

POLICY: COMPLAINTS

GOVERNANCE

The National Epilepsy Association of New Zealand (Epilepsy New Zealand) is committed to having a clear and effective process for dealing with any complaints received from any person or organisation who has contact with Epilepsy New Zealand.

MANAGEMENT

1. All complaints will be taken seriously and acted on appropriately in a fair and respectful manner in accordance with this policy. Any complaint will be dealt with in a courteous, objective and timely manner, following the normal complaints process outlined in this policy. Every stage of the complaints process will be treated with confidentiality. Only those involved in the process will know the details, unless it is in the best interests of any party involved for the details to be made more widely known.
2. Making a complaint will in no way jeopardise ongoing service provision.
3. All parties to a complaint have the right to access independent support/advocacy at their own expense.
4. Complaints can come from both internal and external parties and must be submitted on an Epilepsy New Zealand complaints form available from any staff member or the National Support Centre. A complaints form with full documentation must be completed for all complaints. Complaints should only be sent directly to the Board if they relate to the CEO or the Commissioners.
5. All complaints must be reported to the CEO within two (2) working days of being received by Epilepsy New Zealand. The CEO will be responsible for the management of any complaint, unless the complaint relates to the CEO directly.
6. If a complaint involves abuse, neglect or harassment of a person, the CEO must be advised immediately. If a complaint involves 'physical harm' refer to and commence the Accident/Incident process. If there has been "serious harm" then the CEO must be notified immediately.

7. Any complaint about the CEO must be sent directly to the President of the Epilepsy Association of New Zealand who will follow the standard guidelines in this policy.
8. Any complaint about decisions made by the Board of the Epilepsy Association of New Zealand, must be sent directly to the Commissioners of Epilepsy New Zealand who will follow the standard guidelines in this policy.
9. Any complaint about the Commissioners must be sent directly to the President of the Epilepsy Association of New Zealand who will follow the standard guidelines in this policy.
10. In order to maintain the requirement for the Commissioners to act independently, Commissioners are to make complaints in the following ways:
 - a. When a Commissioner wishes to make a complaint about the board, the Commissioner making the complaint must stand down from the role of Commissioner permanently and then lodge the complaint.
 - b. Any other complaint initiated by a Commissioner will be dealt with in accordance with this policy. When a complaint laid by a Commissioner is escalated in accordance with clause 16 of this policy, the Commissioner who laid the initial complaint must stand down from the role of Commissioner permanently.
11. Formal acknowledgement of a complaint will be provided within five (5) working days of receipt, including details of the key contact person for the complaint.
12. The CEO will determine who the appropriate person to undertake an investigation should be, unless the complaint relates to the CEO directly, the Commissioners or any decisions made by the Board.
13. Investigation of any complaint may include gathering of any information available regarding the issue/incident, including documentation and statements from people involved. Where possible, this process will be open and transparent to ensure issues can be fairly reviewed for all parties involved. All parties will have the opportunity to present their case during the investigation and an additional right of reply prior to the investigation being considered closed.
14. An outcome, together with corrective actions required (if any) will be provided to all parties within fifteen (15) working days, or if this is not practicable, the anticipated timeframe for completion of investigation will be provided to all parties within the fifteen (15) working day period.
15. Where a complaint is not able to be resolved by Epilepsy New Zealand staff (except for one that is related to the CEO directly, the Commissioners or any decisions made by the Board), or any party is not satisfied with the outcome, any party may request that the complaint is elevated and raised directly with the Epilepsy New Zealand Board within ten (10) working days of the outcome being provided to all

parties. If this avenue is pursued, the Board shall undertake a review of the complaint and come to a decision within fifteen (15) working days of receipt of the elevated complaint. The Board will notify all parties of the decision immediately.

16. In situations where any party is not satisfied with the outcome of a Board decision in relation to any complaint, any party has the right to elevate the complaint further and lodge it with the Commissioners of Epilepsy New Zealand within fifteen (15) working days of the outcome being provided to all parties. The Commissioners will be required to follow the standard guidelines in this policy.
17. In the event of any party being dissatisfied with the outcome of the Commissioners review of an elevated complaint, the complaint can be taken to an independent advocacy service where the terms of reference will be established with agreement of all parties, or if preferred, any party has the right to lodge a formal complaint with the Charities Commission in a manner prescribed by the Charities Commission.
18. Lodging a complaint with the Charities Commission is considered extremely serious and must only be made after all options have been exhausted within the boundaries of both the Constitution and this policy.
19. Debriefing of all appropriate staff must be completed and all outcomes together with corrective actions required (if any) will be documented to prevent future incidences.
20. This policy is reflective of the fast changing environment in which business is conducted and is therefore required to be reviewed frequently to ensure it is fit for purpose at all times for all scenarios.

