PURPOSE

The [Name of House] is committed to creating and maintaining constructive, productive and supportive working relationships with all who work in or use the House.

We want everyone to communicate openly and respectfully with one another, recognising different points of view and dealing with them constructively. The presence of conflict, if dealt with effectively, offers an opportunity for individual and organisational learning including the identification of policies and practices that need to be improved. If left unresolved, conflict and grievances can lead to a stressful, and in the worst cases, a poisoned environment.

The purpose of this policy is to guide management committee members and other members, staff, tutors, volunteers and house users in resolving conflict and grievance issues if and when they arise.

While this policy can be used to assist in dealing with issues concerning bullying, harassment and discrimination, if such issues arise, refer in the first instance to the House Anti-Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying policy.

This policy does not apply to alleged criminal activity, suspected corruption, and reportable conduct involving children or young persons under 18 years of age, which must be reported promptly and directly to Tasmania Police.

POLICY

The [Name of House] will provide and maintain a positive environment in which all are able to work and interact constructively together.

The [Name of House] will establish procedures to support timely, fair and effective conflict and grievance resolution.

In the first instance, the [Name of House] will encourage management committee members, staff, volunteers, members, house users and others to resolve directly with each other at the earliest opportunity, and to their mutual satisfaction, any conflict or grievance issues or concerns that they may have.

If informal conflict and grievance resolution between the parties themselves is not acceptable to a person involved, not possible for other reasons, or cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of all parties, a formal conflict and grievance resolution procedure will be implemented.

A person requesting formal conflict and grievance resolution must do so in writing in the
Conflict and Grievance Resolution Policy

manner designated in this policy. A person must be offered independent support to put things in writing if they require it.

All formal conflict and grievance resolution requests will be investigated fully and promptly, and all parties will be kept informed of progress.

The formal conflict and grievance resolution procedures available will be fully documented and provided to those involved at the outset of the process. Then, the wishes and concerns of all parties will be taken into account in determining the procedures appropriate to the circumstances.

The [Name of House] will maintain confidentiality as far as is possible. Only the relevant parties will be involved in investigation and resolution procedures.

Parties to the conflict and grievance resolution will be encouraged to observe confidentiality.

A person raising a conflict or grievance issue may, at any time, withdraw in writing from pursuing the matter.

No person will be intimidated or unfairly treated in any respect if they use this Policy to resolve an issue.

A clear and accurate written record will be kept of the details of any formal conflict and grievance resolution requests and the procedures, actions and outcomes of the resolution process, including dates and signatures of those involved.

Members of the Management Committee or other members, the House Coordinator, staff, tutors and volunteers are obliged to take immediate action in addressing a conflict or grievance if the physical or mental health and safety of any of the parties is perceived to be at risk.

If threats to persons are made, or members of the Management Committee or other members, the House Coordinator, staff, tutors or volunteers perceives a possible danger to a party or to other employees, including the possibility of one party being a danger to themselves, external professional assistance must be sought immediately.

PROCEDURES

Appoint a Grievance Officer

Before any conflict arises, and as a first step, appoint and train a Grievance Officer, chosen from the membership of the House, who is capable of responsibly undertaking the role.
[Name of House]

**Conflict and Grievance Resolution Policy**

Designate and train an Alternative Grievance Officer to deal with situations where it is not practical or appropriate for the Grievance Officer to be involved.

**Informal conflict and grievance resolution**

**Step 1.** Open and honest communication is essential for resolution of conflicts and grievances within the House. Encourage the person/s with a concern to raise concerns with those involved at the first sign of an issue developing. In other words, sit down and talk about the issue sooner rather than later.

**Step 2.** At this meeting, aim to:
- Be accepting that the other party’s view of the situation may be different. At this stage, simply seek agreement that there is a problem and what the nature of the problem is, not agreement with the other party’s view
- Listen actively to each other’s point of view, allowing time for each person to have their say. It is very important to stay calm during this process and concentrate on issues.
- Make a commitment to working it out. Agree on a timeframe and a course of action.

