serious injury, abuse or neglect, unlawful sexual or physical contact or assault, sexual misconduct (including grooming), and unauthorised use of a restrictive practice.

- **Most incidents:** notify the Commission within 24 hours of key personnel (Director or Business Manager) becoming aware, then give more information within 5 business days.
- **Unauthorised restrictive practice:** within 5 business days, or within 24 hours if the person was harmed.
- **How:** through the NDIS Commission Portal. The Director decides, and if unsure, report. Call 000 and the police for any possible crime.

Check the Commission's reportable incidents page (ndiscommission.gov.au) for the current requirements.

11. If the person is not satisfied

The participant or the worker can ask for a review by the Director (or by an independent person if the complaint is about the Director). We reply within 14 days. They can also go outside YAFA Care at any time, without finishing our process first. Workers can also seek advice from a union, the Fair Work Ombudsman, SafeWork NSW or a legal adviser about workplace matters.

- **NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission:** 1800 035 544, ndiscommission.gov.au/complaints
- **Services Australia** for Centrepay concerns, and **police** (000 in an emergency) for suspected crime
- **An independent advocate,** a family member or nominee. We will help them find one if they ask.

12. Records, training and review

- **Records.** Every complaint, including verbal and anonymous ones, goes in the Complaints Register with the date received, issue, risks, investigator, finding, actions, and date closed. Records are stored securely, available only to authorised people, and kept as the law requires.
- **Training.** All staff learn this procedure at induction and every year, including how to receive a complaint, keep people safe, and spot a reportable incident. Participants are told about it when services start, in a way they understand, and workers are told that they can use it too.
- **Review.** Every quarter the Director checks the register for patterns: numbers, types, response times, repeat issues, actions not completed and participant feedback. This document is reviewed at least once a year.

NEED TO MAKE A COMPLAINT?

YAFA Care: info@yafacare.com.au | +61 401 449 998

NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission: 1800 035 544 | ndiscommission.gov.au

Approved by (name)		Signature		Date	