

Complaint Handling Policy

The Little Sanctuary Support Services PTY LTD

The Little Sanctuary Support Services Pty Ltd (“the Organisation”) is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for all participants, families, carers, staff, and volunteers.

This policy outlines our approach to receiving, responding to, and resolving complaints, concerns, suspicions, disclosures, and allegations in line with:

- NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme) requirements
- QLD Child Safe Standards and Laws
- Australian laws and regulatory requirements

This policy is directly linked to our Code of Conduct and reflects our values of respect, integrity, empowerment, and empathy.

1. Scope and applicability

This Code applies to all employees of **The Little Sanctuary Support Services PTY LTD**, regardless of their position or location.

Contractors and temporary staff are also expected to adhere to this Code while working for or on behalf of the company.

2. Mission Statement and Core Values

Mission Statement:

To provide a sanctuary where people can receive guidance and support to live a full and rewarding life.

Values:

The Little Sanctuary Support Services team will deliver person-centred, goal-focused services underpinned by the following organisational core values:

- **Respect:** communicate honestly and openly with kindness, effectively resolve conflict, respect boundaries and take responsibility for their actions
- **Empathy:** foster strong relationships through kindness, understanding and patience
- **Empowerment:** create a strong connection between our team and clients fostering a sense of ownership of achievement and loyalty to our team
- **Integrity:** uphold high standards and be accountable

3. Guiding Principles of Policy

1. Accessible and Transparent – The process will be easy to understand, explained in plain language, and available in formats suitable for children and people with disabilities.
2. Fair and Respectful – All complaints will be managed impartially, respectfully, and without victimisation.
3. Confidential and Safe – Information will be managed with sensitivity, and confidentiality will be maintained in line with privacy laws.
4. Child-Centred and Trauma-Informed – The safety and wellbeing of children will always be the priority.

5. Accountable and Compliant – Processes will comply with the NDIS Code of Conduct, Child Safe Standards, Privacy Act 1988 (Cth), and other legal obligations.

4. Complaints Process

Step 1 – Making a Complaint

Complaints can be made in any of the following ways:

- Verbally (in person or over the phone)
- In writing (email, letter, or feedback form)
- Anonymously
- Through a trusted representative or advocate

Children and young people will be supported to raise concerns in age-appropriate ways (e.g., through drawings, storytelling, or child-friendly forms).

Step 2 – Acknowledgement

- Complaints will be acknowledged within 2 business days.
- Where appropriate, families and carers will also be informed that a complaint has been made, unless confidentiality or safety concerns prevent this.

Step 3 – Assessment and Action

Complaints will be reviewed by a Complaint Manager or relevant senior staff. The type of complaint will determine the response:

Type of Complaint	Action
Concern or service issue	Managed promptly and informally where possible.
Breach of Code of Conduct	Investigated formally and corrective action taken.
Suspensions, disclosures, or allegations of harm (including child abuse)	Immediately reported to police and/or child protection authorities in line with mandatory reporting laws.
Complaints about workers	Investigated fairly and in line with HR processes, while protecting the rights of all parties.

Step 4 – Resolution and Feedback

- Complainants will be kept informed of progress and outcomes, subject to privacy and confidentiality laws.
- Written responses will be provided wherever possible.
- Support will be offered to the complainant (e.g. advocacy, interpreter services, counselling referral).

Step 5 – Escalation

If the complainant is not satisfied, they may escalate to:

- NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission
- Office of the Public Guardian (QLD)
- Queensland Police
- Other relevant regulatory authorities.

5. Confidentiality and Privacy

Employees must act with integrity and uphold the highest ethical standards in all professional interactions.

- Information about complaints will only be shared with those directly involved.
- Records will be securely stored in line with the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) and NDIS requirements.
- Families and carers will be informed of outcomes where appropriate, while respecting the complainant's confidentiality.

6. Responsibility

All Staff and Volunteers must:

- Report complaints, concerns, or suspicions of harm immediately.
- Cooperate fully with investigations and external authorities.
- Uphold the Code of Conduct at all times.

Management must:

- Ensure this policy is publicly available and promoted.
- Provide training to staff and volunteers on handling complaints.
- Ensure compliance with all legal and regulatory requirements.

7. External Authority Cooperation

The Organisation requires all staff and volunteers to fully cooperate with external authorities, including:

- Police
- NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission
- Queensland Child Safety Services
- Other relevant statutory bodies.

8. Support for Complainants

We are committed to supporting anyone who makes a complaint by:

- Providing clear explanations of the process.
- Offering access to independent advocates.
- Making adjustments to ensure accessibility (e.g., interpreters, easy-read materials).
- Ensuring no retaliation or negative treatment occurs.

11. Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if required by legislative or regulatory changes. Feedback from participants, families, staff, and children will be sought to improve the process.

This policy will be:

- Displayed on our website and available within our service environments.
- Provided to all staff, participants, families, and carers via our website.
- Incorporated into staff induction and ongoing training.

I have read this Complaint Handling Policy and agree to abide by it and its terms.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Last reviewed: 3rd September 2025

Next review date: 3rd September 2026

Responsible officer: Elizabeth Spash

(TLS Director)