

Guidance Note - Receiving Complaints Process



About this document

This document is provided as a supplementary document to the Girl Guides Australia (GGA) Child Safe Child Friendly (CSCF) Policy. It supports the Policy Element 9 – Responding to Feedback, Concerns and Complaints and the associated Procedure for Element 9.

1. Receiving the complaint

Girl Guiding in Australia (GGiA) may become aware of complaints through:

- A [Tell us what you are worried about? Youth Member Form](#)
- A [Girl Guide Complaint Form](#)
- A [Girl Guide Incident Report](#)
- A source external to GGiA such as a media report or social media post
- A concern or negative feedback that is escalated due to a **MUST REFER** matter being identified.

Concerns and feedback that raise serious matters should be handled as a complaint. Matters raised informally may involve serious matters so be alert to identify matters no matter how they are raised with you.

MUST REFER matters include those involving:

1. Child safety and wellbeing
2. Criminal conduct or breach of statutory obligation
3. Recurrent and/or long-standing unaddressed concerns
4. Misconduct such as a serious breach of the GGA Code of Conduct
5. Matters which may affect the reputation of GGiA (at the discretion of the relevant Commissioner or CEO).

If a complaint, concern or feedback raises an allegation which may affect the reputation of Guiding the relevant Commissioner and/or CEO must be consulted for consideration as to whether it is to be treated as a **MUST REFER** matter.

The external source of the complaint may be a person contacting GGA or a State Girl Guide Organisation (SGGO) and providing details (that can be used by the person receiving the information to complete a Girl Guide Complaint Form). While you can encourage anyone wanting to make a complaint to use the Girl Guide Complaint Form, their reluctance to put the matter in writing must not be a barrier to the complaint being lodged. Sometimes matters arise during the resolution or investigation of a concern or negative feedback.

The *'Tell Us What You Are Worried About?'* Youth Member Form is available to support Youth Members to make a complaint. Assistance must be provided to support Youth Members to provide feedback, raise concerns or make complaints.

Complaints can also be raised through informal means. If this occurs, there should be an assessment of whether it is feedback or a concern which should be received or dealt with immediately. If the matters raised informally are more serious, the person should be asked to complete the Girl Guide Complaint Form or if they are a Youth Member, the *'Tell us what you are worried about?'* Youth Member Form.

Some people, particularly vulnerable people such as children, may need assistance to complete the form. If you are unable to assist the person you should take steps to source that assistance e.g., you may have to seek an interpreter, you may need to scribe for the person (including any child, young person or person with a disability), you may have to seek a support person to sit with the person while they complete the form or to complete the form for them. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of all Adult Members, Volunteers and Employees to facilitate the identification and reporting of serious matters.

2. Anonymous Complaints, Concerns and Feedback

GGiA will accept anonymous complaints, concerns and/or feedback This is to be done cautiously. The person wanting to raise any matter should be encouraged to give their name and contact details by providing reassurance that GGiA has proper investigation and resolution processes in place. It will also assist should there be a need to seek further information to clarify the matter. This does not mean that GGiA will act on all anonymous complaints, concerns or feedback but all Adults in Guiding should follow the CSCF Procedures for Element 9 and consider the appropriate action.