**Step 3.** If it helps, working together, write down the issues to assist with separating behaviours and issues from the emotions involved. Ask questions like, “What are the facts or behaviours involved? How do they make me feel? What would I like the outcome to be?”

**Step 4.** Working with good will:
- Decide your agreed actions, including who will be involved and in what way, the timeframe, how you will know that the matter is settled, and any other things that the parties agree are necessary. There may be a benefit in putting all this in writing and signing off on it.
- Organise to meet again informally at some point to check with each other that things are now resolved.

**Step 5.** If the people who are in conflict feel unable to deal with the issues by themselves, but want to pursue an informal process, invite an independent person that they both trust to sit in on the discussion to help them deal with the issues.

In summary the informal conflict and grievance resolution process is as follows:
- Initiate a discussion
- Identify the “real” conflict
- Listen to all points of view
- Recognise and respect feelings
- Explore ways to resolve the conflict
Conflict and Grievance Resolution Policy

- Mutually agree on what is to be done
- Check that everyone is satisfied with the resolution

Formal conflict and grievance resolution

All people involved in this formal process will retain the right to contact an external agency for advice, support or assistance at any stage of the process, including any dissatisfaction with resolution of the complaint.

**Step 1.** If informal resolution procedures do not reach an outcome to the satisfaction of all parties involved, direct the person with concerns (the notifier) to first discuss the situation with the House Grievance Officer appropriate for the particular circumstances. Give the notifier a copy of the Conflict and Grievance Resolution Policy.

**Step 2.** If the person with concerns wishes to proceed, the Grievance Officer will request they complete, sign and date the Conflict and Grievance Notification Form, with supporting documentation if appropriate, detailing their view of the situation, and submit it to the Grievance Officer. Give a person independent support to put things in writing if they require it.

**Step 3.** The Grievance Officer will offer assistance to the person with concerns, talk about the problem or grievance and how they would like to see the complaint resolved, and explain the formal conflict and grievance resolution procedures that are available. In consultation with the notifier, the Notification Form may be amended if the notifier requires and/or agrees to the revision, for example to make sure the issues are clear or that abusive language or put-downs are not included.

**Step 4.** People will reasonably expect to know if their behaviour or their decision is a problem for another person or group. Therefore, once finalised and signed, provide a copy of the Notification Form to the other parties identified on the form as being involved in the conflict or grievance. Provide all parties with a copy of the Conflict and Grievance Resolution Policy at the same time as they are provided with the Notification Form.

**Step 5.** The Grievance Officer will check that all documents which define how the House should operate, such as the House policies and procedures, Codes of Conduct, the Constitution or Model Rules, the Strategic Framework and the Funding Agreement, are being properly followed and applied. In some cases, these will provide the basis for resolution of the conflict. During this time, the Grievance Officer may seek the advice of the Department or Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania.

**Step 6.** If Step 5 does not lead to a resolution or requires further action, the Grievance Officer will investigate the circumstances and details of the notification and consult with all relevant parties. Only open meetings held to investigate or resolve a complaint to the parties and the
Grievance Officer, though the parties may have an advocate or supporter present. Meetings may be with the parties individually, together or both. To encourage openness, do not permit legal representation. For the same reason, do not take minutes or written records of what is said during meetings, but document agreed outcomes of the meetings or any resulting agreement and have all parties sign and date them.

**Step 7.** If a clear resolution, agreed to by all parties, does not arise in Step 6, the Grievance Officer will prepare a draft written report on the investigation within ten working days of receiving the Notification Form.

**Step 8.** The Grievance Officer will forward a copy of the confidential draft report to all the parties involved, requesting a written response to any factual errors and comment on any recommendations contained with the report within ten working days.

**Step 9.** Once the Grievance Officer has checked and confirmed any changes to the draft report, the Grievance Officer will meet with all the parties together to discuss and finalise a resolution to the conflict or grievance. In some circumstances, this may be the final step and the end of the matter. If so, the Grievance Officer will implement Step 12 of these Procedures.

