

# Power to Change

## Complaints Handling Policy

### **Purpose**

This policy is intended to ensure that Power to Change handles complaints fairly, efficiently and effectively by outlining the key principles on which our complaints handling system is based.

This policy also provides guidance to those who wish to make a complaint.

### **Spiritual Context**

Our policy seeks to honour God by acting ethically, morally, responsibly and with integrity, and to be wise stewards of the resources God has provided.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all missionaries, employees, volunteers, contractors, and board members who receive or manage complaints from the public or other external stakeholders about Power to Change, about our activities or products, our people, or our complaint handling process.

The approach for internal complaints and grievances can be found in Power to Change's other policies and procedures.<sup>1</sup>

### **Definitions**

#### Complaint

A complaint refers to an expression of dissatisfaction made to or about Power to Change, its activities, people, or the handling of a complaint where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required.<sup>2</sup>

#### Complaint handling process

This includes all policies, procedures, practices, people, hardware and software used by Power to Change in the management of complaints.

#### Dispute

An unresolved complaint escalated either within or outside of our organisation.

#### Grievance

A clear, formal written statement by an individual Power to Change missionary, employee, volunteer, contractor or board member about another missionary, employee, volunteer, contractor or board member.

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<sup>1</sup> These include Whistleblower Policy, Power to Change Constitution (Section 17 Dispute Resolution) and Policy and Guidelines Manual.

<sup>2</sup> AS/NZ 10002:2014

## **Policy Position**

Power to Change understands the value of complaints and we will use our complaint management processes to make improvements and foster healthy relationships with our community.

Power to Change is committed to an effective complaint handling system that is modelled on the principles of fairness, accessibility, responsiveness, efficiency and integration into its organisational culture. When children are involved in Power to Change activities, complaint handling processes will be child focused and accessible to children.

The Power to Change complaint handling system will include:

### 1. Facilitation of complaints

Complaints will be dealt with in a reasonable time frame and those making complaints will be:

- Provided with information about our complaint handling process and how to access it
- Listened to and treated with respect, and
- Provided with reasons for Power to Change decisions and any options for redress or review.

Power to Change will take all reasonable steps to ensure that people making complaints are not adversely affected because a complaint has been made by them or on behalf of them.

Anonymous complaints will be accepted if there is a compelling reason to do so and Power to Change will carry out a confidential investigation of the issues raised where there is enough information provided.

We will ensure that information about how and where complaints may be made to or about Power to Change is easily available, and ensure that our complaint handling processes are clear and accessible to everyone, particularly people who may require assistance.

### 2. Response to complaints

Power to Change commits to responding to complaints by:

- Acknowledging them promptly and, if possible, resolving them at first contact
- Assessing and prioritising complaints in accordance with the urgency and/or seriousness of the issues raised, and responding immediately if a matter concerns an immediate risk to safety or security
- Managing people's expectations by informing them of the complaints process, the expected time frames for action, the progress of the complaint and any reasons for delay, their likely involvement in the process, and the possible outcome of their complaint, and
- Advising people as soon as possible when the complaint cannot be dealt with by Power to Change and providing them with details of where their issues may be directed.

Each complaint will be addressed with integrity and in an equitable, objective and unbiased manner and conflicts of interest will be managed responsibly.

The identity of people making complaints will be protected where this is practical and appropriate.

### 3. Manage the parties to a complaint

Where a complaint involves multiple organisations, or multiple areas within Power to Change, communication and information sharing will be co-ordinated to facilitate a clear process and timely response.

Where Power to Change services are contracted out, those services are expected to have an accessible and comprehensive complaint management system.

### 4. Commitment to dispute resolution

When a complaint cannot be resolved within the Power to Change complaint management processes, the complainant may appeal in writing to the National Director who will review the steps taken and may request further investigation or appoint an independent person to assist in reaching a resolution to the dispute.

## **Record Keeping**

Power to Change will keep records about:

1. Complaints received
2. The outcome of the complaint, and
3. Outstanding actions to be followed up.

## **Responsibilities**

Power to Change expects all its people to be committed to fair, effective and efficient complaint handling.

The National Director is responsible for implementing this policy and promoting a culture that values complaints and their effective resolution.

The National Director is also responsible to appoint an independent person to assist in a dispute resolution process if this is warranted.

## **Related Documents**

- Whistleblower Protection Policy
- Safe Ministry Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Missionary Guidelines
- Employment Policies
- Power to Change Constitution (Section 17 Dispute Resolution)

## **Policy Review**

This policy is to be reviewed every four years by the Board unless there are changes to relevant legislation or standards that require an earlier review.

Any minor changes such as updating “Related Documents” that have no material effect on the intent of the policy will be made without being referred to the Board.

## Document Control

Document Number:	O19
Version Number:	1.1 Includes a child focussed and accessible complaints process
Approved by:	Power to Change Board
Approval date:	3 March 2025
Next review date:	February 2029