



TRANSCEND
AUSTRALIA

Volunteer Dispute Resolution Policy

Introduction

Open communication and feedback are regarded as essential elements of a satisfying and productive work environment.

Transcend Australia encourages its volunteers and Board to resolve any issues or concerns that they may have at the earliest opportunity with each other or, failing that, their immediate supervisor.

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

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide an avenue through which volunteers, and Transcend Australia, can resolve work-related complaints as they arise.

Policy

Transcend Australia will establish mechanisms to promote fast and efficient resolution of workplace issues.

Volunteers should feel comfortable discussing issues with the Volunteer Coordinator in accordance with the procedures outlined below.

All formal avenues for handling of grievances will be fully documented and the volunteer's wishes will be considered in determining the appropriate steps and actions.

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

This Policy applies to all Transcend volunteers.

Volunteer Grievances and Dispute resolution Procedures

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of **Volunteer Coordinator** 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 volunteers;

- All decisions relating to volunteer engagement 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 employees and volunteers are treated fairly and without fear of intimidation.

It is the responsibility of **Volunteers** to ensure that:

- They attempt to resolve any issues arising from their work as a Volunteer for Transcend Australia through their immediate supervisor and through internal processes at the earliest opportunity.

It is the responsibility of **Transcend Australia** to ensure that:

- All volunteers are aware of their obligations and responsibilities in relation to communication and information sharing with volunteers;
- Ongoing support and guidance is provided to all volunteers in relation to volunteering and communication issues;
- All volunteers are aware of their obligations and responsibilities in relation to handling grievances;
- Any grievance that comes to the attention of Transcend Australia is handled in the most appropriate manner at the earliest opportunity.

Procedures

Employment Practices

Transcend Australia should be aware of the possible ramifications of their actions when dealing with volunteer issues. They must ensure that all volunteers 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 Volunteer Coordinator should contact the Board for advice at the earliest opportunity.

Where a grievance or dispute has been brought to Transcend's (or the Volunteer Coordinator's) attention, they should assess whether the employee involved is covered by an Award or Agreement, and if so should refer to that document for grievance procedures. If the employee or volunteer involved is not covered by such a document, the guidelines below should be followed.

Grievances and Dispute Resolution

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

The Volunteer Coordinator should check for clarification of the issue to ensure they fully understand the complainant's concern. The Volunteer Coordinator should follow the standard procedure of offering the volunteer 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 volunteers with a written summary of the meeting and clarification of the next steps to be taken.

The Volunteer Coordinator must ensure that the manner in which the meeting is conducted will be conducive to maintaining positive working 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 volunteer wishes to pursue it, the issue should be discussed with the Transcend Board Chair, who will determine the next steps, including, if necessary, the involvement of an external mediator.

If the grievance/dispute is one of a confidential or serious nature involving the Volunteer Coordinator, the complainant may discuss the issue directly with the Board Chair.

Related Documents

- Bullying Policy
- Anti-Discrimination Policy

Document History

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