

Policy Owner	Head of Communications	Policy Year & Version	2023 v02
Executive Policy Sponsor	COO	Date Approved	11 August 2023
Approval Authority	Executive	Next Review Date	2024

## Overview and Purpose

MCRI and VCGS value feedback - including compliments, complaints and concerns - from children and families participating in our research, staff, contractors and implementing partners. It helps us to continually improve.

'Complaints' should be interpreted broadly and can include expressions of dissatisfaction relating to:

- Dealings with an individual;
- Allegations about the conduct of staff, volunteers, or other individuals engaged by MCRI or another child or young person participating in MCRI research; or
- The handling of a prior concern.

### Scope and Application to Personnel

This Policy applies to both salaried and non-salaried employees of Murdoch Children's Research Institute ("MCRI") and includes employees of the Victorian Clinical Genetics Services ("VCGS"), collectively "the Institute". It extends to all Staff, Contractors, Volunteers, Students, Honorary and Affiliate appointments, Implementing Partners and to any other person who is notified that this Institute Policy applies to them.

## Principles

### Accountability & Integrity

- We are accountable to our stakeholders and the community we serve. We are committed to continual improvement by welcoming feedback and complaints.
- We take all complaints seriously and deal with them in a fair and transparent manner.
- We take ownership of our mistakes, learn from them, and take action to do things better.

### People-Focused

- MCRI is committed to ensuring the rights, safety and wellbeing of children and young people are promoted.
- Our complaints handling system ensures that we consider the needs of the most vulnerable people, including minority and disadvantaged stakeholders.

### Accessibility & Confidentiality

- People have a right to feel safe when making a complaint.
- We observe confidentiality when managing complaints and extend protections to Whistleblowers outlined in the Whistleblower Policy.
- We provide accessible mechanisms for people to lodge a complaint or provide their feedback, including a safe and confidential whistleblower hotline.

### Fairness

- We ensure that all complaints are addressed in a fair, equitable, objective and unbiased manner throughout the complaints handling process.

### Responsiveness

- We will respond to complaints respectfully and in a timely manner.

## Key Accountabilities

Role	Responsibilities
The Director and Executive Team	Have ultimate responsibility for the approval of this policy and oversight of the complaint and feedback program
Feedback and Complaints Handling Policy Owner (Head of Communications)	Responsible for implementing this policy by ensuring that external complaints received via the feedback email address or main line are recorded, directed to the appropriate policy owner and responded to.
People and Culture	Responsible for the Grievance Policy and triaging internal staff grievances.
Compliance Program Owner or Policy Owner of each topic (e.g. Privacy, Biosecurity, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outline the subject-specific complaint process in the individual policy and procedures</li> <li>Ensure that all relevant legal obligations are met when managing the complaint related to their program</li> <li>Carry out the necessary investigations relating to the area of complaint</li> <li>Respond to the Complainant in accordance with the stipulated timeframes</li> </ul>
Research Program Managers	Ensure that this policy is implemented and adhered to throughout MCRI's research programs, and communicated to the Institute's Implementing Partners and Collaborators
Complainant	<p>The person making the complaint, who outlines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the nature of the complaint (what happened and when);</li> <li>ensures that the complaint relates to MCRI or VCGS activity;</li> <li>provides any suggested activity to rectify the complaint or outcome requested;</li> <li>provides their contact information (unless the Whistleblower web form or hotline are being used) and any relevant reference numbers or identifiers.</li> </ul>
All staff	<p>Be familiar with the policy principles and adhere to them. Support the receipt of feedback and complaints by directing lodgement through the feedback email address, or Whistleblower web form or hotline.</p> <p>Ensuring that any complaints involving human participation in research are notified to the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC).</p> <p>Ensuring that any Serious Adverse Events or safety complaints are immediately notified to the Health and Safety team.</p>

## Dispute Resolution and Breaches

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint, you may request to have the matter reviewed by the People and Culture team.

If you believe that the complaint relates to a breach of the [ACFID Code of Conduct](#) and you are not satisfied with the outcome of the review by the People and Culture team, then you may refer the relevant matter to the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) Code of Conduct Committee:

**EMAIL:**

[code@acfid.asn.au](mailto:code@acfid.asn.au)

addressed to Chair, ACFID Code of Conduct Committee

**POST:**

Chair, ACFID Code of Conduct Committee

c/- ACFID

Private Bag 3

Deakin ACT 2600

## Enquiries

Feedback and Complaints may be directed to [feedback@mcri.edu.au](mailto:feedback@mcri.edu.au) and enquiries about the policy and procedure can be directed to the Head of Communications.

## Compliance with the Policy

If the Institute has a reason to believe that a person subject to the policy has failed to comply with it, the institute will investigate the circumstances. If it is found that this person has failed to follow the policy, the institute will consider the circumstances, legal implications, Code of Conduct and may take action against them. This may include seeking to terminate their relationship with the institute.

## Supporting Documents, Procedures, Guidelines and Definitions

Feedback and Complaints Handling Brochure (External)

Feedback and Complaints Handling Procedure (Internal)

[Grievance Policy](#) & Procedure (Internal)

Whistleblower Policy (External and Internal)

## Related Legislation and Industry Codes

Corporations Act 2001 (Cth)

Health Services Act 1988

ACFID Code of Conduct

For other relevant legislation, please refer to the procedure.