

# Complaints Policy

## DOCUMENT INFORMATION

<b>EFFECTIVE DATE</b>	September 19, 2016
<b>LAST MODIFIED DATE</b>	June 4, 2025
<b>NEXT REVIEW DATE</b>	March 2027
<b>CURRENT VERSION</b>	2.0
<b>DOCUMENT OWNER</b>	President & CEO
<b>APPLIES TO</b>	Donors, Volunteers, and Members of the Public

## PURPOSE

From time to time, the Foundation may receive complaints from a member of the public related to Foundation policies and procedures, how these are applied or the conduct, activities or actions of the Foundation or its representatives.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that concerns raised by any interested party are received and responded to promptly and fairly in accordance with the Foundation's high standards.

## SCOPE

This policy applies to donors, volunteers, members of the public and other interested parties external to the Foundation. Any individual who reports any action that they reasonably believe violates a law or regulation or that constitutes fraudulent or unethical practices should refer to the Foundation's Whistleblower Policy.

Guiding principles (from Imagine Canada) indicate that all parties have the right to expect that:

- 1) complaints are dealt with promptly and resolved as quickly as possible;
- 2) review of complaints is fair, impartial and respectful to all parties;
- 3) complainants are advised of their options to escalate their complaint to a more senior staff person if they are dissatisfied with treatment or outcome;
- 4) complainants are provided clear and understandable reasons for decisions relating to complaints;
- 5) updates are provided to complainants during review processes; and
- 6) complaints are used to assist in improving services, policies and procedures.

## DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
Complaint	An expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about the service, actions, or lack of action by the organization, or by a staff or volunteer acting on behalf of the organization.

	Complaints may come from the general public, donors, participants, patients, researchers, and/or volunteers.
Whistleblower	Any individual who reports any action that they reasonably believe violates a law or regulation or that constitutes fraudulent or unethical practices.
Whistleblowing	The action of an individual who reports any action they reasonably believe violates a law or regulation, or that constitutes fraudulent or unethical practices.

## POLICY STATEMENT

### Receiving and Reviewing Complaints

A complaint may be received verbally (phone, in person) or in writing (mail, email, web form). An employee or volunteer that receives a Complaint attempt to informally resolve the Complaint if it is within their direct power and proper authority to do so. If not, or within 24 hours of receiving the Complaint, the employee or volunteer should encourage the complainant to communicate their Complaint to [complaints@vghfoundation.ca](mailto:complaints@vghfoundation.ca) or via the online contact form found on the Foundation's homepage footer. Where this is not practical, or the complainant does not wish to do so, the volunteer or employee should:

- file a complaint on behalf the complainant by emailing [complaints@vghfoundation.ca](mailto:complaints@vghfoundation.ca) or filling an External Complaint on ZenDesk, or the ticketing software of the Foundation's choice;
- report the Complaint to their supervisor or primary contact.

Complaints are not kept confidential and Complaint information, including complainant name, contact information and other relevant details, will be shared in order to address or resolve the issues raised in the Complaint. Complainant name, contact information and any personal information will not be shared outside the Foundation except with the complainant's consent, which consent may be necessary in order to appropriately resolve the Complaint.

The Foundation will take all commercially reasonable steps to resolve any Complaint that it has received which is to be managed by staff within 30 days. If a Complaint requires more than 30 days to appropriately resolve the issue, that Complaint should be elevated to the CEO. Complaints regarding board directors or otherwise managed by the board may take several months to investigate and resolve.

### Responding

The Foundation responds promptly to Complaints. Where possible, a staff member receiving a Complaint will attempt to satisfy the complainant's concerns in the first instance. If a Complaint is not resolved within one business day of receiving the Complaint, that Complaint must be registered as an external complaint.

All external complaints registered by staff or a complainant will be acknowledged promptly. Complaints will be evaluated and used as a means to support continuous improvement for the Foundation.

## Reporting

It is necessary to keep a record of any complaint that involved a dispute over money or that cannot be resolved immediately (within the day it was received). The Manager, President's Office will maintain a complaints tracking worksheet including a description of the complaint, how it was resolved and by whom.

A summary of complaints received including the number and type of complaints will be reported to the Board of Directors annually.

## Vancouver Coastal Health & Hospital Complaints

Occasionally, the Foundation receives complaints related to Vancouver Coastal Health or one of its facilities. In these instances, the complainant is redirected to:

Patient Care Quality Office - Vancouver Coastal Health

Email: [pcqo@vch.ca](mailto:pcqo@vch.ca)

Phone: 1-877-993-9199 or 1-877-993-9199, or

Mail: 380 - 855 West 12th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V5Z 1M9.

## RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Whistleblower Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Respectful Workplace and Human Rights Policy

## VERSION HISTORY

VERSION	DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE	APPROVED BY	APPROVAL DATE
1.0	First version	Board of Directors	September 19, 2016
2.0	Updates	Leadership Team	April 2, 2025
2.0		Governance Committee	June 4, 2025
		Board of Directors	June 16, 2025