**Step 10.** If deemed necessary by the Grievance Officer, or if requested by any party to the conflict or grievance, an independent mediator may be appointed to assist in resolution of the matter and help the parties restore a positive working relationship in the future. The mediator should be trained or otherwise have the necessary skills to support the parties reach a mutually agreed resolution.

**Step 11.** If a mediated approach fails to resolve the matter, an arbitrated approach can be undertaken. The arbitrator will investigate the matter and make a decision or determination of what should be done and what the consequences for the parties should be. The arbitrator may be an external person brought in by the House or, depending on circumstances, the Management Committee, or the Co-ordinator or Manager. If the resolution directed by the independent arbitrator necessitates it, arrange or apply whatever sanctions are required under the Constitution, Policies and Procedures, or Funding Agreement. In writing, describe clearly the expectations about future behaviour and outline the consequences of unwanted or unacceptable behaviour.

**Step 12.** Once the parties have agreed to recommendations of the Grievance Officer for resolution, or the mediated or arbitrated resolution, fully document the details of the resolution of the conflict or grievance in writing and have all parties sign and date it. Then hold the complete file, including the conflict and grievance notification form with any supporting documentation, documentation of relevant factual information, analysis of the information, the conclusion, and the signed and dated resolution in confidential storage for a minimum of two years.
[Name of House]

Conflict and Grievance Resolution Policy

Step 13. When a conflict or grievance cannot be resolved by this House policy and procedures, have the parties and/or the House seek resolution through the relevant industrial or legal processes available.

ADOPTION AND REVISION HISTORY

Include policy versions, approvals, review dates etc. here.

This policy was adopted by the Management Committee of [Name of House] on

__________________________

Signature

Print name

Position

__________________________

Signature

Print name

Position
Conflict or Grievance Notification Form

[Name of House]

REQUIREMENTS

You must complete a copy of this Notification Form and provide it to the House Grievance Officer if you are seeking a formal procedure for resolution of a conflict or grievance. Advice or help to complete the Form and put your concerns in writing is available. Discuss this with the House Grievance Officer.

The House Grievance Officer will review the Form and clarify any details with you, including revising the Form if you require and/or agree to the revision. Once finalised and signed, a copy of the Notification Form will be provided to the other parties identified below as being involved in the conflict or grievance. All parties must be provided with a copy of the Conflict and Grievance Resolution Policy at the same time as they are provided with the Notification Form.

Other than the parties involved and the Grievance Officer, the Notification Form must be kept in confidence.

DETAILS

Notifier’s Name:

Address:

Phone Number: | Mobile Number:

Email:

Please provide a very brief description of the conflict or grievance, including dates where these apply. This information will be used to help identify the appropriate procedures for dealing with the complaint.
# Conflict or Grievance Notification Form

**[Name of House]**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of other person(s) or group involved in the conflict (the respondent):</th>
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<tr>
<th>Contact details of the respondent(s) [if known]</th>
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<tr>
<th>What steps have you already taken to try to resolve this conflict or grievance with the other person(s)?</th>
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<tr>
<th>Is your complaint, or any matter related to your complaint, already being dealt with or has it been dealt with elsewhere? If so, please describe briefly.</th>
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<tr>
<th>Do you have any special needs that require consideration? For example, wheel chair access, interpreter, child care (indicate times), visual/hearing disability, help to put things in writing etc.</th>
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<tr>
<th>Signed:</th>
<th>Dated:</th>
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<th>Received by:</th>
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| Signed: | Dated: |
Useful Contacts

Mediation and Conflict Resolution Support

Relationships Australia (Tasmania)

**Hobart**
20 Clare Street
New Town Tas 7008
Ph: 1300 364 277
Fax: 6279 5073
Email: hobart@reltas.com.au
Website: www.tas.relationships.org.au

