



No To Violence

Male Family Violence
Prevention Association

ABN 98365655697

ntv.org.au

Men's
Referral
Service

1300 766 491

mrs.org.au



Your Rights

How NTV/MRS manages your concerns and complaints about the organisations

Confidentiality

All calls to the Men's Referral Service are confidential and private, unless we have concerns about your safety or someone else's safety. If we have concerns about your safety or someone else's we may call the police or an ambulance. Whenever possible, the Telephone Counsellor will discuss this with you first.

We ask all callers for basic statistical information including age, employment status, postcode or suburb, and how you heard about our service. The Telephone Counsellor will also ask you questions about your situation to make sure they are able to give you relevant advice.

Policy Statement

No to Violence / Men's Referral Service is committed to ensuring that any person or organisation using No to Violence / Men's Referral Service services or affected by its operations has the right to lodge a complaint or to appeal a decision of the organisation and to have their concerns addressed in ways that ensure access and equity, fairness, accountability and transparency.

The organisation will provide a complaints and appeals management procedure that:

- is simple and easy to use
- is effectively communicated and promoted to all clients and stakeholders
- ensures complaints or appeals are fairly assessed and responded to promptly
- is procedurally fair and follows principles of natural justice
- complies with legislative requirements.

Principles

No to Violence / Men's Referral Service will:

- consider all complaints it receives
- treat all complainants with respect, recognising that the issue of complaint is important to the complainant
- maintain confidentiality of parties involved, keeping any information private to those directly involved in the complaint and its resolution

- ensure advocacy is available to clients who make a complaint and require support
 - resolve complaints, where possible, to the satisfaction of the complainant
 - deal with all complaints in a timely manner
 - keep parties to the complaint informed of progress of the complaint
 - ensure that Board of Governance members, staff, volunteers are given information about the complaints procedure as part of their induction and are aware of procedures for managing client feedback and complaints.
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- ensure all service users, stakeholders and members are aware of the complaints policy and procedures
 - ensure that a complainant is not penalised in any way or prevented from use of services during the progress of an issue.
 - ensure that feedback data (both positive and negative) is considered in organisational reviews and in planning service improvements.

Procedures

Information for clients and stakeholders

In addition to this document, No to Violence / Men's Referral Service complaints and appeals procedure will be further detailed if clients and stakeholders phone (03) 9487 4500 (during office hours), or by return email, where a query is sent to info@ntv.org.au

All clients will be informed of their rights and responsibilities with regards to complaints and appeals at the earliest possible stage of their involvement with the organisation.

This document contains information on the following:

- how to make a complaint or lodge an appeal
- contact person for lodging a complaint or appeal
- how the organisation will deal with the complaint or appeal, the steps involved and the timelines
- the rights of the complainant to an advocate, support person or interpreter
- how the person will be informed about the outcome of their complaint or appeal
- how to make a complaint to an external body including contact details.

The information will also be made available to clients upon request in a language other than English.

Making a complaint

A person wishing to make a complaint may do so in writing (including email) or verbally to:

- the staff member they were dealing with at the time
- the MRS Team Leader working the shift when the complaint was made

- the MRS Manager
- The NTV/MRS CEO

If the complaint is about:

- a staff member, the complaint will normally be dealt with by two Team Leaders
- a Team Leader, the complaint will normally be dealt with by the MRS Manager
- MRS Manager, the complaint will normally be dealt with by the CEO and a member of the Board of Governance

Written complaints may be sent to

**PO Box 3022
Burnley North
Victoria 3121
Australia**

or emailed to info@ntv.org.au

Please attention your correspondence to the NTV/MRS CEO, who will be responsible for receiving this correspondence and directing it to the appropriate person.

Lodging an appeal

Clients or their advocates may lodge an appeal if they disagree with a decision made by the organisation, or by a staff member. An appeal should be made in writing by post or email and submitted to the CEO, as described above.

Procedure for complaints and appeals management

The person managing the complaint will be responsible for:

1. Processing the complaint or appeal:
 - registering the complaint or appeal in the complaint register
 - informing the complainant that their complaint has been received and providing them with information about the process and time frame
2. Investigating the complaint or appeal:
 - examining the complaint within two weeks of the complaint being received
 - investigating the complaint and deciding how to respond
 - Informing the complainant by letter within two days of the complaint being received of what is being done to investigate and resolve it, and the expected time frame for resolution.

As far as possible, complaints or appeals will be investigated and resolved within four weeks of being received. If this time frame cannot be met, the complainant will be informed of the reasons why and of the alternative time frame for resolution.

3. Resolving the complaint:
 - making a decision or referring to the appropriate people for a decision within four weeks of the complaint being received
 - informing the complainant of the outcome

- upheld (and if so what will be done to resolve it)
- resolved (and how this has been achieved), or
- if no further action can be taken, the reasons for this.
- Informing the complainant of any options for further action if required.

4. Reviewing the complaint:

If the complainant is not satisfied with the investigation and proposed resolution of their complaint or appeal they can seek a further review of the matter by the CEO within four weeks.

Record keeping

A register of complaints and appeals will be kept in Register of Complaints. The register will be maintained by MRS Manager and will record the following for each complaint or appeal:

- details of the complainant and the nature of the complaint
- date lodged
- action taken
- date of resolution and reason for decision
- indication of complainant being notified of outcome
- complainant response and any further action.

Copies of all correspondence will be kept on file by NTV/MRS.

The complaints register and files will be confidential and access is restricted to MRS Manager, CEO and Operations Manager.

A report on the number of complaints and their outcome will be prepared annually by the MRS Manager and presented to the Board.

Results from this report will be reviewed by the NTV/MRS Board of Governance and used to:

- inform service planning by including a review of complaints and appeals in all service planning, monitoring and evaluation activities
- inform decision making by including a report on complaints and appeals as a standard item on staff and management meeting agendas.

Complaints involving specific staff members or volunteers.

The Operations Manager has delegated responsibility for resolving complaints or disputes involving staff members or volunteers.

Internal complaints, where a staff member or volunteer makes a complaint concerning another staff member or volunteer, will be dealt with in accordance with the organisation's Dispute Resolution Policy

External complaints by clients or stakeholders made against a staff member or volunteers will be

managed by the Operations Manager who will:

- notify the staff member or volunteer of the complaint and its nature
- investigate the complaint and provide the staff member or volunteer with an opportunity to respond to any issues raised
- attempt to mediate the dispute (if appropriate) and/or attempt to resolve the matter to the satisfaction of the outside party
- take any other action necessary to resolve the issue.

Any disciplinary action against a staff member or volunteer arising from a complaint will be taken in accordance with the procedures contained in organisation's disciplinary procedures.

Complaints involving the CEO will be managed by Board Chair.

Complaints involving organisation members or Board of Governance members

Complaints made against a member or Board of Governance member will be referred to the Chair. The Chair, or their delegate, will:

- notify the person about whom a complaint is being made of the complaint and its nature
- investigate the complaint and provide the member with an opportunity to respond to any issues raised
- attempt to mediate the dispute (if appropriate) and/or attempt to resolve the matter to the satisfaction of the outside party.

Where the Chair is the subject of a complaint, the complaint should be referred to the Deputy Chair

If the matter remains unresolved, the Chair or Deputy Chair will raise the matter at the next Board of Governance meeting. Depending on the seriousness of the complaint, the Board of Governance may:

- deal with the matter at its meeting, or
- refer the matter to the process outlined in the organisation's constitution.

Find out more about your rights from the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission's *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities*.
