



## **DUNEDIN REPERTORY SOCIETY INC - COMPLAINTS POLICY**

Date approved: 23 April 2024

Date of next review: April 2027

Dunedin Repertory Society (the Society) Inc is committed to providing a safe and enjoyable experience to its participants, volunteers, audiences, hirers, and other stakeholders or users of the Playhouse Theatre.

The Society recognises that all participants, volunteers, audiences, hirers and other users have the right to raise concerns or complaints about the Society or the Playhouse Theatre. This policy sets out how concerns or complaints can be made, and how the Society will deal with these when they arise.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to:

- ensure everyone knows how to make a complaint and how a complaint will be handled;
- ensure that complaints are dealt with consistently, fairly and sensitively within clear time frames;
- provide individuals with a fair and effective way to complain about our work or activities;
- ensure that complaints are monitored to improve our work.

### **Commitment**

The Society will ensure that we:

- make available clear information on how to voice concerns or complaints
- take seriously any concern or complaint and will look into it promptly, for resolution as quickly as possible;
- treat complaints as confidential, wherever possible, and respect any complainant's request for privacy;
- record, store and manage all complaints accurately and securely, protecting data and privacy;
- deal with concerns and complaints in a consistent, fair and sensitive way;
- investigate complaints fully, objectively and within the stated time frame
- Notify the complainant of the outcome of the investigation, including any actions that will be implemented as a result, and advise any available next steps
- Report to the Committee, on an annual basis, the number of complaints received, the outcomes and any actions taken.

## Scope

This concerns and complaints policy is open to everyone who visits or engages with the activities of the Dunedin Repertory Society Inc or the Playhouse Theatre. This may include (but is not limited to):

- cast and/or crew of productions (and their whanau / family)
- audiences (and their whanau / family)
- hirers of the Playhouse Theatre
- service providers or other partner organisations
- members of the Society

Concerns or complaints about productions staged by hiring organisations will be referred to the hiring organisation (unless the concern or complaint relates to the Playhouse Theatre as a venue).

## Raising concerns

It is important to establish the difference between a concern and a complaint. Taking informal concerns seriously at the earliest stage will reduce the likelihood of their developing into formal complaints.

If you have any concerns about our services or activities please contact either:

- the Director of the particular Production; or
- the Convenor of that area of the Committee; or
- the President of the Society.

That person will work to quickly understand your concerns and try to put things right.

If you are not happy with the response to your concern, and/or if you want to make a formal complaint, please follow the procedure below.

## Formal complaints

This policy defines a **complaint** as an expression of dissatisfaction with the Society, its actions, or with the Playhouse Theatre.

An individual or organisation may make a complaint if they feel the Society has:

- Failed to provide a service or an acceptable standard of service, or made a mistake in the way the service was provided.
- Failed to act in a proper way
- Provided an unfair service.

## Complaints Procedure

### *Making a complaint*

An individual or organisation wishing to make a complaint should contact the Society's President by email: [playhousedunedin@gmail.com](mailto:playhousedunedin@gmail.com). They can either send the complaint directly to this address, or use this address to seek the President's phone number or their personal contact details.

A complaint can be written (either in hard copy or via email), or if the complainant prefers they can tell someone at the Society, or someone else, who will write it down for them. The complainant will need to sign the complaint.

The complaint should include the complainant's name and contact details, unless they wish to remain anonymous (see below). The complaint should also include the nature and date of the complaint, and how the complainant wishes to see it resolved.

#### *Acknowledgement of complaints*

Each complaint will be acknowledged by the President within 5 working days of receipt of a signed complaint.

#### *Consideration of complaints*

All complaints will be dealt with by the President, unless the complaint relates to the President, in which case it will be dealt with by the Society's two Vice Presidents.

The President may choose to involve one or two senior committee members to assist them if required.

If the President needs to meet with the complainant, they will make best endeavours to do so within ten working days of receiving the written complaint.

Complaints will be fully investigated, and a written response provided to the complainant by the President, within fifteen working days. Occasionally investigations will take longer, particularly if the complaint is complex. Should this be the case, a holding letter will be sent after ten working days, and a final date given for a conclusion to be reached.

#### *Outcome*

The complainant will receive written confirmation of the outcome of any investigation, including any recommendations or remedies made as a result.

Complaints and their outcome will be advised (anonymously) to the Committee at its next meeting, to ensure outcomes are communicated and the Committee has the opportunity to learn from the complaint.

#### *Next steps*

If a complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint, they can take their complaint to the Committee by advising the Secretary they wish to do so (contact [playhousedunedin@gmail.com](mailto:playhousedunedin@gmail.com)).

The Committee will consider the complaint, including actions taken by the President in considering the original complaint, at their next meeting (or within fifteen working days, whichever is sooner). The Committee will determine next steps, including whether further investigation or action is necessary. The Secretary will inform the complainant of

the Committee's decision, within one month of receiving notice the complainant wished to take their complaint to the Committee.

### **Anonymous Complaints**

Complaints received anonymously will be recorded and considered, but specific action may be limited if further information is required to ensure a full and fair investigation.

### **Data Protection**

To process a complaint the Society will hold personal data about the complainant, which the individual provides, and which other people give in response to the complaint. We will hold this data securely and only use it to address the complaint. The identity of the person making the complaint will only be known to those who need to consider the complaint and will not be disclosed to other people or made public. However, it may not be possible to preserve confidentiality in some circumstances, for example, where relevant legislation applies, or allegations are made which involve the conduct of third parties.

The Society will destroy complaints files in a secure manner five years after a complaint has been closed.

### **Monitoring**

In order to help the Society learn and grow, the Committee will review the number of complaints and their outcomes on an annual basis. Complaints will be anonymised in this report.

### **Review**

This policy will be reviewed by the Committee every three years.