

FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINT POLICY AND PROCEDURE



Policy Statement

This policy and procedure sets out how any person can provide feedback and make complaints about any aspect of Pathways SouthWest operations and the process of addressing or responding to feedback and complaints.

The objectives of this Policy are to:

- Recognise, promote and protect individuals' rights, including the right to comment, compliment or complain.
- Provide an efficient, fair and accessible mechanism for ensuring the perspective of clients is heard.
- Provide information on the feedback handling process.
- Monitor feedback in an endeavour to improve the quality of services.
- Increase the level of satisfaction with the delivery of services.
- The recording of data to identify existing or emerging trends or systemic issues
- And to promote and demonstrate that Pathways SouthWest has an organisational culture that is focused on effective, person-centred complaints resolution and utilises feedback for continuous improvement

Scope

This policy and procedure applies to the organisation, staff, students, contractors and volunteers and all potential and existing clients, their family members and other supporters. The policy also applies to other service providers, government agencies and members of the community. This policy is owned by the Management Team.

Definitions

- **Carer:** Under the Carers Recognition Act 2004 a carer is a person who (without being paid) provides ongoing care or assistance to another person who has a disability, a chronic illness or a mental illness, or who is frail
- **Clients:** For the purposes of this policy and procedure clients are Pathways Southwest consumers and carers.
- **Consumers:** Consumers are people with a lived or living experience of mental health challenges and receiving a service from Pathways SouthWest
- **Complaint:** An expression of dissatisfaction made to or about an organisation related to its products, services, staff or the handling of a complaint where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected. Complaints include an expression of displeasure, such as poor service and any verbal or written complaint directly related to the service (including general and notifiable complaints).
- **Complainant:** Means the person or organisation making the complaint.

Date deployed:
Revalidate:
Approved by CEO
Signature

April 2026
April 2029

Owner:
Author:

Management Team
Coordinator Quality and Service Improvement

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- **Compliment:** An expression of praise, encouragement or gratitude about an individual staff member, a team or a service.
- **Complimenter: Means** the person who is providing a compliment.
- **MHC:** Mental Health Commission. The Western Australian Mental Health Commission is the government body responsible for planning and purchasing mental health, alcohol and other drug services.
- **General complaint:** Addresses any aspect of the service e.g. a lost clothing item or the service's fees. The complaint must be dealt with as soon as is practicable to avoid escalation of the issue.
- **Grievance:** A formal statement of complaint that cannot be addressed immediately and involves matters of a more serious nature e.g. the service is in breach of a policy, or the service did not meet the care expectations of a family.
- **Manager/management:** Means the Chairperson of the Board of Management if complaint is about the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), or CEO if the complaint is about an employee, client or carer
- **SMS:** Service Management System (SMS) is a comprehensive and innovative management software provided via SaaS and is developed explicitly for agencies delivering community care. Owned by Alchemy Technology who are a Software Development and Support company.

Principles

1. Procedure

Pathways SouthWest respects the right of clients or members of the community to provide feedback about the services that we provide. Pathways SouthWest commitment to fair, equitable and timely resolution of complaints is also described in this Policy and related documents.

All feedback is to be recorded and actioned by management who will sign off on all complaints when they have been dealt with. All personal information that Pathways SouthWest collects to manage feedback or complaints will be handled in accordance with the Privacy Act 1988.

Feedback and complaints will be dealt with in a confidential manner and will only be discussed with the people directly involved. All information regarding feedback and complaints will be kept securely in accordance with the Information Management and Code of Conduct Policies and Procedures

All clients and community members will be made aware of their right to make a complaint or provide feedback, the Pathways SouthWest complaints procedure and the use and availability of advocates. Management will take steps to ensure that clients feel comfortable to continue accessing the service after making a complaint.

Visibility and Transparency of the Complaints Process

Information on Pathways SouthWest Feedback and Complaints procedure is included in the client and Carer Information Pack by the inclusion of the Complaint Form. The complaints procedure will be briefly explained to clients at the time of entry into the service. If a situation develops where

there is potential for a complaint, or a complaint is made then more information will be given about the process

Pathways SouthWest provides all new clients with an Information Pack which contains a Complaint Form and the Rights and Responsibilities brochure. All Clubhouse clients also receive a Services Feedback Form. All of these publications are also available at the both sites and can be requested by clients to be posted or emailed. The Pathways SouthWest website also provides access to the Complaint Forms.

2. Fairness

Pathways SouthWest recognise the need to be fair to both the complainant and Pathways SouthWest employee/s against whom the complaint is made.

If a complaint is received Pathways SouthWest will:

1. Treat the complainant with tact, courtesy and fairness at all times.
2. Maintain appropriate confidentiality of the complainant at all times.
3. Not victimise or harass the complainant as a result of any complaint they make,
4. Not discriminate against the complainant because of any disability, their colour, race, religion, age, sex or sexual orientation.

3. Complaints System

First stage - Responding to a Complaint

- Recording via the Complaint Form Verbal complaints can be documented using clients words
- Acknowledgment of the complaint and attempt to resolve the complaint at the first point of contact.
- Where a complaint is not fully understood, contact the person who lodged the complaint to ensure good understanding of the issues correctly and advise.
- For complaints not resolved "on the spot", Pathways SouthWest aim to resolve the complaint and issue a response within 30 working days.

Second stage - If the complainant is still not satisfied, the CEO or the Chairperson of the Board of Management will review the complaint and the results of the review will be reported to the complainant.

If the complainant remains dissatisfied, Pathways SouthWest will consider other options that may be available to achieve a resolution.

