



1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose

This Policy provides clear guidance for handling and managing feedback and complaints in a manner consistent with procedural fairness, natural justice, and the requirements of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018.

1.2. Scope

This Policy is applicable to all employees affiliated with Defuse Behaviour Solutions. Every individual, regardless of employment status, is responsible for fully understanding and complying with the commitments outlined in this policy. All employees must acknowledge that they have read, understood and will comply with the contents of this Policy.

1.3. NDIS Indicators (Objectives)

Feedback and Complaints Management

Outcome: Each participant has knowledge of, and access to, the provider's complaints management and resolution system. Complaints and other feedback from all parties are welcomed, acknowledged, respected, and well managed. To achieve this outcome, the following indicators should be demonstrated:

- a) A complaints management and resolution system is maintained that is relevant and proportionate to the scope and complexity of supports delivered and the size and scale of the organisation. The system follows principles of procedural fairness and natural justice and complies with the requirements under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018.
- b) Each participant is provided with information on how to give feedback or make a complaint, including avenues external to the provider, and their right to access advocates. A supportive environment is available for anyone who provides feedback and/or makes complaints.
- c) Demonstrated continuous improvement in complaints and feedback management by regular review of complaint and feedback policies and procedures, seeking participant views on the accessibility of the complaints management and resolution system, and incorporation of feedback throughout the provider's organisation.
- d) All employees are aware of, trained in, and comply with the required procedures for complaints handling.



2. Policy Statement

At Defuse Behaviour Solutions, we recognise that complaints are not just an expression of dissatisfaction, but a vital way for individuals to exercise their fundamental rights, express their views, and shape the quality of their NDIS supports. We appreciate that errors can occur and acknowledge that our response shapes the experience. We commit to handling all complaints in a way that emphasises the value of the individual's opinion and assures them that their feedback has been taken seriously. We believe this approach can strengthen the relationship between the people we support, and us.

We welcome feedback and complaints from all parties and manage each professionally and respectfully. We are dedicated to resolving complaints within a reasonable timeframe, improving our services based on feedback, and fostering an environment where participants and their advocates feel encouraged to express their concerns. We regularly review our policies and incorporate stakeholder views for continuous improvement. Furthermore, all employees are trained in and adhere to our complaint-handling procedures.

2.1. Relevant legislation

All relevant legislation to this Policy is outlined in the Legislation Register.

2.2. Related documents

- a) Feedback, Complaint and Incident Considerations
- b) Feedback and Complaints Form
- c) Feedback and Complaints Summary
- a) Feedback and Complaints Register

3. Responsibilities and Roles

- a) Esme Jorgensen is responsible for developing and reviewing this policy. Esme Jorgensen is expected to ensure this Policy remains compliant with all applicable laws, regulations, and standards.
- b) Key Management Personnel play a vital role in ensuring the effective implementation of this Policy throughout Defuse Behaviour Solutions. All Key Management Personnel are responsible not only for assisting Employees in understanding and complying with this policy, but also for complying with it themselves. Leading by example, they demonstrate the importance of adherence to the policy and foster a culture of compliance within the organisation.
- c) Employees are responsible for understanding this policy and complying with all procedures applicable to them.



- d) The Complaint Manager(s) is responsible for managing all complaints. Esme Jorgensen is the Complaint Manager. If the Complaint is about Esme Jorgensen, this role will be delegated to a Key Management Personnel.

4. Definitions

Defuse Behaviour Solutions means Defuse Behaviour Solutions Pty Ltd trading as Defuse Behaviour Solutions ABN 67700401369.

Key Management Personnel means Esme Jorgensen and other key management personnel involved in Defuse Behaviour Solutions from time to time.

Director means Esme Jorgensen.

Worker or Employee means a permanent, fixed-term, or casual member of staff, a contractor, or a volunteer employed or otherwise engaged by Defuse Behaviour Solutions, and includes the Director.

Whistleblower means any current or former worker, current or former participant, or any other person connected to the organisation who makes a disclosure about conduct they reasonably believe constitutes a contravention of the NDIS Act 2013 or the NDIS Code of Conduct, or that raises a concern about the safety or quality of supports provided by the organisation. This definition includes persons who were connected to the organisation at the time of the relevant conduct but are no longer engaged with it, in accordance with the NDIS Amendment (Integrity and Safeguarding) Act 2026 (Cth).

