



Grievance Policy



The Congregation of the Presentation
Sisters (W.A.) Incorporated



Approved July 2021

Last Updated July 2023

Next Review June 2024

1. RATIONALE

In Baptism we are given the right and the responsibility to participate in the Church's mission of establishing God's reign of peace and justice that Jesus embodied in his words and deeds. (Constitution 1) Formed in the charism of Nano Nagle, we engage in those ministries which continue Jesus' mission to establish right relationships with God and all creation. (Constit. 5)

The Congregation of the Presentation Sisters (W.A.) Incorporated values all people and provides and maintains a safe, inclusive and productive work environment for PBVMWA Sisters, employees and volunteers in which all individuals feel safe, supported and are able to work effectively, without fear of discrimination, harassment, bullying, victimisation and/or reprisal.

We aim to empower PBVMWA personnel to communicate their concerns without fear of retribution or discrimination and to provide a transparent process for this to occur. All concerns and complaints will be dealt with in a way that observes the principles of honesty, transparency and fairness.

2. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that The Congregation of the Presentation Sisters (W.A.) Incorporated:

- offers a robust framework for the internal management and resolution of any discrimination, bullying and harassment concerns and complaints brought against Sisters, employees and volunteers by another PBVMWA member.
- provides appropriate mechanisms for Sisters, employees and volunteers to raise a grievance or complaint about employment related matters.

This Grievance Policy has been approved by the Congregation Leader and the Leadership Team and applies to all PBVMWA personnel who are members of, or engaged by, The Congregation of the Presentation Sisters (W.A.) Incorporated. Although it provides a process for PBVMWA personnel to raise a concern or complaint, it is not intended to be a set of rigid procedures that must be followed whenever a complaint is raised, as the process for dealing with a particular concern will vary depending on the nature, circumstances and seriousness of the complaint.

3. COMMITMENT

The Congregation of the Presentation Sisters (W.A.) Incorporated is committed to providing and maintaining a safe, inclusive and productive work environment for all PBVMWA Sisters, employees and volunteers. PBVMWA will strive to uphold its core values of non-violence, safety, integrity and mutual respect in order to achieve its goal of zero harm to anyone.

4. OBLIGATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

PBVMWA will take all reasonable and practical steps to protect members and employees from discrimination, harassment, bullying, victimisation and/or reprisal while working on behalf of PBVMWA. The Congregation of the Presentation Sisters (W.A.) Incorporated is committed to:

- doing everything possible to ensure that PBVMWA Sisters, employees and volunteers are treated fairly with dignity and respect
- dealing with complaints and grievances fairly, consistently, transparently, confidentially, promptly and with sensitivity to all parties
- complying with its legal responsibilities in accordance with all relevant legislation
- acknowledging that individuals have a legislative workplace right to raise a complaint or grievance in accordance with this Policy and will protect these rights
- encouraging all parties involved in a complaint or grievance resolution process to participate in good faith. The principles of natural justice and procedural fairness will be observed throughout this process
- not normally investigating anonymous complaints unless the issue(s) raised within the complaint are of a serious nature and sufficient information is provided
- holding and using all personal information collected under this Policy in accordance with The Congregation of the Presentation Sisters (W.A.) Incorporated's Privacy Policy.

5. KEY PRINCIPLES

Complaints of discrimination, bullying and harassment will be treated seriously by The Congregation of the Presentation Sisters (W.A.) Incorporated and will be managed promptly in a thorough and confidential manner ensuring that all individuals, including witnesses, are not victimised. PBVMWA's procedures and processes for resolving discrimination, bullying and harassment concerns and complaints are underpinned by the following key principles:

- Individuals making discrimination, bullying or harassment complaints will be supported by The Congregation of the Presentation Sisters (W.A.) Incorporated to make resolution decisions and to take action to resolve their concerns
- Complaints will be dealt with as expeditiously as possible with resolution as close as possible to the source of the complaint/concern within the PBVMWA workplace
- Where practicable, complaints managed under this Policy will normally be dealt with and finalised within 21 days
- At any time, an individual may withdraw the complaint, seek assistance from a nominated PBVMWA representative or support person, or lodge a complaint with an external agency, as appropriate
- Complaints will be rejected if a preliminary investigation of the facts indicates that they are found to be frivolous, vexatious, misconceived or lacking in substance
- The Congregation of the Presentation Sisters (W.A.) Incorporated may initiate a disciplinary procedure/investigation in response to allegations of conduct or behaviour that may be considered serious misconduct
- The Congregation of the Presentation Sisters (W.A.) Incorporated reserves the right to take disciplinary action against PBVMWA personnel who knowingly lodge a false complaint

against another Sister, employee or volunteer of The Congregation of the Presentation Sisters (W.A.) Incorporated