Third stage - If the complaint cannot be resolved within the organisation, the complainant will be referred to an outside agency.

4. Actions

Pathways SouthWest will endeavour to resolve all complaints received as fairly as possible and in a timely manner. Some of the remedies that we may use to help resolve complaints include:

- Rectify mistakes - where a mistake has been made, it has taken too long to follow up a matter, or a matter has been overlooked, action will be taken to rectify the mistake or situation as soon as practicable.
- Employee training and counselling - where a complaint is made about an employee, there will be an investigation which may result in the employee being provided with training and/or counselling or disciplinary action according to the Pathways SouthWest Employee Grievance and Disciplinary Policy and Procedure

5. Visibility and Transparency of the Complaints Process

Pathways SouthWest promote the existence of our Feedback and Complaints Policy and Procedures through:

- Inclusion in the Clients Statement of Rights and Responsibilities which is displayed prominently on our noticeboard.
- Provision of information on this process in the Client/Carer Information Pack.

6. Access to the Complaints Process

If it is difficult for a client to personally make a complaint, a complaint may be made on their behalf by another person.

7. Confidentiality of Complaints

Staff directly concerned with lodging, receiving and resolving the complaint must as far as possible maintain the confidentiality of the complainant. Staff may refer to the Pathways SouthWest Whistle Blower Policy.

8. Complaints about Employees

Complaints about Pathways SouthWest employees should be directed to the CEO or in the case of a complaint against the CEO, it will be submitted to the Chairperson of the Board of Management.

Where and when appropriate the employee will be:

- Given the opportunity to comment.
- Informed of the final resolution/decision and the reason for that decision.
- And provided with a copy of the final reply to the complainant.

If management deems it appropriate, the employee will receive appropriate training and/or counselling.

Pathways SouthWest will provide a response to the complainant and inform the complainant of our decision and the reasons for that decision.

9. Compliments

All compliments will be acknowledged by a member of the management team to the complimenter, the compliment will be recorded in the feedback register (on SharePoint) and this will be fed back to the staff and considered as part of service improvement.

10. Review and Evaluation

Pathways SouthWest will monitor feedback and complaints to identify opportunities to improve choice and control for people accessing services and to improve the quality and type of services delivered.

Key Contacts

Questions about how to implement this procedure should be directed to Pathways SouthWest CEO on ceo@pathwayssouthwest.org.au or phone 97911257

Agencies that may be used for the purposes of advocacy and mediation:

Health Clients' Council (HCC)
Unit 6/40 Lord Street
Perth WA 6000
Telephone: 1800 620 780
Email: info@hconc.org.au

Website: [Health Consumers' Council WA – WA's peak health consumer organisation](#) (accessed 17/2/2026)

Advocacy South West Inc.
32 Wittenoom Street
BUNBURY WA 6230
Telephone: 9791 6444
Website: [Advocacy WA](#) (accessed 17/2/2026)

Clients of Mental Health WA (CoMHWA)
13 Plaistowe Mews
West Perth WA 6005
Telephone: 9321 4994
email: admin@comhwa.org.au
Website: [Consumers of Mental Health WA](#) (accessed 17/2/2026)

Mental Health Law Centre (WA) Inc.,
96- 98 Parry Street
PERTH. WA 6000
Telephone: 1800 620 285
Email: office@mhlcwa.org.au
Website: www.mhlcwa.org.au

Health and Disability Services Complaints Office (HaDSCO)
GPO Box B61
PERTH. WA 6838
Email: mail@hadsco.wa.gov.au
Website: <https://www.hadsco.wa.gov.au> (accessed 17/2/2026)

Ruah Community Services
All inquiries
Telephone [13 78 24](tel:137824)
connecting@ruah.org.au
(Open 8:30am-4:30pm Monday to Friday)
[Mental health legal services - Ruah Community Services](#) (accessed 17/2/2026)

Ruah Legal Services and Mental Health Law Centre
ABN 40 306 626 287
PO Box 6397, East Perth, WA, 6004
Phone: 08 9328 8012
Freecall: 1800 620 285
legalservices@ruah.org.au (accessed 17/2/2026)

Related Policies and Other Documents:

- Continuous Improvement Policy and Procedure
- Compliance Policy and Procedure
- Governance Policy and Procedure
- Housing Eligibility and Allocations Policy and Procedure
- Incident Management Policy and Procedure and all related reporting forms.

- National Safety and Quality Mental Health Standards for Community Managed Organisations
- Risk Management Policy and Procedure
- Risk Register
- Tenants Handbook
- Tenants Information Sheets
- Western Australian Community Housing Regulatory Framework

Relevant Legislation

- Age Discrimination Act 2004
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1991
- Building Regulations 2012
- Carers Recognition Act 2004 (WA)
- Carers Recognition Act 2010
- Charter of Health Care Rights
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Disability Services Act 1993 (WA)
- Electricity Act 1945
- Electricity Regulations 2012
- Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (WA)
- Fair Work Act 2009
- Freedom of Information Act 1982
- Health Services Act (WA) 2016
- Housing Assistance Act 1996 (COM)
- Human Rights Act 2004
- Mental Health Act (WA) 2014
- National Regulatory Community Housing Standards
- National Regulatory Code for the National Regulatory System of Community Housing 2022
- Privacy Act 1988
- Public Sector Ethics Act 1994
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Racial Hatred Act 1995
- Residential Tenancies Act 1987
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984
- Quality of Care Principles 2014
- Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012
- Work Health and Safety Act 2020
- Work Health and Safety (General) Regulations 2022