

ST JOHN AMBULANCE (NSW)

Complaints Handling Policy & Procedure

July 2022



ST JOHN NSW VALUES



Our values define who we are. They guide our actions and behaviour. They influence the way we work with each other, our customers, and communities.



RESPECT

We are ambassadors for St John. We are respected for the work that we do and the way that we do it. We recognise our strength comes from our diversity. We have the courage to be authentic and true.



INTEGRITY

We do the right thing. We are honest and trustworthy. We are accountable for our actions and take ownership of our shared goals. We are there when you need us. You can depend on us.



LEADERSHIP

We are the custodians of our future. We enable our teams to grow and succeed. We lead by example and learn from our mistakes. Our passion and commitment engage and inspire.



COMMUNICATION

We are sincere in our voice and actions. We share ideas and listen to each other, our customers and community. We are open and transparent in all that we do.



COLLABORATION

We work best when we work together. We care for our colleagues and our community. We take initiative, generate new ideas and embrace change. We share success. Together we can make a difference.



Complaints Handling Policy

Our Commitment

St John NSW is committed to creating an environment and culture where complaints or feedback from our members (staff members and volunteers), parents, cadets, juniors, or the community are dealt with in a fair, responsive, efficient, effective, and transparent way.

St John NSW believes people have the right to make a complaint when they are dissatisfied with an action, inaction, decision or event and we encourage such feedback.

Definitions

Cadets and Juniors - any person under the age of 18 years.

Complaint - an expression of dissatisfaction about St John NSW, our services, staff members or volunteers or the handling of a complaint. Complaint may be about our actions or inaction, a decision, or an event.

Complainant – person making the complaint.

Dispute - an unresolved complaint.

Feedback - opinions, comments, or concern, made directly or indirectly to or about St John, our services, our people, products, or complaints handling system.

Members - staff and volunteer members.

Natural Justice - refers to the right of the parties to a complaint to receive a fair hearing and decision that is free from bias.

Procedural Fairness - refers to the procedures used by a decision-maker that requires that fair and proper procedures are used when making a decision.

Responsibilities

This Policy applies to all Members making, receiving, or managing a complaint from the public or St John NSW Members made to, or about, St John NSW.

All Members will treat complainants with respect and provide assistance to people to make a complaint, where necessary. All Members of St John NSW are committed to a fair, responsive, and transparent complaint process.

All leaders should promote a culture that values complaint, feedback, and an effective complaints handling process. All leaders should foster a culture where Members, including our Cadets, Juniors, and the public feel able to raise concerns and give feedback.



ST JOHN AMBULANCE (NSW)

People should always be able to make a complaint without fear of reprisal, victimisation, retaliatory action, or other adverse effect. St John NSW will take all reasonable steps to ensure complainants do not experience repercussions as a result of their complaint.

St John NSW will ensure information about how to make a complaint is made publicly available.

The complaints handling process will appear in plain language and will be straightforward, and we will provide help in accessing and understanding our complaint framework to people who require it.

Complaints can be made in a range of formats via phone, email, post or verbally to a St John NSW Member. A child friendly version of the Complaint and Feedback Form, using appropriate language, is also available. See Appendix A & B.

All complaints will be taken seriously, and the complaint or feedback process will be objective, fair, equitable and unbiased.

All complaints will be dealt with confidentially to the extent possible, except where we are required by law to disclose information about the complaint or where we believe that a child or young person is being harmed. St John NSW will protect the identity of people making complaint where this is practical or appropriate and will only disclose personal information that identifies an individual where permitted by law.

St John NSW will accept anonymous complaint made directly or through our external Whistleblower provider 'StopLineReport'.

How to raise a complaint or provide feedback internally?

Members including parents, Cadets and Juniors are encouraged, wherever possible, to resolve concerns or difficulties directly with the person(s) concerned to deal with the issue before making a formal complaint. If the issue cannot be resolved informally, how a complaint should be raised depends on what the complaint is about, who is involved and the seriousness of the allegations.

In the first instance, Members including parents, Cadets and Juniors are encouraged to provide feedback or submit a complaint to their Manager or Volunteer Leader. Members can make the complaint verbally or in writing by completing the Complaint & Feedback Form found on St John NSW Members Website – see Appendix A & B.

