Life Camps Australia
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LIFE CAMPS AUSTRALIA INCORPORATED

Complaints Policy

This Policy in relation to complaints sets out:

- Who complaints should be made to; and
- What a person receiving a complaint should do.

This Policy applies to all complaints in relation to Life Camps Australia, its Employees, Leaders and Volunteers.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- Life Camps Australia will make every reasonable effort to ensure that complaints are dealt with in an appropriate, transparent and timely manner.
- The circumstances of every complaint must be considered thoroughly, with a view to ensuring that any necessary strategy is adopted to minimise the risk of a recurrence of the issue.
- The Camp Organiser must include details of any serious complaint made during a Camp and any action arising in the Camp Report.
- If a Leader feels uncomfortable or unqualified to handle a complaint, they should seek assistance from a more senior Leader, the Camp Organiser or the Manager.

DEFINITIONS

Unless otherwise specified in this Policy:

- **Camp Report** means the written report provided by the Camp Organiser to the Manager not more than seven days after the end of the Camp**;**
- **Leaders** means all people who attend a Camp for some or all of the time who have any role in organising or facilitating it or who provide services to the Campers in any way. It includes but is not limited to the Camp Organiser, a cabin co-ordinator, cabin leaders, spiritual leaders, junior

leaders, trainee leaders, camp Mum or Dad, worship leaders, cooks, first aid officers and support personnel whether they are volunteers or Employees who act as leaders from time to time; and

- **Parent** includes the legal guardian of a Camper.

ADHERENCE TO POLICIES OF LIFE CAMPS AUSTRALIA

Regardless of who the complainant is or when the complaint is made:

- If a complaint is a disclosure of abuse or gives rise to a suspicion of abuse, the procedure set out in the 'Policy in relation to disclosure of Child Abuse' must be followed.
- If the response to a complaint requires a Camper or Leader to be disciplined, such discipline must be carried out in accordance with the procedure set out in the 'Discipline Policy'.
- If a complaint relates to a criminal matter it must be referred to the Police at the earliest opportunity.

COMPLAINT BY A CAMPER DURING A CAMP

- The Leader receiving the complaint must listen with concern, care and in an attitude of conciliation. Every complaint, no matter how trivial it may seem, must be given due regard and every effort must be made to reassure the complainant that their grievance will be dealt with sincerely.
- If the complaint is made to a junior Leader and is minor or can be easily and immediately rectified by the junior Leader, the complaint should be dealt with accordingly.
    - At the first reasonable opportunity the junior Leader must advise their senior Leader of the complaint and the response that was made to it.
- If the complaint is made to a junior Leader and is serious or cannot be easily and immediately rectified, the junior Leader must refer it to a senior Leader at the earliest opportunity.
    - If appropriate and if the complainant wishes it, the junior Leader may remain with the complainant as a comfort and support during the period in which the complaint is being aired and/or investigated.
- If the complaint is made to a senior Leader (whether direct or by referral from a junior Leader) and is minor or can be easily and immediately rectified by the senior Leader, the complaint should be dealt with accordingly.
- If the complaint is made to a senior Leader (whether direct or by referral from a junior Leader) and is serious or cannot be easily and immediately rectified, the senior Leader should consider who is most appropriate to deal with the complaint.
    - Who the appropriate person to report to is will depend upon the circumstances. It might be a Camp Mum or Dad, the Program Director, the Camp Organiser or the Manager.

- Consideration should be given as to whether the Camper's Parent should be notified of the incident.

- Any action taken to resolve a serious matter will be at the discretion of the person handling the complaint, working in consultation with the Manager or the Camp Organiser as appropriate.

COMPLAINT BY A LEADER OR PARENT DURING A CAMP

- Any complaint by a Leader during a Camp should be directed to the Camp Organiser. If the complaint is minor or can be easily and immediately rectified, the complaint should be dealt with accordingly.

- If the complaint is serious or cannot be easily and immediately rectified, the Camp Organiser must notify the Manager at the earliest opportunity.

- Any action taken to resolve a serious matter will be at the discretion of the Manager, working in consultation with the Camp Organiser.

COMPLAINT BY A PARENT OR LEADER AFTER A CAMP

- Any complaints following a Camp should be directed to the Manager. The Manager will consider who should deal with the complaint and refer the matter accordingly.

- The complaint must be dealt with in a timely manner. As a guide:

  - Receipt of the complaint must be acknowledged within two business days of it first being received by Life Camps Australia.

  - The complainant must be notified who is dealing with the complaint within five business days of it first being received by Life Camps Australia.

  - Depending on the nature and severity of the complaint, updates should be given to the complainant at least once every ten business days. These updates might include:

    - *Brief advice that steps are being taken to investigate;*

    - *Advice of the steps that are being taken to investigate;*

    - *Progress made; or*

    - *Findings to date.*

  - Matters should be finalised as soon as possible, taking into account the nature and severity of the complaint.

- The complainant must be advised of the steps taken in relation to the complaint.

FAIRNESS

- The Manager and the Camp Organisers must ensure that every complaint is dealt with in a manner that is both procedurally and substantively fair. The principles of natural justice to be observed include:
  - the right of each party to be heard;
  - the right of each party to be treated fairly;
  - the right of the respondent to have a witness or support person present at any meetings;
  - the right of the respondent to know the allegations made against him or her;
  - the right of the respondent to respond to the allegation/s made against him or her; and
  - the right of both parties to a decision-maker who acts fairly and in good faith.

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