

# Complaints Policy for Members of the Public

## 1 - Purpose

This policy is intended to ensure that complaints received from members of the public about United Way Greater Toronto (UWGT) services and programs are dealt with promptly, consistently and fairly in accordance with UWGT's high standards. UWGT recognizes that when a person has a complaint about UWGT, the way in which their complaint is handled is critical to the person's ongoing relationship with UWGT.

## 2 - Scope

This policy applies to all complaints received from members of the public (including community members, donors, prospective donors, volunteers, etc.) about UWGT operations, which includes the conduct and behaviour of all employees and volunteers.

It does not apply to complaints by agencies about community investment funding process that would be addressed through a separate appeal process.

As UWGT and its funded agencies are distinct and separate entities with independent governance and management structures, complaints about other related organizations will not be dealt with by UWGT. UWGT will refer such complaints to the organization for appropriate action.

## 3 - Policy

**Definition:** Complaints are defined as an expression of dissatisfaction with regard to a service/program, an action or a decision taken by United Way, or the way in which United Way employees or volunteers carry out their duties. Complaints typically arise when a person believes:

- UWGT has failed to do something agreed upon or expected
- A UWGT policy or procedure has not been followed
- An error has been made
- UWGT employees or volunteers acted in a wrongful way. A complaint is distinct from an inquiry, feedback, or a suggestion.

To launch a formal complaint, the Complainant must submit their concerns in writing and identify themselves. UWGT will not respond to verbal or anonymous complaints, however accommodations will be made for individuals with disabilities.

Once a formal complaint is received in writing, UWGT is committed to handling the complaint promptly, consistently, and fairly. The Complainant will be treated with respect and be kept informed of the status of the complaint, the investigative steps being followed, and expected timelines for resolution.

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Upon completion of the investigation, the Complainant will be provided with clear reasons for the decisions relating to the complaint. If the Complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may appeal the decision and have the matter escalated to the President & Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or the UWGT Board of Trustees. All decisions made through the appeal process are considered final.

To ensure transparency in the way complaints are being handled, UWGT will ensure that this policy is available on our website.

### 4 - Procedures

#### Complaints under other UWGT Policies

UWGT has other policies that may have procedures to address questions, concerns, or complaints specific to those policies, including procedures required by legislation such as:

- **Confidentiality Policy.** Confidential information regarding the affairs of UWGT. This Policy is related to UWGT's Privacy Policy which establishes the policies around how UWGT collects, protects, uses and disposes of personal information in the conduct of its business. The Privacy Policy requires that each individual who has access to personal information under the custody of UWGT maintains the privacy and confidentiality of such information.
- **Conflict of Interest Policy.** This Policy will assist Board Trustees, other volunteers and employees of United Way Greater Toronto (UWGT) to identify and avoid conflicts of interest and to allow the same individuals to deal with conflicts of interest as they arise. This Policy is created to ensure the highest standard of public trust and integrity in the work of UWGT.
- **Non-Discrimination & Harassment Policy** This Policy is intended to communicate United Way Greater Toronto's (UWGT) position on discrimination and harassment in the workplace under the Ontario *Human Rights Code* and the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*. Under the Ontario Human Rights Code, every person has a right to equal treatment in the provision of services and facilities, occupation of accommodation, contracts and in employment. Under the Occupational Health and Safety Act, all employers are required to have a workplace harassment policy, program, to provide information, instruction and to protect workers from workplace harassment
- **Workplace Anti-Violence Policy.** This policy is intended to ensure that UWGT has established measure to prevent or lower the probability of violence directed to UWGT employees in the workplace; to respond swiftly and appropriately to the threat of or actual incidents of violence; and provide support to UWGT employees who have experienced or witnessed a traumatic workplace incident.
- **Fundraising Policy.** The rights of donors and prospective donors to treatment that respects their dignity and ability to be their authentic self at all times, by both the Policy of UWGT and the **Donor Bill of Rights**, which all member United Ways in Canada uphold.

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- *Code of Conduct and Ethics Policy*. This policy governs the decisions and actions of UWGT Board Trustees, other volunteers, sponsored employees, and all employees, ensuring that we use the principles of reconciliation and equity to make clear and measurable changes to eliminate systemic racism and discrimination from our work.

As required, the complaint will be investigated under any processes outlined in those policies, as well as the processes outlined in this general Complaints Policy for Members of the Public, which is meant to ensure a consistent and fair investigation of complaints about UWGT.

