

Grievances and Dispute Resolution Policy

Introduction

Open communication and feedback are regarded as essential elements of a satisfying, productive and successful volunteer environment.

Wildlife SEQ encourages its members to resolve any issues or concerns that they may have at the earliest opportunity with each other or, failing that, a member of the management.

The preferred process involves members resolving issues to their satisfaction internally, without feeling they have to refer to external organisations or to authorities for assistance.

Objective

The purpose of this document is to provide an avenue through which Wildlife SEQ members can resolve organisation-related complaints as they arise.

Policy

Wildlife SEQ will establish mechanisms to promote fast and efficient resolution of organisation-based issues. Members should feel comfortable discussing issues with their managing committee in accordance with the procedures outlined below.

All formal avenues for handling of grievances will be fully documented and the member's wishes will be taken into account in determining the appropriate steps and actions.

No member will be intimidated or unfairly treated in any respect if they utilise this Policy to resolve an issue.

This Policy applies to all financial members of Wildlife SEQ.

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of Managing Committee to ensure that:

- They identify, prevent and address potential problems before they become formal grievances;
- They are aware of, and are committed to the principles of communicating and information sharing with their members;
- All decisions relating to membership practices are made with consideration given to the ramifications for the individual, as well as the organisation in general;
- Any grievance is handled in the most appropriate manner at the earliest opportunity;
- All members are treated fairly and without fear of intimidation.
- They are aware of their obligations and responsibilities in relation to communication and information sharing with their members;
- Ongoing support and guidance are provided to all members in relation to membership and communication issues;
- All members and volunteers are aware of their obligations and responsibilities in relation to handling grievances;
- Any grievance that comes to their attention is handled in the most appropriate manner at the earliest opportunity.
- It is the responsibility of Members to ensure that:

- They attempt to resolve any issues with a member of the managing committee and through internal processes at the earliest opportunity.

Membership Practices

The managing committee of Wildlife SEQ should be aware of the possible ramifications of their actions when dealing with member issues. They must ensure that all members are treated with fairness, equality and respect.

If there are any doubts or queries in relation to how to deal with a particular set of circumstances, the managing committee should seek external console.

Where a grievance or dispute has been brought to the management's attention, they should assess whether the member involved is a full financial member of Wildlife SEQ.

Grievances and Dispute Resolution

A member who considers that they have a dispute or grievance should raise the matter with a member of the management as a first step towards resolution. The two parties should discuss the matter openly and work together to achieve a desired outcome.

The management should check for clarification of the issue to ensure they fully understand the complainant's concern. The member of management should follow the standard procedure of offering the member the opportunity to have an independent witness at the discussion, ensuring they follow the steps outlined below:

- If more than one person is present, establish the role of each person.
- Outline the process that is to be followed.
- Inform the parties that any information obtained in the conduct of the review is confidential.
- Listen to the complainant and diagnose the problem.
- Take accurate and detailed notes of all conversations (including dates, people involved) and attach any supporting documentation.
- If deemed necessary, provide the member with a written summary of the meeting and clarification of the next steps to be taken.
- The member of the management must ensure that the manner in which the meeting is conducted will be conducive to maintaining positive ongoing relationships, and will provide a fair, objective and independent analysis of the situation.
- All parties are to maintain complete confidentiality at all times.
- If the matter is not resolved and the member wishes to pursue it, the issue should be discussed with the entire management of Wildlife SEQ, the matter is to be discussed openly and objectively with all management members to ensure it is fully understood.
- If the grievance/dispute is one of a confidential or serious nature involving a member of the management, the complainant may discuss the issue directly with President/Vice- President of Wildlife SEQ.
- Any complaint that is to be brought before the management of Wildlife SEQ is to be in writing.
- A right of reply will be given to any member should they be involved with any dispute or grievance. This will be within a timeframe outlined in writing by the management of Wildlife SEQ.

Related Documents

- Wildlife SEQ Code of Conduct
- Wildlife SEQ Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Rehabilitator Code of Ethics