



Optiform's Complaints Policy

Optiform's Complaints Management and Resolution System (the System)

The System has been created to be consistent with Optiform's legal, professional and ethical requirements, as well as the *National Disability Insurance Scheme (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018* (the Rules) and NDIS Practice Standards;

For the purposes of the System, a Complaint is defined as: an expression of dissatisfaction with Optiform's support or service by a stakeholder, and for which a response or resolution is expected. It includes but is not limited to an expression of dissatisfaction with how a previous Complaint was handled.

Complaints Policy

Optiform is committed to providing quality service and care for all Participants including by welcoming and responding to the views of Participants and other stakeholders, and we aim to handle and resolve Complaints.

Optiform aims to handle and resolve all Complaints, however any person also has the right to make a Complaint about Optiform's services directly to the NDIS Commission via:

- Calling 1800 035 544;
- Visiting their local NDIS office; or
- Completing a complaints form via the NDIS Commission website www.ndiscommission.gov.au/about/complaints

Key personnel

Optiform's Complaints Manager is Kate Wilson and her contact details are:

- feedback@optiform.com.au
- 53344402

Optiform's Complaints Manager receives and responds to all Complaints.

Optiform's directors, Meaghan Sullivan and Andrew Sullivan, are responsible for governance and final decision making with respect to Complaints. Their contact details are:

- meaghan@optiform.com.au
- 0408338259
- andrew@optiform.com.au
- 0407551661



Optiform's Complaints Manager and Optiform's Directors are responsible for the management of Complaints at Optiform and will be trained annually on Complaint management and compliance with NDIS Practice Standards.

All Optiform employees are trained in their induction and then trained annually in their obligations under the System and on Optiform's Complaints Policy and Process.

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to enable Complaints to fairly and efficiently acknowledged, assessed and resolved, wherever possible.

Optiform aims to ensure that:

- making a Complaint is as easy as possible;
- anonymous Complaints may be made;
- Complaints are dealt with as promptly, confidentially and appropriately as possible, with regard given to the seriousness and level of vulnerability of all parties, including any Participant involved;
- the person making the complaint (the Complainant) is not adversely affected because they have made a Complaint;
- Optiform's process for handling Complaints is transparent and accessible and the Complainant is:
 - treated with respect and dignity throughout the Complaints process;
 - treated fairly by Optiform throughout the Complaints process;
 - as regularly updated as possible to the progress of the complaint; and
 - appropriately involved in the resolution of the complaint;
 - all parties affected by a Complaint, including the Complainant and the person complained about (Respondent), are afforded procedural fairness; and
 - we learn from Complaints and where possible and indicated, that we apply any learnings arising from a Complaint to improve services and supports.

Scope

All of Optiform's Directors and employees are trained in this Policy. This Policy applies to all stakeholders of Optiform, including Participants, parents, family members or representatives, who wish to make a Complaint.

Confidentiality

Optiform will take all reasonable steps to ensure that Complaints remain confidential, exceptions apply where Optiform is required to make disclosures by law or where disclosures are required for investigation.



Process

Optiform's Complaints Officer will:

- acknowledge the Complaint in writing;
- respond within a stated period of time;
- deal reasonably and sensitively with the Complaint and take action where appropriate. Our approach recognises that complainants generally seek:
 - acknowledgement;
 - answers;
 - action; and/or
 - apology.

Optiform's Complaints Process

Optiform's Complaints Process provides an overview of the steps Optiform employees will take to respond to a Complaint.

When Optiform receives a Complaint we will apply whichever of the following steps is relevant and possible:

Step 1. Acknowledgement

Stakeholders can make a complaint via the following methods:

- Talking informally with a clinician or staff member;
- Calling Optiform reception;
- Emailing feedback@optiform.com.au;
- Filling in a Feedback Form in the waiting room or on Optiform's website www.optiform.com.au (which can be completed anonymously);
- Contacting Optiform's designated Complaints Manager, Kate Wilson via:
 - Email: [Insert email]; or
 - Phone: [insert phone].

Optiform's Complaints Manager will then, wherever possible, contact the complainant to acknowledge the complaint within 5 working days of receipt.

The Complaints Manager provide the complainant with a reasonable opportunity to present their complaint, and for their concerns to be heard and understood.



Step 2. Actions

Optiform's Complaints Manager will undertake the following actions after acknowledging receipt of a complaint:

Conduct a preliminary assessment of the complaint, including but not limited to:

- Assessing the seriousness of the complaint;
- Undertaking a risk assessment;
- Undertaking a conflict of interest check, perceived conflict or otherwise;
- If required and appropriate, liaising with the Directors of Optiform; and
- If applicable, referring or notifying the matter to the NDIS or any bodies in accordance with any requirements under relevant Commonwealth or Victorian laws (e.g. the police).

If the matter is considered to be serious in nature and the Complaints Manager considers an investigation is warranted then this will be commissioned.

If the complaint is not considered serious enough to warrant investigation, then the Directors and Complaints Manager will decide what action, if any, will flow in order to resolve the matter.

This action will consider the specific complaint and any systems relating to ensuring that similar issues will not recur.

Sometimes, Optiform will not be able to fix the issue raised, but can initiate actions to prevent the issue from arising again.

Where appropriate, an action plan can be formulated to document actions that will be taken, including:

- What will be done;
- Who will do it;
- When it will be done;
- How the progress of the complaint and outcomes will be communicated with the complainant; and
- How the progress of the complaint actions and implementation will be overseen.

The Complaints Manager will consider the complainant's preferred resolution of the matter, and wherever possible will liaise with the complainant before a decision is made as to what action will be taken.



If the complaint involves allegations specifically against an employee of Optiform, the employee and the complainant will be treated with procedural fairness throughout the process. This includes giving the subject of the complaint:

- notice of each prejudicial matter that may be considered against them;
- a reasonable opportunity to be heard on those matters before adverse action is taken; and
- the right to have an unbiased decision maker.

Step 3. Apology

A formal written apology and description of actions taken should be provided, where relevant and appropriate, to the complainant within 15 business days of the initial complaint. An apology should come from the person complained about and/or a Director of Optiform.

Step 4. Reflection and Prevention

Optiform takes complaints seriously, and as such, implements systems in order to reflect on our complaints processes and the outcomes of any complaints. Therefore, the Complaints Manager will undertake the following actions after a complaint has been resolved or concluded:

- Check in with the person who made the complaint for feedback on Optiform's handling of the matter, and their response to the outcome of the complaint;
- Document records and all consequent correspondence with regard to that complaint and keep on record for 7 years;
- Review this Policy and Optiform's Complaint Management and Resolution System annually to ensure its effectiveness. A review should include the identification and resolution of systemic issues raised through the complaints management and resolution process; and
- Regularly train employees in Optiform's complaints process to enable ongoing compliance.

Updated: January 2020