

5 POLICY ON COMPLAINTS

Bright Futures is committed to being accountable for its actions and takes complaints seriously. If any person notices wrongdoing in the work of Bright Futures in Australia or in its programs, they can report this confidentially and safely to Bright Futures. This ensures that stakeholders are able to hold Bright Futures to account for its actions or decisions through a complaints process where these can be queried and a response obtained.

Scope of policy

This policy is intended to apply to any complaint, regardless of who makes it. This could be a member of the general public, a beneficiary, a representative of Bright Futures, or anyone else who is in contact with our work and the work of our in-country partners.

Bright Futures regards a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction about our organisation, our staff, our volunteers, our board, our in-country development partners, or anyone else acting on our behalf.

Publicising this policy

Bright Futures has identified its Executive Officer and its Board Chairman on its website as points of contact for complaints. This includes the words '*We welcome feedback or complaints on our operations and conduct. Should you wish to provide feedback or complaints, please contact us by email, mail, or phone on the contact details above (which list the details of the Board Chairman and the Executive Officer). We will respond to your feedback or complaint.*'

Complaints may also be lodged through the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) which is the peak body for international development agencies. Bright Futures is a member of ACFID and a signatory to its Code of Conduct. The process for lodging a complaint through the ACFID Code of Conduct Committee can be found at: <https://acfid.asn.au/content/complaints> Complaint contact details for ACFID and for Bright Futures are detailed on the Bright Futures website and appear below.

Volunteers, staff, and members of the Board are made aware of this complaints policy through their induction so that they understand the importance and scope of the policy.

Bright Futures' in-country partners also have contact details listed on their websites. If they do not have a website, points of contact for complaints are available within their community. Bright Futures' in-country partners are made aware of this policy when they begin their partnership with Bright Futures. The importance of the policy is also reinforced throughout the partnership during visits by Bright Futures representatives, and partners have regular meetings with project beneficiaries and stakeholders to encourage feedback and reporting of complaints.

Handling of complaints

When Bright Futures receives a complaint, it registers this on the confidential Complaints Register. This Register includes date of receipt, summary, type of complaint, who received the complaint, process to deal with complaint, and complainant. The matter is first discussed on a personal basis with the complainant and the Executive Officer or Chairman of the Board

to determine the magnitude of the complaint. If the complaint involves the Executive Officer or Chairman of the Board, then the matter is raised with a senior Board official (eg Secretary or Treasurer).

If the issue cannot be resolved through discussion, the complaint is presented in written form and is then addressed at a meeting of the Board where a decision can be made. The person making the complaint is then advised by the Executive Officer and/or the Chairman of the Board, both verbally and in writing.

Bright Futures reserves the right to intervene without notice should a situation arise which requires immediate investigation. In the event of a complaint requiring investigation, whether that complaint be in relation to a child protection, financial, or other matter, the Bright Futures Board will appoint a suitably qualified person to undertake the investigation on its behalf. A report of the investigation is to be provided to the Bright Futures Executive, which will be responsible for determining any action to be taken and for providing a report to the Board. Where an investigation reveals criminal wrongdoing, the matter is reported to the relevant authority.

Child Friendliness

Bright Futures and its partners are committed to ensuring that complaint processes are accessible to children. A child is anyone who is under 18 years of age. As a principle, the child should have the support of a person in whom they have confidence with them in this process.

Where a child is unable to express their complaint through a formal process, staff engaged with the child will receive and document the complaint on behalf of the child having regard to the seriousness of the circumstance and the wishes of the child with regard to what they would like to happen to resolve their complaint.

Where a complaint involves abuse of any kind, then the child protection policy of Bright Futures and the relevant partner group is to be applied.

In responding to the complaint the management or Board of Bright Futures should ensure that the process undertaken is appropriate to the age and circumstance of the child and that the process will not exacerbate any anxieties the child might be feeling.

Bright Futures will encourage partners to develop culturally appropriate training for children explaining child safe principles and how they can make a complaint.

Timeframes

For complaints that are not resolved within 5 days, Bright Futures acknowledge the complaint either by telephone or in writing. If the complaint has not been resolved within 30 days, Bright Futures contacts the complainant to update them on the progress of the complaint.

Confidentiality

Full confidentiality is assured in the complaints process, enabling staff, members of the Board, office holders or members of the public to report misconduct under conditions of confidentiality. Bright Futures will not reveal the complainant's name or personal details to anyone outside the organisation without the complainant's permission.

Resources

ACFID Complaints Policy and Process <https://acfid.asn.au/content/complaints>

Complaint Contact

To make a complaint to Bright Futures contact:

Bright Futures Child Aid and Development Fund Australia Ltd

Office: Shop 27, Da Costa Arcade, 68 Grenfell Street, Adelaide SA 5000
(Postal: PO Box 3071, Rundle Mall SA 5001)

Phone: (618) 7225 7175

Email: office@brightfutures.com.au

Executive Officer: Paul Madden M: 0411 740549 E:
paul.madden@brightfutures.com.au

Bright Futures Board: Chair, Mr Roger Bryson M: 0478 614131

How to lodge a complaint with the Australian Council for International Development:

Complaints should be marked 'confidential' and emailed to:

Chair, ACFID Code of Conduct Committee, E: code@acfid.asn.au
or posted to:

Chair, ACFID Code of Conduct Committee
Private Bag 3, Deakin ACT 2600

