

Deadly Descendants Child Safe Complaints Handling Policy

Purpose

Deadly Descendants is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for all children, young people, staff, volunteers, parents, and carers. Our Complaints Handling Policy is designed to empower every member of our community to voice their concerns or complaints, knowing they will be taken seriously, treated confidentially, and addressed promptly and fairly.

Aim of the Policy

This policy aims to:

- Clearly explain how children, young people, and their families can make a complaint.
- Ensure complaints are resolved in a child-friendly, fair, and supportive manner.
- Protect the confidentiality and rights of all individuals involved in the complaints process.

How to Make a Complaint

We understand that everyone has different needs and preferences for communicating. Therefore, we offer several ways to make a complaint, including:

- **In Person:** Talk to a staff member, volunteer, or our designated Child Safety Officer.
- **By Phone:** Call us at a dedicated number (to be provided) where you can speak to someone directly or leave a message.
- **Online:** Fill out a simple form on our website or send us an email.
- **Written Note:** Hand in a letter or note to a trusted adult in our organization.
- **Accessible Options:** For those who need them, we offer support through accessible technology, interpreters, or providing information in different formats (e.g., large print, audio).

What Happens After You Make a Complaint

Acknowledgment: You will receive a response letting you know we've received your complaint within 48 hours.

Assessment: We quickly assess the complaint to decide how best to resolve it.

Action: Depending on the complaint, actions might include a quick fix, a formal investigation, or referral to external authorities.

Feedback: We'll let you know what we're doing to address your complaint and the outcomes achieved.

Our Promises to You

- **You Will Be Heard:** We promise to listen to your complaint without judgment.
- **You Will Be Supported:** We will provide support throughout the process.
- **You Will Be Protected:** Your privacy will be respected, and your complaint will be kept confidential.

Special Protections for Staff and Volunteers

- **Confidentiality:** We guarantee the confidentiality of staff and volunteers who report concerns or complaints, protecting their identities as far as legally possible.
- **Protection from Retaliation:** No negative consequences will occur for anyone who, in good faith, reports a concern or complaint.

Accessibility and Inclusivity

- Our policy and complaint forms are accessible to all, including those with disabilities. We strive to ensure our communication methods are inclusive and sensitive to the diverse needs of our community.
- We are committed to continuous training for our staff and volunteers to ensure they are equipped to support all children and young people, especially those with additional needs.

Legislation

The following legislation underpins our Child Safety Complaints Handling Policy, ensuring that our practices are not only compliant with current laws but also reflect our commitment to protecting children and upholding their rights:

- **Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998:** Provides the statutory basis for child protection and welfare, emphasizing the importance of children's safety and well-being.
- **Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012:** Requires background checks and monitoring for individuals working or volunteering in child-related roles, to ensure they are suitable to work with children.
- **Disability Discrimination Act 1992:** Protects individuals with disabilities from discrimination and ensures their rights to access services, including complaint mechanisms.
- **Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth):** Governs how personal information is handled, ensuring the privacy and confidentiality of individuals making a complaint.

Our Commitment to Legal Compliance

Deadly Descendants is dedicated to:

- Adhering to the principles and obligations outlined in the above legislation.
- Ensuring all staff and volunteers are aware of and understand their legal responsibilities, especially regarding child safety and protection.
- Regularly reviewing and updating our policies and practices to align with legislative changes and best practices in child safety.

Legislative Compliance in Our Complaints Handling Process

Our process for managing complaints is designed to be fully compliant with these legislative frameworks, providing a safe, respectful, and effective mechanism for addressing concerns. We commit to:

- Protecting the rights and privacy of children, families, staff, and volunteers involved in a complaint.
- Offering accessible and inclusive ways for everyone, especially children and those with disabilities, to voice their complaints.
- Ensuring that staff and volunteers who report complaints are protected from reprisal and their identities kept confidential, as per legal requirements.

Policy Status Review and Improvement

This policy was approved on the 28th March 2024 by Founding Director Anastasia Elliott and Child Safeguarding Officer Tracee Wilcock. This policy will be reviewed on the 28th September 2024 to ensure it meets the needs of our community and reflects best practices in child safety and complaints handling.

Contact Information

To make a complaint you can either complete the complaints form on our website www.deadlydescendants.com.au, contact Anastasia Elliott; Founding Director on 0490 444 063 or via email anastasia@deadlydescendants.com.au or contact cso@deadlydescendants.com.au