Where this is not appropriate because of who is involved in the issue, then we encourage Members to go to:

- their Manager's Manager or Volunteer Leader's Manager, or a General Manager or Zone Leader/Deputy Commissioner.

If the matter relates to child safety, Members must reach out to any of the Child Wellbeing Officers. If the matter involves a serious child safety concern, Members must contact the Senior or Lead Child Wellbeing Officers immediately.

Members can also raise Complaint anonymously through our external Whistleblower provider Hotline on 1300 30 45 50 or <http://stjohnnsw.stoplinereport.com>. More information can be found in our Whistleblower Policy.

With very serious incidents or incidents that impact the whole of organisation, the Manager or Volunteer Leader may escalate the incident to EHS Incidents on incidents@stjohnnsw.au.

ST JOHN AMBULANCE (NSW)

How to raise a complaint or provide feedback externally?

Past Members, parents of Cadets and Juniors and members of the public can submit a complaint or provide feedback through our St John NSW external website or by contacting the Customer Service Team.

What happens when St John NSW receives a complaint or feedback?

Once St John NSW receives a complaint, they will:

- Confirm they have received the complaint with the complainant as soon as possible (unless raised anonymously).
- If necessary, speak to the complainant and ask for more information.
- Identify the issues raised by the complainant and the outcome the complainant is seeking.
- Decide on the best way to handle the complaint; and
- If applicable, offer St John NSW Support Services to everyone involved.

Not all complaints require investigation. St John NSW will assess the complaint to determine the appropriate next steps. These might include:

- Informal discussions with those involved.
- High level review of culture.
- Training and coaching.
- Mediation / facilitated discussions.
- Investigation; or
- No further action is needed.

The factors that St John NSW will consider when deciding how to handle the complaint include:

- Who made the complaint.
- Who the complaint is made against.
- The severity or urgency of the complaint.
- Whether sufficient information been provided to progress the complaint.
- Whether the complainant and any witnesses are likely to cooperate.
- Whether the issues raised in the complaint have been investigated previously.
- Whether the complaint relates to the health and safety of another person, particularly a young person, and
- If the issue(s) can be resolved without an investigation.

Once a complaint has been assessed and a decision has been made regarding the appropriate next steps, the complainant will be notified of that decision. If it is determined that a complaint requires investigation, depending on the type of complaint, the complaint may be allocated to the St John NSW Investigation Team or to an external investigator.



ST JOHN AMBULANCE (NSW)

Conducting Investigations

If a complaint is to be investigated, usually it will be the GM PPC who will decide whether the investigation will be conducted internally or externally and who will investigate the complaint. If there is to be an internal investigation, the investigator may be the Manager or Volunteer Leader of the person who has been complained about or a member of the Investigation Team. If the complaint will be investigated, the investigator will be required to declare any conflict of interest. When the complaint is investigated by the Investigation Team, the Manager or Volunteer Leader of the person who has been complained about will usually remain involved in managing the complaint, unless it is inappropriate for them to do so.

In some circumstances, it will be more appropriate for a complaint to be investigated externally. This may be when the complaint:

- is unable to be investigated internally due to conflicts of interest
- involves senior personnel within St John NSW, or
- involves serious or sensitive organisational issues.

What happens after the investigation is concluded?

Once the investigation is completed, St John NSW will let the complainant (where possible) and the person being investigated know the outcome including:

- The decision and any action(s) St John NSW has taken.
- The resolution or improvement St John NSW has proposed or put in place; and
- Any options for review or appeal available to them should they be dissatisfied with the outcome.

What happens if the complainant or the person being investigated is not satisfied with the outcome?

An appeal may be lodged by the complainant, or the person being investigated if they are not satisfied with the decision or outcome. Any appeal should be put in writing, should clearly set out the issue of concern and be lodged with the Manager or Volunteer Leader who has been managing the complaint with a copy to that person's Manager. If the reasons for the appeal involve concerns regarding the Manager or Volunteer Leader who has been managing the complaint, the appeal should be submitted to the GM PPC.