- Where required by legislation, and as necessary, The Congregation of the Presentation Sisters (W.A.) Incorporated will notify relevant external agencies and reporting bodies of serious matters relevant to such agencies and bodies
- The Congregation of the Presentation Sisters (W.A.) Incorporated will act with integrity and without bias when handling workplace-related complaints
- The Congregation of the Presentation Sisters (W.A.) Incorporated will act with procedural fairness to facilitate a just and impartial process and outcome when investigating complaints
- Privacy and confidentiality will be maintained, subject to relevant statutory requirements
- Use the data, insights and learnings from complaints to improve professional behaviour and practice within The Congregation of the Presentation Sisters (W.A.) Incorporated.

6. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES AND PROCESSES

A PBVMWA Sister, employee or volunteer wishing to report a workplace concern or complaint may do so by contacting the Congregation Leader. If the workplace concern or complaint involves the Congregation Leader, then the Deputy Congregation Leader should be contacted. The Congregation Leader will normally handle the workplace complaint or concern.

Initial contact may be made in person, by phone to the Administration office of The Congregation of the Presentation Sisters (W.A.) Incorporated on (08) 9384 5433, by email via other@preswa.com.au or in writing to PO BOX 12, Mosman Park W.A. 6912.

The Congregation Leader will be the point of contact for both the PBVMWA person making the complaint and the person who is the subject of the complaint or concern. She will:

- carefully listen to the complainant's concerns and his or her desired outcomes
- consider and request (if necessary) further information from the complainant and/or from third parties in order to make a preliminary assessment including risk
- seek advice from relevant external authorities when appropriate
- refer the complainant and the other person involved to a copy of this document
- encourage the complainant to approach the other person – should he or she feel safe and capable of doing so – to resolve the matter between themselves using the conflict-resolution practices of non-violence in mind, heart and action
- note the issues and questions that should be covered in a meeting with both parties and be responsive to what unfolds during these discussions – if the PBVMWA personnel can not first resolve the matter between themselves
- review, respond to and resolve the workplace complaint or concern - if the PBVMWA personnel can not resolve the matter between themselves
- keep those involved appropriately and regularly informed about the progress of the matter

- keep appropriate, confidential records of the matter
- monitor the workplace situation during, and for the time soon after, the resolution process, or longer as is deemed necessary.

See Section 7 of The Complaint Handling Policy of The Congregation of the Presentation Sisters (W.A.) Incorporated for further suggestions as to how to respond to complaints.

7. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The Congregation of the Presentation Sisters (W.A.) Incorporated will regularly review complaints to identify particular patterns or trends and opportunities for continuous improvement, having regard to:

- any underlying factors that may have contributed to the issue/s giving rise to the complaint
- what could have been done to prevent or reduce the issue/s giving rise to the complaint
- what safeguards, policies or procedures could be put in place to prevent or reduce the risk of a recurrence of the behaviour in the future by the same person or by other members, employees or volunteers of The Congregation of the Presentation Sisters (W.A.) Incorporated.

The Congregation Leader is responsible for ensuring workplace complaints are regularly reviewed by the Leadership Team of The Congregation of the Presentation Sisters (W.A.) Incorporated.

The Congregation Leader will take appropriate action in response to these reviews.

8. REVIEW OF GRIEVANCE POLICY

The Grievance Policy will be updated as required and reviewed annually. The Congregation of the Presentation Sisters (W.A.) Incorporated will consult stakeholders as part of reviewing the Grievance Policy.

9. REVIEW DATES OF GRIEVANCE POLICY

Grievance Policy approved	Sr Lucy van Kessel pbvm, Congregation Leader	July 2021
Grievance Policy reviewed	Sr Lucy van Kessel pbvm, Congregation Leader	June 2022
Grievance Policy reviewed	Sr Anna fewer pbvm, Congregation Leader	June 2023
Grievance Policy reviewed	Sr Anna fewer pbvm, Congregation Leader	June 2024
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