



MSLSC Grievance Policy and Procedure

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Policy Owner	J Wilson - <i>J Wilson</i>

Purpose

To outline the circumstances under which a Mooloolaba Surf Life Saving Club (MSLSC) member, volunteer or employee may lodge a grievance and explain the process to be followed in relation to the resolution to grievances and disputes within MSLSC.

Scope

This policy applies to MSLSC members, volunteers and employees and is relevant for all grievances within MSLSC.

Policy and Procedure

A grievance is any problem, concern or complaint regarding a members', volunteers' or employees' involvement or the environment members, volunteers and employees are involved in. For example, a grievance may include:

- development and training,
- how an issue was handled,
- the club environment,
- safety in the workplace,
- the treatment by an official or officer,
- discrimination,
- harassment – verbal or sexual, or
- Physical violence or assault.

MSLSC regards the safety and wellbeing of the members, volunteers and employees as paramount, MSLSC will not tolerate harm against its members, volunteers or employees. Any untoward behaviour is to be reported as per the MSLSC Grievance Flow Chart (Attachment A) for the complaint to be fully investigated by the Grievance Officer in the first instance.

Key Principals

Confidentiality - The Club President, Secretary and the Grievance Officer should be directly involved in the grievance and may access relevant information.

Impartiality - all parties are to be provided with the opportunity to state their position/ situation with regards to the grievance. Action is not to be taken until all relevant information has been collected and considered. All parties have access to support or representation if required or requested.

Free of unfair repercussions or victimisation - management and officers are to take all necessary steps to make sure all members, volunteers and employees involved in a grievance are not victimised for submitting a grievance. If victimisation occurs, any party involved may be subject to disciplinary action. Use of this policy for fictitious grievances may also result in disciplinary action.



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Resolution at local level - when possible, grievances are to be resolved in an informal manner at the local level. In many cases grievances can be resolved by agreement between parties involved.

Timeframes - grievances are to be managed as soon as is practicable. When grievances cannot be resolved at the local level, formal grievances are to be addressed in a timely, efficient, effective and confidential manner. It is preferable that a decision is issued in relation to a grievance within 4 weeks of written notification of the grievance.

Grievances are handled as per the MSLSC Constitution and BYLAWS.

Lodging a Grievance

Step 1: Parties are to attempt to resolve the grievance in an informal manner, where possible.

For example: In most cases, miscommunication can cause an unnecessary issue, and can be resolved with an explanation or acknowledgement. Code of Conduct for Members is to be adhered to at all times.

Step 2: If the issue cannot be resolved between parties, either party may liaise with the Grievance Officer – Matthew Stewart – grievance@thesurfclub.com.au. The Grievance Officer will acknowledge the concern or complaint within 3 working days, and formulate a plan for interview and investigation.

MSLSC Volunteers and members

The Grievance Officer is to:

- obtain full information from the complainant regarding the grievance,
- determine whether the allegation is serious enough that, if proven, it would be a breach of discipline or other related policy (such as member safety and wellbeing). If this is determined, the grievance must be referred for a disciplinary inquiry as per the MSLSC Grievance Flow Chart - Appendix A.
- explain the grievance process steps, (including what will be done to protect any party from victimisation). The Grievance Officer is to refer the complainant to an officer who can provide or arrange advice or support.
- determine if they are the appropriate person to action the grievance. If they are unable to action the grievance, the complainant will be referred to another appropriate Grievance Officer. The appropriate Grievance Officer is to liaise with the complainant and continue with the investigation.

Step 3: The Grievance Officer is to promptly instigate action to resolve the grievance, including wherever practical, within 3 working days of interviewing the complainant, the Grievance Officer will discuss the complaint with all parties to obtain relevant information with regards to the grievance.

If the Grievance Officer is unable to determine all the facts, they may investigate further and decide on a resolution or course of action, this may include liaising with witnesses or review of CCTV footage. The Grievance Officer is to explain to each party their rights and responsibilities.

Step 4: The Grievance Officer is to determine how the grievance should be resolved and inform all parties concerned of final actions.

Where the grievance involves an allegation of a less serious nature and the main facts are **not in dispute**, mediation may be offered. Where the grievance involves an allegation of a less serious nature and the main facts are **in dispute**, the Grievance Officer is to come to a suitable resolution through conversation that both parties are mutually satisfied.



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If the grievance is of a serious nature. The Grievance Officer is to advise the Club President as such and refer the grievance to the relevant authority with a recommendation for further action.

MSLSC Employees

MSLSC Employees can report their grievances or complaints directly to the MSLSC President via the MSLSC Secretary. The MSLSC President is the direct reporting line to the employee.

Record Keeping

The Grievance Officer is to keep a confidential record of the agreement reached, unless the agreement is breached. The Grievance Officer is to retain written notes of:

- interviews with all parties involved in the grievance, and
- actions taken to resolve the grievance.

These notes are to be retained by the MSLSC Secretary on file in confidential and secure manner.

Appeals

If either party believes that the grievance procedure has not been followed correctly, or are dissatisfied with the outcome, concerns can be escalated to the MSLSC Secretary in writing or via email: jwilson@thesurfclub.com.au

An appeal is permitted only on one or more of the following grounds:

- the decision was affected by actual bias,
- there was no information on which the decision could reasonably be based.

The Notice of Appeal must set out the ground(s) of appeal relied upon by the appellant and an outline of the appellant's submissions in relation to the appeal.

The appeal is then to be forwarded to the MSLSC Club President or the MSLSC Club Captain for further review and/ or action.

For further details on appeals and penalties please refer to the MSLSC Bylaws section 11.

Definitions

Nil

References

- Mooloolaba Surf Life Saving Club BYLAWS
- SLSC Policy 6.05 - Appendix C - Member Protection and Section 5.2b