After receiving the appeal, the Manager, Volunteer Leader, or GM PPC will conduct a review and let the person who lodged the appeal know the outcome of that review. A person may also be able to complain to an external agency. Nothing in this policy precludes that from happening.



ST JOHN AMBULANCE (NSW)

What Support Services does St John NSW offer?

St John NSW offers a number of support services that are free and available to all Members and their family. These programs offer private and confidential services to all Members who are seeking assistance.

They are:

- Peer Support Services – 0437 538 904
- Chaplaincy – 0429 919 327 or 02 4655 8578
- Volunteer & Employee Assistance Program - 1300 361 008

For further information, please visit

<https://www.stjohnmembers.com.au/mystjohn/my%20support%20systems>

Record Keeping

All the relevant information regarding the complaint will be kept private and confidential. Any complaint received by the Investigation Team will be recorded in St John NSW's complaint register.

Continuous Improvement

St John NSW is committed to continuously improving its complaints handling process. Where the complainant appeal has identified an area for improvement, St John NSW will review the available information. This may result in amendments and updates to policies, procedures, or practices.

What other policies documents this relates to?

- Values & Behaviour Statement
- Whistleblower Policy
- Member Conduct & Performance Procedure
- Grievance Dispute Resolution Procedure
- Criminal Charges & Conviction Policy
- Child Safety Policy & Reporting Procedure
- Child Safety Code of Conduct

These policies can be found at the Members Website <https://www.stjohnmembers.com.au/>

Who to contact with questions?

If you would like further information, please contact the Safety & Member Services Manager, the People & Culture Partner, your Executive Team Member, or the GM PPC.

Contact details are available on the St John NSW Members Website, <https://www.stjohnmembers.com.au/>

The Policy will be reviewed every 3 years or as otherwise required.

Appendix A

St John NSW

COMPLAINT FORM



St John Ambulance (NSW) is committed to continuously improving and we welcome any feedback or formal complaint you wish to make. We take all feedback and complaint seriously.

We may need to contact you about your complaint, so please do provide your name and contact details. However, we understand you may not wish to be identified. While we encourage you to identify yourself and provide your contact information, you don't need to do this. If you don't want to do this, we will still follow our complaint policy and make a decision about the information that you give us to the extent that we can.

All complaint will be treated confidentially and in accordance with our obligations under privacy legislation.

If you need help in submitting your complaint, or support during the complaint process, you can elect a support person, or we can appoint an independent support person to assist you.

A child friendly version of this form is also available from incident@stjohnnsw.com.au

Name of person completing this form: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Name of person making complaint or the aggrieved person: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

I wish to remain anonymous:

Is the person making the complaint a:

St John Volunteer/Staff Member

St John Youth Volunteer

Family member of a St John Volunteer/Staff Member

Member of the Public

Support person/advocate

External Organisation

Address: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Phone number: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Email: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

What is your preferred method of being contacted? Choose an item.

Tell us what happened

What happened? Please give us details:

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

When did it happen? [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Where did it happen? [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Who was involved? [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

What have you done so far to try and resolve the complaint? (e.g. did you contact your Manager or Volunteer Leader to try and resolve your complaint and the response was not satisfactory)

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

What do you think needs to be done to address or resolve your complaint or what outcome are you hoping for?

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Do you require assistance to participate in the complaint process? Choose an item.

Are you attaching supporting information or evidence? Choose an item.

Signature (of person completing this form): Click or tap here to enter text.

Date: Click or tap to enter a date.

How to return this Form

Fill in the form and save your response. Then:

- Email it to incidents@stjohnnsw.com.au
- Hand it to your Manager
- Post it to the Safety & Member Services Manager, Level 1, 9 Deane St Burwood NSW 2134

What will happen now?

Thank you for taking the time to let us know about your concerns, complaint, or feedback. Once we receive your complaint, we will follow the process outlined in our Complaints Handling Policy (a copy can be obtained by emailing incidents@stjohnnsw.com.au).

What if I am not satisfied with the outcome?

- You can appeal our decision. To do so, you will need to follow the steps outlined in our Complaints Handling Policy.

Office use only

Date received: Click or tap to enter a date.

By: Click or tap here to enter text.

Acknowledgment of complaint provided (date): Click or tap to enter a date.