The exception to this is complaints from Members of the Public about UWGT funded agencies. Funded agencies of UWGT are distinct and separate entities with independent governance and management structures. Complaints made about funded agencies will be referred to the agency or funded partner and UWGT will follow up with them to ensure they are responding to the complainant. See UWGT's Policy on Complaints Regarding Funded Partners.

UWGT acknowledges the inevitable existence of biases for all individuals involved in the procedures and will be mindful of these biases in the review of complaints.

### Informal Complaint

Anyone who has a concern is encouraged to talk with the employee at UWGT who is most connected with the situation to resolve it before it becomes a formal complaint. This informal process can be used to resolve many inquiries or matters of simple error that can be corrected to the satisfaction of the person with the concern. Departments may establish protocols and responsibilities for handling informal complaints, which the investigation can follow. If the matter is not resolved at this stage, the person can make a formal complaint to UWGT.

Employees are encouraged to forward informal complaints of a serious nature to the) Chief of Staff and Corporate Secretary, as they may be valuable to identify areas where service can be improved. Employees should consult with their Director or Vice President when in doubt.

### Formal Complaint

A formal complaint should be made in writing (by mail, fax or email) providing details of the complaint and contact information of the Complainant. The complaint may be directed to the Chief of Staff and Corporate Secretary If the individual is unable to register their complaint in this manner due to a disability, they may contact the Chief of Staff and Corporate Secretary to request accommodation, which will be provided appropriate to the individual's needs and circumstances.

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All formal complaints received by any other employee are to be forwarded to the Chief of Staff and Corporate Secretary. This is to ensure that all complaints are handled consistently and fairly. The Chief of Staff and Corporate Secretary will delegate any complaints related to an individual employee or volunteer to the VP, People & Culture. If the complaint concerns the Chief of Staff and Corporate Secretary or the VP, People & Culture, the complaint should be directed to the CEO of UWGT who will undertake or delegate the responsibilities outlined in this Complaints Procedure. If the complaint concerns the CEO, the complaint should be directed to the Chair of the Board, with copy to the VP, People & Culture. Upon receiving the complaint, the Chief of Staff and Corporate Secretary will log the complaint in a registry and appoint an Investigator to handle the complaint investigation. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the investigator can be an individual from the staff or volunteer group or an external source with the appropriate expertise and level of authority.

UWGT will respond to the Complainant within 48 hours of receiving the written complaint to confirm that the complaint has been received, and indicate expectations for how long the investigation will take if it can be reasonably assessed at that point. Once appointed, the Investigator will communicate with the Complainant to confirm details and to update on the status of the investigation.

The Investigator will be accountable to the Chief of Staff and Corporate Secretary or their delegate for the investigation and timely resolution of the complaint. The target timeframe for initiating a complaint investigation is within 30 business days from the receipt of the written complaint. If this timeline cannot be met, the Complainant will be informed of the reasons and be given a revised timeframe. The Investigator will consult with others to determine the facts, and if necessary, will escalate the matter to more senior levels for assistance in evaluating the findings and recommending a resolution. Throughout the process, confidentiality will be maintained as much as possible without impinging on the investigation.

The Investigator should record the following:

- Name and position of the Investigator
- Name and contact information of the Complainant
- Log the written complaint and the date it was received
- Details of the complaint, key steps in the investigation, investigation notes, and other key documents gathered during the investigation
- Other key personnel involved, including all escalation authorities
- The findings, recommended resolution, and rationale

The Investigator will report the findings and recommendations to the Chief of Staff and Corporate Secretary or their delegate in writing. The Chief of Staff and Corporate Secretary will review the findings and recommendations with the President and CEO and the Vice President of People and Culture to ensure objectivity and fairness in the findings. Depending on the nature and seriousness of the complaint,

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the findings can also be shared with the Governance and Human Resources Committee. Chief of Staff and Corporate Secretary is responsible for communicating the findings and resolution to the Complainant

If the Complainant is not satisfied with the findings or the corrective action, they may submit a written appeal to the CEO within sixty (60) business days of the receipt of the communication. If the CEO was involved in the complaint or the investigation, the appeal should be made to the Chair of the Board of Trustees via the VP, People & Culture.

Upon receiving the appeal, the CEO or the Chair of the Board of Trustees will review the complaint, undertake any additional investigation considered necessary and make a final determination. The decision made at this level is considered final.

The Chief of Staff and Corporate Secretary will report to the Board at least annually on the number and type of complaints received and the attendant resolution.

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