



## 14. Complaints Policy

Effective From: March 2025  
Policy Number: Fourteen  
Review Date: March 2027

### Introduction

The Trust views complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person (or organisation) that has made the complaint.

Our policy is:

- To provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint
- To publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint
- To make sure everyone knows what to do if a complaint is received
- To make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely manner
- To ensure any person wishing to make a complaint feels safe throughout the process outlined below, all complaints have the right to involve an advocate or support person at every stage of the process.
- To make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired
- To gather information by which we can improve our services

### Definition

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of the Kootuitui Trust programme. Complaints may come from any individual, staff member, volunteer or organisation, including the general public. A complaint can be received verbally, by phone, by email or in writing. All complaint information will be handled sensitively in accordance with the Trust's Confidentiality policy.

### Receiving Complaints

Written complaints may be sent to Kootuitui Trust at PO Box 272 1174, Papakura 2244, through the 'Contact Us' page on the Trust website, or by e-mail at [admin@kootuitui.org.nz](mailto:admin@kootuitui.org.nz). Verbal complaints may be made by phone to 021495642 or in person to any of Kootuitui Trust's staff or trustees.

The person who receives a phone or in-person complaint should:

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1. Write down the facts of the complaint
  2. Take the complainant's name, address and telephone number
  3. Note down the relationship of the complainant to Kootuitui, e.g. donor, volunteer, sponsor
  4. Tell the complainant that we have a complaints procedure
  5. Tell the complainant what will happen next and how long it will take
  6. Where appropriate, ask the complainant to send a written account by post or by email so that the complaint is recorded in the complainant's own words
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## Resolving Complaints

### **Stage One**

In many cases, a complaint is best resolved by the person responsible for the issue being complained about. If the complaint has been received by that person, they may be able to resolve it swiftly and should do so if possible and appropriate. Whether or not the complaint has been resolved, the complaint information should be passed to the Chief Executive Officer within five working days.

On receiving the complaint, the CEO records it in the complaints file. If it has not already been resolved, they delegate an appropriate person to investigate it and to take appropriate action. If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a fair opportunity to respond.

Complaints should be acknowledged by the person handling the complaint within five working days. The acknowledgement should say who is dealing with the complaint and when the person complaining can expect a reply. A copy of this complaints procedure should be attached. Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within two weeks.

If this is not possible because for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given. Whether the complaint is justified or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.

### **Stage Two**

If the complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage One, they can request that the complaint is reviewed at Trust level.

At this stage, the complaint will be passed to the Chair of the Trust. The request for Trust level review should be acknowledged within five working days of receiving it. The acknowledgement should say who will deal with the case and when the complainant can expect a reply.

The Trust may investigate the facts of the case themselves or delegate a suitable person to do so. This may involve reviewing the paperwork of the case and speaking with the person who dealt with the complaint at Stage One. The person who dealt with the original complaint at Stage One should be kept informed of what is happening.

If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a further opportunity to respond. Ideally, complainants should receive a definitive reply within two weeks. If this is not possible because for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given. Whether the complaint is upheld or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint. The decision taken at this stage is final, unless the Board decides it is appropriate to seek external assistance with resolution.

### **External Stage**

As Kootuitui Trust is a New Zealand registered charity, the complainant can complain to NZ Charities Services - Ngā Rātonga Kaupapa Atawhai. Information can be found on their website at: <https://www.charities.govt.nz/charities-in-new-zealand/making-a-complaint/>

### Variation of the Complaints Procedure

The Trust may vary the procedure for good reason. This may be necessary to avoid a conflict of interest, for example, a complaint about the Chair or trustee should not also have the Chair and/or trustee involved as a person leading a Stage Two review.

### Monitoring and Learning from Complaints

Complaints are reviewed annually to identify any trends which may indicate a need to take further action.

### Supporting Documentation

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1. Complaints Investigation template [here](#)
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Dealing with Complaints and Grievances.

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