5. Procedures

5.1. Complaints management system

The complaints management procedure is designed to encourage all types of feedback, including complaints, and ensure their fair, efficient, and timely resolution. We respect every individual's right to voice their concerns or dissatisfaction about the services provided by our organisation, with full assurance of confidentiality and protection from any potential retaliation.

a) Complaint Receipt

- 1) Defuse Behaviour Solutions' complaint management system is designed to receive complaints in various ways, including email, phone calls, face-to-face communication, mail, or via our website. This ensures participants can choose the most convenient and comfortable way to voice their concerns. Anonymous complaints are also accepted and treated with the same due diligence.
- 2) When a complaint is made verbally, the recipient must attentively listen to the complainant and their supporter or advocate, ensure their comfort, recognise their feelings, thank them for their complaint, and take detailed notes. They should also help the complainant confirm their complaint in writing via the Feedback and Complaints Form.



b) Complaint Registration

- 1) We will formally register all complaints in our Complaint Management Register. This includes capturing details such as the date, the nature of the complaint, the person who received it, and the person's information.

c) Acknowledgment of Complaint

- 1) Upon receipt, we will acknowledge each complaint within three business days. This acknowledgment, typically via email or phone call, will let the complainant know that their complaint has been received and will be addressed.

d) Complaint Investigation

- 1) An internal assessment will be conducted, and the Complaint Manager will determine whether the issues in the complaint are within Defuse Behaviour Solutions' control. The manager will also consider the complainant's desired outcomes and determine whether multiple issues need to be addressed separately. They will decide how to manage the complaint based on factors such as severity, complexity, and potential risk.
- 2) If deemed necessary, the complaint will be thoroughly investigated. This involves gathering all necessary information, speaking with relevant parties, and determining the complaint's validity and severity. The process will be conducted in an unbiased, respectful, and fair manner.
- 3) If the complaint concerns the conduct of a specific worker or might adversely affect a person's rights or interests, an investigation must be conducted, providing the worker or person with a fair opportunity to be heard and to present their case.
- 4) Where a complaint results in an investigation or inquiry by the NDIS Commission, the organisation will comply with any information-gathering notice issued by the Commission, including within any shortened timeframe specified where the Commission has identified a risk to participant safety. Failure to comply with an information-gathering notice is a civil penalty offence under the NDIS Amendment (Integrity and Safeguarding) Act 2026 (Cth).

e) Response and Resolution

- 1) After the investigation is complete, the person will be informed of the findings and any actions taken to address the complaint. Where appropriate, a formal apology will be offered. If the person is dissatisfied with the outcome, they will be informed of their rights to escalate the complaint within Defuse Behaviour Solutions or to external bodies.

f) Persons affected by the complaint

- 1) Where a person with a disability is affected by an issue raised in a complaint, but not the person making the complaint to the provider, Defuse Behaviour Solutions will ensure that both the person involved in the complaint and any affected person with a disability are:
 - (i) Appropriately involved in the resolution of the complaint



(ii) Kept informed of the progress of the complaint, including:

- a. Any action taken;
- b. The reasons for the decisions made; and
- c. Options to have decisions reviewed.

g) Documentation and Record Keeping

- 1) Each stage of the complaint process, including all communications, findings, actions, and resolutions, will be thoroughly documented and securely stored in the complaints management system. This allows for transparency and accountability and provides a record for future reference.

h) Systematic Review and Improvement

- 1) The data from the complaints management system will be reviewed regularly. This will help identify trends or recurring issues, which can then be addressed proactively to improve services.
- 2) Lessons learned from individual complaints will also be used to improve procedures and prevent similar issues from arising in the future.

5.2. Training

- (a) All Employees will be trained in our feedback and complaints procedures during induction and as part of ongoing refresher training. They will be expected to comply with these procedures and to demonstrate respect for the rights of all participants to make complaints.
- (b) The Complaint Manager has undergone specialised training in complaint management and resolution (managing challenging conversations professional learning, GROWTH Coaching training), aiming to provide comprehensive support to participants throughout the Complaints Process. This training will enable them to address complaints empathetically, fostering a comforting and understanding environment.
- (c) In addition, the Complaint Manager will be equipped with the skills needed to investigate serious incidents. This includes probing incidents that may involve a crime. The manager will also receive training on applying Procedural Fairness, as outlined in both the NDIS (Procedural Fairness) Guidelines 2018 and the Procedural Fairness considerations of Defuse Behaviour Solutions.

5.3. Referral to NDIS Commission

- a) The organisation will provide appropriate support to any person wishing to escalate a complaint or concern to the NDIS Commissioner. This includes current and former participants, current and



former employees, and any other person with a legitimate concern about the organisation's conduct or the safety and quality of supports provided. Support may include explaining the Commission's complaint process, assisting with required documentation, and facilitating access to an advocate or support person where required.