Complaint sent to Manager (date): Click or tap to enter a date.

Manager name: Click or tap here to enter text.

Appendix B

Youth Feedback and Complaint Form

St John NSW cares about what happens to you and we're here to help.

When you give us feedback, make a complaint, or let us know what you are worried about, we will listen to you, treat you kindly and take the matter seriously.

If you need help to fill out this form, you can speak to a divisional leader, Child Wellbeing Officer or give call us on 0457 334 003. You can also email us at incidents@stjohnnsw.com.au

Just so you know, there could be some things that St John NSW will need to tell others about so they can help too. Remember, we will always do our best to support you.

You can tell us your name and contact details or be anonymous. If you don't tell us your name, we will not be able to talk to you about how we can help or help you directly.

Tell us about you

Your Name:

What division are you from (you don't have to answer):

 **Where do you live?**

 **Phone number:**

 **Email:**

Tick which way is the best to contact you?

Email  Phone 

We might need to talk to you about your problem so we can help. Is this OK?

 Yes  No

You can send this form to us by:

Giving it to a leader or adult your trust

Phone: 0457 334 003

Email: incidents@stjohnnsw.com.au

You can also contact a **Child Wellbeing Officer** to help you fill out and send through this form. You can find a list of these officers at www.stjohnmembers.com.au or by calling 02 9745 8787

Tell us what you're worried about

What happened? (Need more space? Just attach another piece of paper!)

 **When did it happen?**

Who was there or who was involved?

Can anyone else give more details? (Is it OK for us to talk to them? Can you tell us how to contact them?)

Name:

Contact Details:

What would you like to happen? / What would make you happy?

What now?

We will read what you have told us carefully and we will think about how we can best help you. We might be able to fix or make the problem better. We might also try to talk to you, if you agreed for us to do this, so that we can understand more find out more about what happened.

If you aren't happy about what we do, you can ask us to look at it again, and a different person will look at it.

