



Complaints Policy

Policy area:	Governance/Operations
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Approved by:	Board
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1. Purpose & Scope

- 1.1 Te Pū Harakeke wishes to maintain a high standard of professionalism and service to all those we have contact with, including our staff and volunteers, members, and the public.
- 1.2 This policy applies to any person acting on behalf of Te Pū Harakeke in any capacity, including our staff and volunteers, board members, contractors, or members acting in their capacity as members.

2. Policy

- 2.1 Any person may make a complaint about the conduct of Te Pū Harakeke, or any person acting on behalf of Te Pū Harakeke.
- 2.2 Te Pū Harakeke will make reasonable efforts to resolve concerns or complaints informally in the first instance, ensuring that they act in a way that upholds the mana of all parties.
- 2.3 We will ensure that member groups, or any persons or agencies who make a complaint know that they continue to be welcome at Te Pū Harakeke and will continue to receive our full services.
- 2.4 We will handle complaints in such a way that cultural values are respected and valued.
- 2.5 We will allow any alleged wrongdoers the opportunity to defend themselves or provide an explanation, following the principles of natural justice.
- 2.6 We will take any steps necessary to remedy or make reparation as agreed by both parties when a complaint is substantiated after investigation.
- 2.7 We will take any necessary steps to prevent recurrence of any shortcomings that led to the complaint.
- 2.8 We will ensure that complaints are reported to Te Pū Harakeke Board and that any trends are identified in order to improve service delivery.
- 2.9 All complaints will be treated in confidence and privacy of individuals/organisations will be maintained.

Making a complaint

- 1.1 Any person or group wanting to make a complaint can write to the manager by email or letter
- 1.2 Any person or group wanting to make a complaint regarding the manager can write to the chairperson or may provide a complaint in writing to staff in the office, and this will be passed to the chairperson straight away.
- 1.3 A copy of our complaints policy will be available on our website and will be offered to any person or group with a concern or a complaint, or who requests a copy.
- 1.4 When a complaint is easily rectified to the satisfaction of the complainant, then our formal complaints procedure need not proceed

2. Processes & Procedures

- 2.1 The chairperson and manager will meet to discuss the best way to investigate and progress the complaint, and will either
 - a. investigate the matter themselves, or
 - b. appoint external investigators.
- 2.2 The investigators will attempt to resolve the complaint in an expedient manner, upholding the mana of all parties.

Investigation of complaints

- 2.3 The investigators will:
 - a. notify the complainant, acknowledging the complaint in writing within 5 working days, sending a copy of Te Pū Harakeke complaints procedure, and giving the time frame for resolution of the investigation.
 - b. meet with the complainant wherever possible and find out what steps the complainant has already taken to resolve the problem.
 - c. inform the complainant of the right to have a support person or advocate of their own choosing at any time during the investigation or decision-making process. An advocate will have full speaking rights in any meeting.
 - d. enquire about any cultural requirements that may be needed.
 - e. within 10 working days, notify the complainant as to whether the complaint will proceed through a formal complaint process. If more time is needed to investigate the complaint this will be determined, and the complainant notified and given reason for this along with details of the additional time frame required.
 - f. give the complainant progress reports on their complaint at least every month.
 - g. obtain from the complainant, if possible, a statement of what they would like to have happen, fully document this, have the complainant sign, and use this to inform further action.
- 2.4 The investigators will keep an accurate written record of all stages of the complaints procedure, including dates of meetings, who attended and concise notes from each meeting.

- 2.5 The investigators will take all possible steps to find a satisfactory solution by consulting the complainant and any support person. They can recommend solutions to Te Pū Harakeke such as:
 - a. They believe the complaint to be unfounded and no further action is required.
 - b. A change in Te Pū Harakeke policy or procedure is required and what this should be.
- 2.6 Complaints not satisfactorily resolved within two months will be referred to mediation if all parties are agreeable, or otherwise on to the Te Pū Harakeke Board.

Complaints against individual workers

- 2.7 When a Te Pū Harakeke worker receives a formal complaint from anyone about themselves or another worker they will immediately (by the next working day) refer the complaint to the manager, or, if the complaint is about the manager, to the chairperson.
- 2.8 The worker against whom the complaint is made will be informed by the manager (or chairperson, if complaint about the manager) at the earliest opportunity.
- 2.9 For complaints by a Te Pū Harakeke worker about another Te Pū Harakeke worker, counter complaints will not be considered until the completion of the investigation of the initial complaint.
- 2.10 Resignation of a worker will not prevent a complaint from being investigated.
- 2.11 Te Pū Harakeke shall ensure a worker against whom a complaint has been made, is aware of their right to have a support person/advocate of their choosing available. The advocate may speak in support of the worker in any meetings.
- 2.12 A worker against whom a complaint is made will not be one of the investigators for this complaint.
- 2.13 The investigators will meet with the worker who is the subject of the complaint in private to hear their recollection of events.
- 2.14 If the complaint is found to be substantiated, the investigators may recommend to Te Pū Harakeke:
 - a. that additional training is required and what this may entail.
 - b. that a formal warning be given with the opportunity to improve within a given time span.
 - c. that supervision is sought for a specified period.
 - d. that the worker change the kind of work they undertake within Te Pū Harakeke.
 - e. that, if serious misconduct, the worker/volunteer leave Te Pū Harakeke and that, if the worker is a paid worker, Te Pū Harakeke go through the correct dismissal procedures.
 - f. that mediation is an appropriate next step.
- 2.15 If the complaint about the worker is taken to the Board, the complainant and the worker each have the right to have someone act as their advocate and/or support person at this stage also.

3. Definitions

- 3.1 **Worker** means any person acting on behalf of Te Pū Harakeke, including, but not limited to, paid employees, volunteers, board members, contractors, or students on placement.

4. Relevant Legislation & Related Policies

Legislation

- 4.1 [Incorporated Societies Act 2022](#)
4.2 [Privacy Act 2020](#)
4.3 [Employment Relations Act 2000](#)
4.4 [Human Rights Act 1993](#)

Related Policies

- 4.5 Disclosure of Serious Wrongdoing (Whistleblower) Policy
4.6 Privacy Policy