- b) The organisation will not take any action to discourage, impede or delay a person from making a complaint to the NDIS Commission, and will not retaliate against any person for having done so.
- c) The organisation complies with the complaints management and resolution requirements for registered NDIS providers under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018, as supported by the NDIS Amendment (Integrity and Safeguarding) Act 2026 (Cth).

5.4. Protection and confidentiality

a) Confidentiality

- 1) Defuse Behaviour Solutions will ensure that all communication, documents, and records related to a complaint are stored securely and accessed only by authorised personnel involved in the complaint resolution process. The complainant's identity and any other sensitive information are kept confidential and disclosed only if:
 - (i) It is legally mandated: we may be legally required to disclose certain information, such as court orders or statutory reporting obligations.
 - (ii) It is deemed necessary for complaint resolution: There may be instances where sharing some information with relevant parties is crucial to resolving the complaint. In such cases, we will disclose only the minimum necessary information and seek the complainant's consent where possible.
 - (iii) The organisation will not disclose the identity of any person who makes a complaint or protected disclosure, or any information from which their identity could be reasonably determined, except where the person has given their express consent to such disclosure.
 - (iv) Disclosing the identity of a protected whistleblower, or information that could lead to their identification, attracts a civil penalty under the NDIS Amendment (Integrity and Safeguarding) Act 2026 (Cth). All persons involved in complaint management and resolution must treat the identity of complainants and disclosers with the strictest confidence.

b) Protection

- 1) Any person who lodges a complaint or makes a protected disclosure, or who is involved in the complaint resolution process, will not be adversely affected as a result of their involvement. This protection extends to current and former employees, current and former participants, and any other person who has raised a concern about the



organisation's conduct or the safety and quality of supports provided. The organisation takes allegations of retaliation very seriously. Any form of retaliatory behaviour, including intimidation, threats, adverse changes to work arrangements, changes to service delivery, or any action that disadvantages a person because of their complaint or disclosure, is treated as a separate and serious matter and will be addressed promptly. These protections apply regardless of whether the person making the disclosure has identified themselves and are consistent with the whistleblower framework under the NDIS Amendment (Integrity and Safeguarding) Act 2026 (Cth).

6. Making a complaint

6.1. How to make a complaint

a) **To Defuse Behaviour Solutions:** A person can make a complaint to Defuse Behaviour Solutions:

- 1) In person;
- 2) By email to esme@defusebehavioursolutions.org;
- 3) Via the telephone at 0417449486;
- 4) By post to PO BOX 181 Ballarat West 3350 VIC
- 5) At www.defusebehavioursolutions.org/feedback-complaints

b) **To the NDIS Commission:**

A complaint can be made to the NDIS Commission by:

- 1) Phoning: 1800 035 544 (free call from landlines) or TTY 133 677. Interpreters can be arranged.
- 2) National Relay Service: call 1800 035 544.
- 3) Visiting: <https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/about/complaints> and completing a complaint contact form.

The NDIS Commission can take complaints about:

- 1) Services or supports that were not provided in a safe and respectful way.
- 2) Services and supports that were not delivered to an appropriate standard.

6.2. Support to make a complaint

a) Our Employees are committed to ensuring all individuals receive the necessary support and assistance related to the Complaints Management System. This includes anyone wishing to make a complaint or those who have already done so. Our responsibilities include:



- 1) Providing all necessary and easily understandable information regarding the complaint process. Each Participant receives a Feedback and Complaints Summary outlining the information set out in this Policy, and Defuse Behaviour Solutions actively encourages Participants to provide feedback.
- 2) Guaranteeing an environment that allows individuals to raise complaints or provide negative feedback without fear of retaliation, negative repercussions, or service loss.
- 3) Treating all complainants with respect and acknowledging the significance of their complaints.
- 4) Preserving the confidentiality of all parties involved in a complaint.
- 5) Facilitating the involvement of advocates, representatives, or support persons in the complaint discussion and resolution process, if required.
- 6) Guiding complainants on how to raise a complaint with the NDIS Commission and offer appropriate support to those affected by issues raised in complaints.
- 7) Ensuring that the complaint process is procedurally fair and adheres to the principles of natural justice outlined in the NDIS (Procedural Fairness) Guidelines 2018.

7. Policy review and updates

This Policy is to be amended and updated to comply with applicable law.

Approval Authority: Esme Jorgensen

Version: 1

Approval Date: July 2026

Review Date: July 2028