**Launceston**
6 Paterson St
Launceston Tas 7250
Ph: 1300 364 277
Fax: 6332 8015
Email: launceston@reltas.com.au

**Devonport**
68 North Fenton Street
Devonport TAS 7310
Ph: 1300 364 277
Fax: 6421 3605
Email: devonport@reltas.com.au

Positive Solutions – Mediation, Counselling

**Freecall** 1800 064 039

**Hobart Office**
162 Macquarie Street Hobart 7000

**Launceston Office**
44 Canning Street Launceston 7250

**Devonport**
Coastal Psychology
68 Oldaker Street Devonport 7310

**Burnie**
HQ Consulting Rooms
152 Wilson Street Burnie 7320
Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying

Anti-Discrimination Commission

Statewide local call 1300 305 062

Office address
Level 1, 54 Victoria St
Hobart Tas 7000

Postal address
GPO Box 197
Hobart Tas 7001
Phone: 6233 4841
Fax: 6233 5333
Email: antidiscrimination@justice.tas.gov.au

Industrial Advice

Jobs Australia

Postal Address
PO Box 299
Carlton South
Victoria 3053
Phone: 03 9349 3699
1800 331 915 (Jobs Australia Members)
Fax: 03 9349 3655
Email: ja@ja.com.au

James O’Neill and Associates

South - Level 5, 2-4 Kirksway Place, Battery Point, TAS 7004.
Phone: 62236361
Fax: 6223 8165

North - Level 2, 39 Paterson Street, Launceston, TAS, 7250
Phone: 6334 1173

Email: info@joneill.com.au
Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (TTCI)

**Free call statewide**  1300 559 122

**Southern Office**
Industry House, 309 Liverpool Street, Hobart 7000
GPO Box 793 Hobart TAS 7001
Phone:  03 6236 3600
Fax:  03 6231 1278
Email:  admin@tcci.com.au

**Northern Office**
Level 1, 111 St John Street, Launceston TAS 7250
PO Box 1490 Launceston TAS 7250
Phone:  03 6331 1144
Fax:  03 6334 6400
Email:  laun@tcci.com.au

**Fair Work Commission**

1st Floor, Commonwealth Law Courts,
39–41 Davey Street,
Hobart, 7000
GPO Box 1232M, Hobart, 7001
Phone:  6214 0200
Fax:  6214 0202
Out of hours emergency:  0418 124 021
Email:  hobart@fwc.gov.au

**Fair Work Ombudsman**

**Southern Office**
Level 3,
142-146 Elizabeth Street,
Hobart, 7000
GPO Box 9887, Hobart, 7001
Phone:  13 13 94
Fax:  1800 618 366
Web:  http://www.fairwork.gov.au

**Northern Office**
Ground Floor Transit Centre,
Cornwall Square,
Launceston, 7000
GPO Box 9887, Hobart, 7001
Phone:  13 13 94
Fax:  1800 618 366
Web:  http://www.fairwork.gov.au
WorkSafe Tasmania

Hobart – 30 Gordon’s Hill Road, Rosny Park
Launceston – 3rd Floor, Henty House, 1 Civic Square
Burnie – 3rd Floor, Reece House, 46 Mount Street
PO Box 56
Rosny Park TAS 7018
Phone: 1300 366 322
Fax: 03 6233 8338
Email: wstinfo@justice.tas.gov.au

Australian Services Union (ASU)

Hobart Office
265 Macquarie Street
Hobart TAS 7000
Phone: 6224 3411
Fax: 03 9342 3498
Email: info@asuvictas.com.au

Launceston Office
237 Wellington Street
Launceston TAS 7250
Phone: 1300 855 570
Fax: 03 9342 3498
Email: info@asuvictas.com.au

Health and Community Services Union (HACSU)

Postal Address
PO Box 635
North Hobart
TAS 7002
Phone: 1300 880 032
Email: assist@hacsutas.net.au

Hobart Office
11 Clare Street, New Town TAS 7008
Fax: 6231 4142

Launceston Office
91 Paterson Street, Launceston TAS 7250
Fax: 6331 4309

Devonport Office
80 Oldaker Street, Devonport TAS 7310
Fax: 6424 6808