



All Red Cross people are empowered, engaged and accountable for their contribution to our humanitarian goals



## GRIEVANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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### POLICY SCOPE

All Red Cross people commit to behaving in accordance with the Australian Red Cross Ethical Framework, which reflects our values and Fundamental Principles and guides how we work, *every person, every day*.

As a Red Cross person – a member of staff, a volunteer or a member - I am accountable for contributing to an environment that is harmonious, where all people are treated with dignity and respect.

### POLICY STATEMENT

This Grievance Policy applies to all Red Cross people - staff, volunteers and members.

Red Cross is committed to maintaining a workplace that encourages collaboration, trust, cooperation and communication, and where all behaviours are consistent with the Australian Red Cross Ethical Framework

It is recognised, however, that on occasions inappropriate behaviours may occur and that a complaints and grievance process is required to resolve complaints or concerns.

This policy aims to ensure that complaints and grievances are handled and resolved in an appropriate, fair, transparent and timely manner, in accordance with the Australian Red Cross Ethical Framework and the principles of natural justice.

### PROCEDURES

These Grievance Procedures apply to volunteers and to members of staff, recognising that some grievance procedures for members are contained in the Divisional Regulations.

As with staff and volunteers (see below), members are encouraged to deal with any concerns directly between themselves, if they reasonably can. If that is unsuccessful, or inappropriate, the Divisional Regulations include procedures to deal with a grievance about the behaviour of a member.

### WHAT SHOULD I DO, IF A RED CROSS PERSON IS NOT BEHAVING APPROPRIATELY?

As a volunteer or as a member of staff, I may have a concern or grievance about the behaviour of another Red Cross person which I consider may not be in accordance with the Australian Red Cross Ethical Framework, or the relevant Human Resources policies or Volunteer policies.

#### Dealing with a concern directly

If I am concerned about another Red Cross person's behaviour, and I am comfortable to do so, I will raise my concern in good faith directly with that person.

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I will seek to resolve the concern with the other Red Cross person in a respectful, constructive and reasonable way, that reflects my commitment to Red Cross values and Fundamental Principles under the Australian Red Cross Ethical Framework.

If the other person and I agree on a reasonable way of resolving my concern, which I am satisfied with, that will be the end of the matter.

## **Support in raising a concern**

- I may speak to my line manager, a member of the Human Resources team or my Red Cross contact person on a confidential basis if I would like to discuss how to deal with my concern directly with the other Red Cross person.
- If my concern relates to harassment, bullying or discriminatory behaviour, I may have a confidential discussion with the Human Resources Manager in my State or Territory about how to deal with my concern (e.g. about how to directly deal with the other Red Cross Person).

## **Referring the concern to my line manager, Red Cross contact person or Human Resources**

As a member of staff or as a volunteer, I will refer my concern to my line manager or Red Cross contact person if I --

- do not feel comfortable discussing the concern with the other Red Cross Person directly;
- have discussed the concern in good faith with the other Red Cross person but I am not satisfied with the outcome; and/or
- am experiencing a work-related issue that does not involve another person.

I may be asked by my line manager or Red Cross contact person to provide further information or a written outline of my concern.

If I have already raised my concern with my line manager or Red Cross contact person but my concern remains unresolved, I may refer my concern directly to Human Resources.

I may be asked by Human Resources to provide further information or a written outline of my concern.

## **Whistleblower Hotline**

If I am genuinely unable to raise my concern within Red Cross I may contact the confidential whistleblower hotline, STOPline on 1300 304 550, in accordance with the Red Cross Whistleblower Policy.

## **HOW WILL RED CROSS DEAL WITH MY CONCERN?**

### **The approach Red Cross will apply to resolution of my concerns, as a volunteer or as a member of staff**

I understand that a concern I raise will be dealt with and resolved by Red Cross under this Procedure. It will be resolved in a manner which is in accordance with the Australian Red Cross Ethical

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Framework and is timely and fair, and consistent with the principles of natural justice, and Red Cross standards and policies.

I also understand that Red Cross may become aware of allegations of inappropriate behaviour, such as an omission to work in accordance with the Ethical Framework.

Red Cross may, at its discretion, choose to take appropriate steps to investigate and deal with these allegations. This applies even if I have not raised a concern with Red Cross.

## **Investigation**

If I raise a concern in one of the situations set out above, my concern may be investigated by Red Cross in a way which is suitable in the circumstances.

In relation to my concern, Red Cross may determine to follow an informal process, or to follow a formal process.

## **Choice of process**

I understand that a line manager (in conjunction with Human Resources) will initially investigate my concern and determine whether a formal investigation is required, or whether an informal process is suitable to resolve the concern.

(If the line manager is the subject of my concern, or cannot be objective in an investigation, the choice of process will be determined by Human Resources.)

Key principles of each process are set out in the following sections.

## **Informal process:**

I understand that in the case of an informal process:

- The objective of the investigation is to resolve the concern in a manner which is in accordance with the Ethical Framework and is fair and timely, and consistent with the principles of natural justice and Red Cross standards and policies.
- This may result in reporting the concern to a more senior manager or to Human Resources.
- It may also include speaking to other workforce members who may be able to assist in resolving the concern.
- If the concern relates to the conduct of another Red Cross Person, that person will be provided with details of the substance of the concern and be given an opportunity to respond.
- Red Cross will determine any action which may be appropriate to resolve the concern.

