



## Maggie's Toronto Sex Workers Action Project

### General Complaints Policy

#### **Purpose**

Problems, misunderstandings and frustrations may arise in the workplace. It is Maggie's Toronto Sex Workers Action Project's intent to be responsive to employees, volunteers, and board members and their concerns. Therefore, an individual who is confronted with a problem may use the procedure described below to resolve or clarify their concerns.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a quick, effective and consistently applied method for any employee, volunteer or board member to present their concerns for an internal resolution.

#### **Procedures**

##### **Step 1: Discussion with immediate supervisor (Informal Complaint)**

- a. Initially, the complainant should bring their concerns or complaints to their immediate supervisor. Even if the complaint involves the complainant's supervisor, the complainant should schedule an appointment with that supervisor to discuss the problem that gave rise to the complaint within five working days of the date the incident occurred. At this stage the complaint may be made verbally. The supervisor should document the complaint, and may ask for written documentation from the complainant. However, the complainant should be informed that the complaint is being received informally, and will proceed through the steps of the informal complaint process.
- b. Volunteers should bring their concerns to their immediate supervisor. Board members should bring their concerns to the Board Chair.
- c. The immediate supervisor should respond in writing to the complaint within five days of the meeting held with the complainant.
- d. If the complaint relates to supervisor behavior that is egregious in nature and can bring disciplinary action (e.g. fraud or suspected illegal activity), the complainant should refer directly to the next level supervisor, or may choose to file a formal complaint (harassment and violence always warrants a formal complaint. Refer to the harassment policy.), see Step 2 (e.g. in this case if the complaint is about one's supervisor the complainant should approach the manager if applicable, or Executive Director. If the complaint is about the Executive Director, the complainant should approach the Board Chair).



## Step 2: Written complaint and decision (Formal Complaint)

1. If the discussion with the immediate supervisor does not resolve the problem to the mutual satisfaction of the complainant and the supervisor, or if the supervisor does not respond to the complaint, the complainant may submit a written complaint to the next level of supervision from the supervisor: Manager, Executive Director or Board Chair. The formal complaint should include:
  - The problem and the date when the incident occurred.
  - A copy of the immediate supervisor's written response or a summary of their verbal response and the date when the complainant met with the immediate supervisor. If the supervisor provided no response, the complaint should state this.
  - Suggestions on ways to resolve the problem. (*optional*)
2. Upon receipt of the formal complaint, the Manager, Executive Director or Board Chair must schedule a meeting with the complainant within five working days to discuss the complaint. Within approximately 10 working days after the discussion, the Manager, Executive Director or Board Chair must issue a decision in writing to the complainant filing the complaint. The Executive Director or Board Chair will advise the complainant, if this timing is not possible. If the complainant believes that the complaint is not being handled in accordance with this policy, they should contact the Manager, the Executive Director or Board Chair (who received the complaint).
3. If the conflict or complaint has not been resolved to the complainant's satisfaction, the Manager, the Executive Director or Board Chair may forward the complete file and the recommended resolution, to the Executive of the Board for review (hereinafter the "Executive Committee").
4. The Executive Committee will review relevant issues in the file and any newly discovered evidence or information that may arise during the problem resolution process. The Executive Committee will forward a response to the complainant and the Manager, the Executive Director or Board Chair, either concurring with the previous resolution or proposing an alternative resolution.
5. The decision and recommendations made by the Executive Committee will be final.

**Note:** If it is the case that the complaint cannot be addressed internally, the Executive Director or Board Chair may offer mediation or engage an investigation through a third party [See Anti-harassment Policy and Procedures: Mediation, Investigation]. The complainant shall be informed if this is the case.



All complaints must be made in good faith.

Maggie's reserves the right to impose appropriate disciplinary action for any conduct it considers to be disruptive or inappropriate. The circumstances of each situation may differ, and the level of disciplinary action may also vary, depending on factors such as the nature of the offense, whether it is repeated, the employee's work record and the impact of the conduct on the organization.

No Maggie's employee will be subject to retaliation for filing a complaint under this policy.