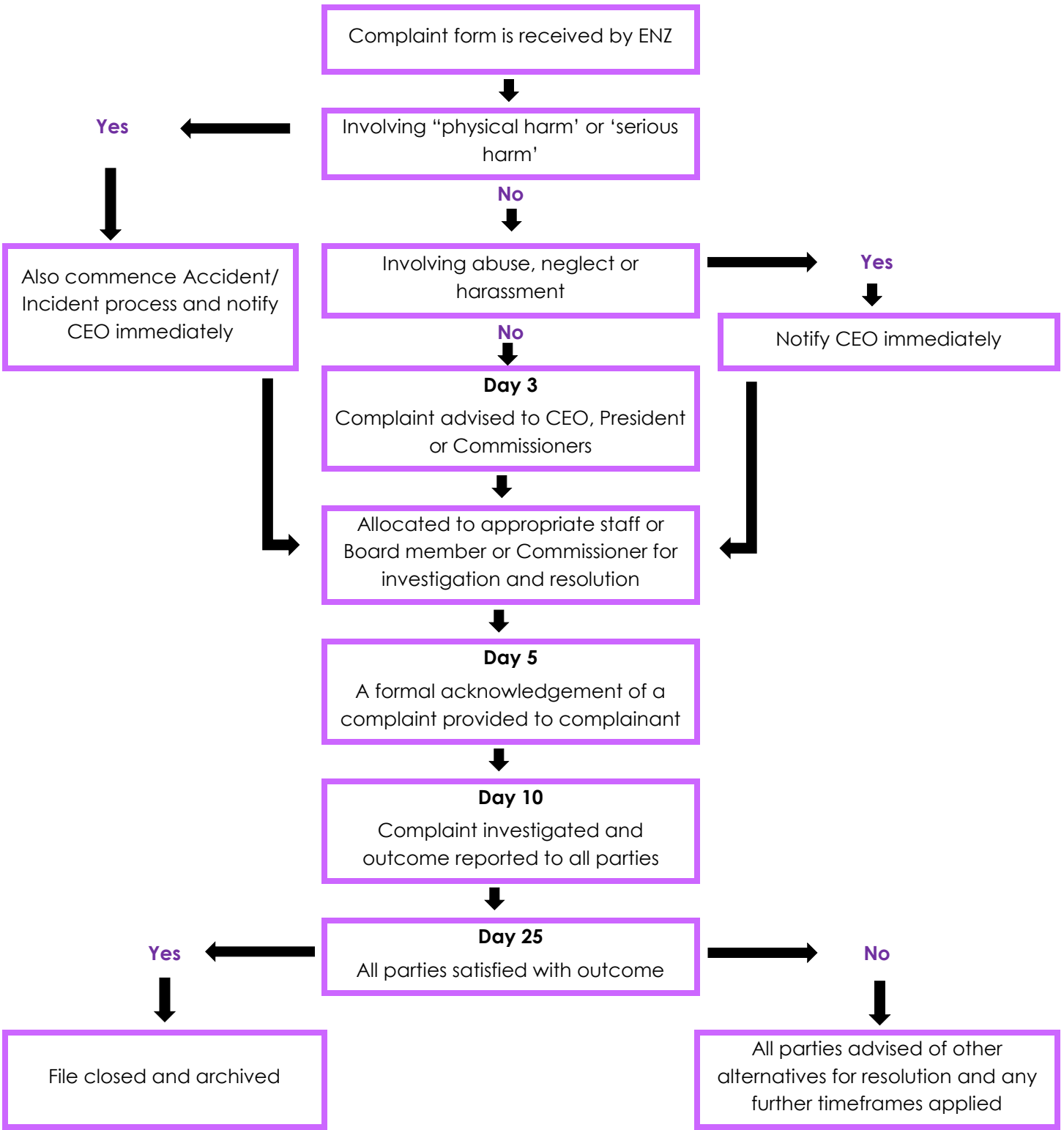
Approved: August 2019



Signed on behalf of the ENZ Board: _____

Review Date: August 2021 (or prior if deemed necessary)

Complaints Flowchart



Complaints Form



Thank you for taking the time to submit a complaint. Your complaint will be dealt with in accordance with our Complaints Policy which is included with this form for your reference. All information will be treated confidentially.

Your Full Name

Client/Member/Staff/Other

Postal address

Email address

Contact phone number

Are you happy for us to speak openly with any person or people involved? Y N

In order for us to manage your complaint in the best way, we need to know as many details from you as possible. If your complaint is about a specific person/people or a specific day, we need to know these details. You are welcome to attach an additional sheet to this form to describe your complaint in full if required.

Complaint Details:

Complaints Form



While we can't guarantee what the outcome will be following any investigation into your complaint, we would like to know what outcome you think would satisfy your concerns?

Suggested Outcome:

All details in this form provided by me are correct to the best of my knowledge. By signing this form I consent to Epilepsy New Zealand initiating an investigation into my complaint in any way it sees fit. I will participate in the investigation process where requested so that the best outcome for all parties can be reached. I have received a copy of the Epilepsy New Zealand Complaints Policy and understand the process involved.

_____ **Complainant Signature**

_____ **Date**

Office Use Only

Date form received by ENZ: _____

_____ Signature of CEO

Internal Documentation Completed Y N