## **Formal process**

I understand that in the case of a formal process:

- An independent investigation will be undertaken. The objective of the investigation is to resolve the concern in a manner which is in accordance with the Ethical Framework and is fair

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and timely, and consistent with the principles of natural justice and Red Cross standards and policies.

- Human Resources will conduct the investigation or arrange for another Red Cross manager(s) to conduct it, or where appropriate as determined by Red Cross, an external investigator(s) may be appointed.
- The investigation will be conducted through a confidential process of:
  - ascertaining from me the substance of the concern, so as to determine what issues in relation to the concern are of sufficient substance to require investigation;
  - obtaining relevant information, from any relevant source, which can be considered by the investigator;
  - taking any other necessary steps to obtain relevant facts;
  - seeking a response to the substance of the concern, from the person whose alleged conduct is of concern;
  - making determinations of facts for provision of a report to Red Cross.

Details of the appropriate process will be determined by Red Cross in each case.

## **Support person**

If I raise a concern, I may have a support person present during any interview.

Similarly, I understand that the person about whose behaviour I have raised a concern may have a support person present during any interview.

## **RESOLUTION IN THE FORMAL PROCESS**

### **Determination by Red Cross**

In the formal process, after the investigation is complete and findings have been made (where required), a resolution of the matter will be determined by Red Cross.

I understand that details of the resolution will be recorded in writing and a copy provided both to me and to the other Red Cross person (usually, the person about whose behaviour a concern has been raised).

Options which may be considered for resolution of my concern, include one or more of the following:

- ongoing monitoring by a line manager
- counselling or training/education, which may be provided by the line manager, [Human Resources] or another appropriate person or organisation
- a formal apology
- mediation between me and the other Red Cross person, facilitated by an independent person, where both parties agree to participate in the mediation process

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- formal disciplinary action in line with the Disciplinary Policy (HR SUP 15)

## **Escalating my concern**

### ***I am not satisfied with the resolution – what may I do?***

If I am not satisfied with the resolution of my concern, I may refer my concern to the relevant responsible member of the Executive or Leadership team. Under this internal Red Cross process, the decision made by the Executive or Leadership Team member is final and binding.

### ***My concern relates to the behaviour of a member of the Executive or the Leadership team – what may I do?***

If my concern relates to a member of the Executive or the Leadership Team, I may raise the concern with the CEO. The decision made by the CEO is final and binding.

### ***My concern relates to the behaviour of a member of the CEO – what may I do?***

If my concern relates to the CEO, I may raise the concern in writing with the President of the Australian Red Cross Society by providing it in a sealed envelope provided to the General Counsel, Legal and Policy. The President will determine an objective process to resolve the grievance in accordance with this procedure. The decision made by the President is final and binding.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

If I am the person raising the concern, or the person against whom a concern is raised, a witness, a support person or any other interviewee, I must keep all aspects of the participation in the investigation confidential.

## **RAISING MATTERS IN GOOD FAITH**

### **No victimisation or detrimental action**

If I am a person raising a concern, a witness, an individual providing information, or a support person, I will not be victimised or disadvantaged in my role with Red Cross, if I raise a concern in good faith or am involved in an investigation and act in good faith.

Victimisation or detrimental action may be regarded as serious misconduct and will be treated in line with the Disciplinary Policy (HR SUP 15).

### **Concerns raised vexatiously**

Red Cross will not tolerate concerns raised vexatiously.

I understand that if I raise a concern other than in good faith (for example, if I initiate a concern without reasonable grounds to do so), disciplinary action may be taken in line with the Disciplinary Policy (HR SUP 15).

## **HOW IS A COMPLAINT BY A CLIENT RELATING TO A RED CROSS PERSON TO BE HANDLED?**

This procedure applies to client complaints, only if the complaint relates to the behaviour of a Red Cross person.

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For further information regarding client complaints, please refer to the Client Feedback, Complaints Response policy.

## **FURTHER INFORMATION REGARDING INDUSTRIAL INSTRUMENTS**

With some exceptions, members of staff of Red Cross are generally covered by a modern award or enterprise agreement, in operation under the **Fair Work Act**. An applicable award or enterprise agreement may include further information regarding entitlements and processes.

Where a concern is in relation to a matter under the award or the enterprise agreement, any relevant dispute resolution process in the award or agreement is to be followed.

## **RAISING CONCERNS WITH EXTERNAL AGENCIES**

This procedure is to assist in resolution, within Red Cross, of concerns about behaviour of Red Cross people.

However, nothing in this procedure is intended to affect the right of a person to approach an external agency in relation to their concern.

## **EAP SUPPORT**

Red Cross provides a free, confidential and independent Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to all members of staff and volunteers. Refer to the Workforce Access to EAP Policy (HR SUP 18).

Workforce members may use the confidential EAP to seek professional counselling on any work related or non-work related matter. The Red Cross EAP is operated by a third party and is available 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

**REFERENCE: Australian Red Cross Ethical Framework  
Whistleblower Policy**