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## **The Salvation Army Hong Kong and Macau Command** **Complaint Handling Policy**

1. This policy seeks to provide a transparent and consistent process for resolving complaints, to ensure complaints are received, recorded and resolved in an appropriate manner.
2. The Salvation Army (hereafter referred to as 'TSA') strives to be the best at what we do. We are honest, trustworthy, and accountable. TSA is committed to seeking and receiving feedback and complaints, and to use those as valuable means to improve the Army's governance, service quality, policies and procedures.
3. Every officer and staff member of TSA has a responsibility to comply with this policy.

### **Glossary of Terms (for Policy and Procedure)**

4. **"Staff member"** – Officers and employees of The Salvation Army Hong Kong and Macau Command.
5. **"Complaint"** – An expression of dissatisfaction or concern from external parties made to or about TSA, our services, systems, practices, procedures, products and complaint handling, where a response is expected or required.

A complaint does not include:

- A request for services
- A request for information or explanation of policies or procedures or decisions

6. **"Feedback"** – Opinions, comments and expressions of interest or concern, made to or about TSA, our services, systems, practices, procedures, products and complaint handling, where a response is not expected or required.
7. **"Grievance"** – A clear, formal written statement by an active staff member about another active staff member or a work-related problem.
8. **"Victimise"** – To act or omit to act towards a person in a way which is intended to cause disadvantage or discrimination to that person because they have made a complaint, or may make a complaint, or may be or are the subject of a complaint.

### **Scope**

9. This policy applies to complaints against The Salvation Army Hong Kong and Macau Command, departments, corps, service units, schools, Recycling Programme, family stores, and all our staff members.
10. All grievance made by active TSA staff members will be referred to and handled by the Human Resources Department with reference to the Grievance Policy and Procedures.
11. All complaints channelled from media, where a public response is expected, will be referred to and handled by the Corporate Communications Department (CCD) with reference to the Media Handling Guidelines and the 'Communications Flow for Issue Management'.



## Guiding Principles

12. Any individual or organisation using services provided by TSA or affected by its operations has the right to lodge a complaint and to have their concerns addressed in ways that ensure access and equity, fairness, accountability and transparency.
13. The complaint handling policy and procedures will be well publicised on the TSA website for public information.
14. Complainants should not be victimised as a result of raising a complaint.
15. Reasonable and clear timeframes for the review and progress of complaint resolution will be established and adhered to for each stage of complaint handling process.
16. Complainants may choose not to disclose identity and contact details on the complaint form if there is a compelling reason to do so, but such information must be provided. Anonymous complaints, or complaints initiated by the complainant who cannot be identified or traced, will not be processed. The details will be recorded as a feedback.
17. All complaint proceedings will remain confidential and privacy must be protected.

## Procedures

18. Complaints will be handled according to The Salvation Army Hong Kong and Macau Command Complaint Handling Procedures.

Effective Date	21-08-2018
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## **The Salvation Army Hong Kong and Macau Command** **Complaint Handling Procedure**

1. Complaints can be received from the following channels:
  - Written – letters, emails (TSA’s email account: info@hkt.salvationarmy.org), Facebook (TSA’s Facebook account: 救世軍 The Salvation Army Hong Kong and Macau) or other channels;
  - Verbal – telephone (TSA’s hotline: 2332-4531) or in person
2. All general complaints will initially be handled and recorded by the Corporate Communications Department (hereafter referred to as ‘CCD’).
3. All complaints made directly to the respective departments, corps, service units, schools, Recycling Programme and family stores will be handled by the respective parties directly. The social services and education services departments will handle the complaints according to their respective policies and guidelines in compliance with the requirements of the Social Welfare Department and the Education Bureau.
4. A complaint log of cases made directly to the respective departments, corps, service units, schools, Recycling Programme and family stores is to be shared with CCD every month for record purpose.
5. If it is a feedback case, i.e., opinions, comments and expressions of interest or concern about TSA, our services, systems, practices, procedures, products and complaint handling, where a response is not expected or required, CCD will provide appropriate explanation or information to close the case on the spot. All feedback will be recorded using the ‘Feedback Log Sheet’.
6. If it is a complaint case, i.e., expression of dissatisfaction or concern about TSA, our services, systems, practices, procedures, products and complaint handling, where a response is expected or required, CCD will acknowledge receipt of complaints. CCD will:
  - Inform the complainant that all complaints are treated confidentially and that they will not experience any loss of support or service because they have made a complaint;
  - Explain the complaints procedure;
  - Inform the complainant that the case will be referred to respective departments who will acknowledge the complaint and get back to the complainant after investigation;
  - Thank the complainant for their complaint and explain that complaints are valuable in assisting to maintain and improve the Army’s governance, service quality, policies and procedures.
7. All complaint cases received will be documented using the Complaint Form after getting the consent of the complainants.
8. The Complaint Form with detailed information will be referred to respective departments within 2 working days for following up according to their departmental procedures. A copy of the complaint form must be presented to the Corporate Communications Director of CCD for information.



9. Respective departments should acknowledge the complainant within 3 working days after receiving the complaint form.
10. All complaint cases will be handled within a reasonable timeframe. Once the referred case is resolved, the respective departments have to fill in the summary of resolutions and pass the form back to CCD for filing.
11. Monthly review will be conducted with various departments to make sure all referred cases are handled and resolved.
12. A central complaint log will be maintained by CCD as a central depository of all the complaint cases received.
13. CCD will submit a quarterly complaint registry to the Leadership of the Command.

### **Appeals**

14. If the complainant is not satisfied with the complaint resolution, they may submit a request for appeal. An appeal must be made in writing to the General Secretary within 14 working days from the notification of the investigation result.
15. The General Secretary will report the appeal to the Chair of the Command Governance Council (CGC) with recommendations within 24 hours upon a receipt of appeal request. The Officer Commanding will issue an acknowledgement letter to the appellant within 5 working days upon receipt of the appeal referral.
16. A Review Panel with Chair and members nominated by the Chair of CGC and approved by the International Headquarters will be appointed annually. The Review Panel will review the complaint within 5 working days upon receipt of the appeal referral.
17. Timeframe for the review will be within 21 working days from the date of the setting up of the Review Panel. The set-up of the Review Panel, subsequent procedure and timeframe will be informed to both parties concerned by the Chair of the Review Panel. The result of the review will be reported to Chair of CGC and forwarded to the CGC for endorsement.
18. If there is a need to extend the timeframe with justified reason, the revised timeframe will be set and inform the concerned parties of the change as appropriate.
19. The decision endorsed and approved by the CGC at this stage is final.

### **Exceptions**

20. Any grievance made by active TSA staff members will be referred to and handled by the Human Resources Department with reference to the Grievance Policy and Procedures.
21. All complaints channelled from media, where a public response is expected, will be referred to and handled by the CCD with reference to the Media Handling Guidelines and the 'Communications Flow for Issue Management'.



22. For complaints concerning the Corporate Communications Director, the case must immediately be escalated and handled by the General Secretary.

### **Confidentiality Principles**

23. Information about complaints will only be available to people on a need-to-know basis.
24. All personal information related to complaints must be kept confidential. Identifying information to be removed when individual complaints are reported at meetings or in reports.
25. If the complainant indicates that the data is to be kept confidential, special attention must be paid to respecting the complainant's right to confidentiality.