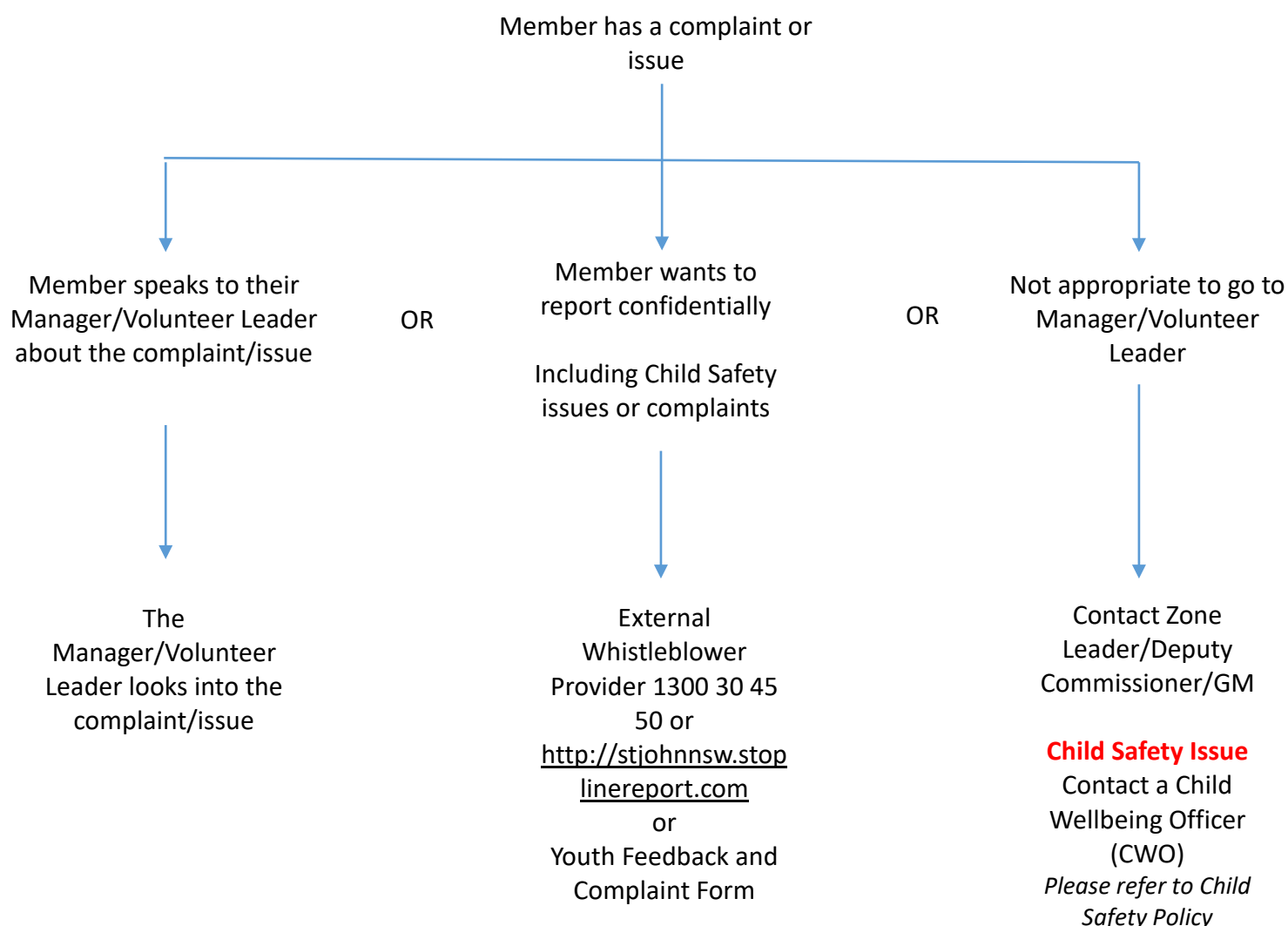
Confidentiality

St John NSW is very careful about the personal information you provide to us – we have rules about who we share information with. If you say we can talk to people then we may do that so we can better understand what you are worried about and find the best result. We do need to tell you that we may need to tell someone else such as the police or child protection people if we are worried that you are being harmed or that you may be unsafe.

Appendix C

How to make a complaint or raise an issue internally at St John NSW

Raising a complaint



What can I expect to happen to my complaint or issue that I have raised?

You can expect that the following will happen:

- Your complaint or issue will be acknowledged and listened to
- Your complaint will be taken seriously
- The decision-making process in dealing with the complaint or issue will be objective, fair, equitable and unbiased
- All complaint will be dealt with confidentially

Please be aware if the concerns that you raise are of a very serious nature or impacts the whole organisation, the Manager or Volunteer Leader will escalate to their Manager's Manager or through the EHS Incidents email or to the PPC Team. Thereafter, the issue will be managed formally.

What happens if I'm not happy with how my complaint or issue has been dealt with?

If you are not satisfied with the process or decision or outcome, you may appeal by putting your concerns in writing to the Manager or Volunteer Leader who has been managing the complaint and cc their Manager. If the reasons for the appeal involve concerns regarding the Manager or Volunteer Leader who has been managing the Complaint, the appeal should go to the next management level or be submitted to the GM PPC.

You will need to be specific about the reason why you are appealing the decision. You can expect your appeal will be reviewed and a response be provided to you in timely manner.

What other Policies does this relate to?

- Values & Behaviour Statement
- Whistleblower Policy
- Member Conduct & Performance Procedure
- Criminal Charges & Conviction Policy
- Child Safety Policy
- Child Safety Code of Conduct

These policies can be found on the St John NSW Members Website at <https://www.stjohnmembers.com.au/>

Where do I find contact details?

You can find the following resources in St John NSW Members Website <https://www.stjohnmembers.com.au/>

- Complaints Handling Policy <https://www.stjohnmembers.com.au/resources-page>
- Child Wellbeing Officers, Senior Child Wellbeing Officers & Lead Child Wellbeing Officers on <https://www.stjohnmembers.com.au/mystjohn/child%20safety>
- Whistleblower Policy <https://www.stjohnmembers.com.au/resources-page>



ST JOHN AMBULANCE (NSW)

WEBSITE

www.stjohnnsw.com.au

CONTACT

1300 St John (78 5646)

ADDRESS

9 Deane Street, Burwood
NSW 2134