

PI001 – OAU Complaints Policy

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Policy type	Operational
Owner	Executive Lead People & Integrity (Programs & Transformation)
Approved by	Executive Lead People & Integrity (Programs & Transformation)

1. Policy Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to establish the principles and governance approach to how Oxfam Australia (OAU) receives, investigates and responds to complaints, and to enable stakeholders, including the general public, to make complaints to OAU in a safe and confidential manner. This policy is a public document that can be readily accessed and shared with any interested person.

2. Scope and Eligibility

This Policy applies to complaints and concerns about aspects of OAU’s business, activities and the actions of its personnel, including staff, Directors, volunteers, subcontractors and any third parties performing work on OAU’s behalf. Complementary policies of OAU specifically address Safeguarding, Whistleblower complaints and Community Feedback Mechanisms for international programs.

3. Policy Statement

OAU is committed to providing accessible and effective complaint processes to foster accountability and continuous improvement. The principles below outline ways to make a complaint and how Oxfam Australia handles complaints when received.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

The following roles and responsibilities apply:

Oxfam Australia Trustees and Board Members: Hold overall accountability for this Policy and its implementation.

Oxfam Australia Chief Executive: Responsible for the application of this Policy within the OAU affiliate.

Oxfam Australia People & Integrity Executive Lead: Responsible for regularly reviewing this Policy, and for the maintenance and oversight of facilitative processes and procedures described in this Policy.

Oxfam Australia Managers who are appointed as primary response contacts for complaint areas such as safeguarding misconduct, financial misconduct, HR misconduct, misconduct related to privacy/data breaches and other misconduct: Responsible for managing and responding to serious complaints triaged to their areas in accordance with the [OAU Complaints Handling Flowchart](#).

Oxfam Australia Line Managers and/or Country Directors: Responsible for receiving, managing responding to complaints if the nature of the complaint allows for resolution, or escalating serious complaints to primary response contacts for management and response in accordance with the [OAU Complaints Handling Flowchart](#).

Oxfam Australia Staff & Volunteers: Understand and adhere to this Policy, and share this Policy with regional and country staff in countries where Oxfam Australia works.

5. How to make a complaint

Phone	1800 088 110
Email	enquire@oxfam.org.au
Mail	Oxfam Australia Locked Bag 20004 Melbourne, Victoria 3001
Online portal	https://oxfam.whispli.com/oxfamaustralia (can be anonymous)

What is Oxfam Australia's attitude to complaints?

OAU values feedback and considers all feedback, including complaints, to be an integral part of the organisation's continuous improvement and governance processes. We recognise that complaints and feedback are an important component of our commitment to an inclusive, professional, and productive workplace, and an impactful organisation. Oxfam Australia is committed to providing a safe, supportive and efficient approach to complaints management and responses.

How does Oxfam Australia handle complaints?

OAU acknowledges all complaints and aims to provide clear, timely information to complainants about the matters they have raised. Complainants should receive an acknowledgement or response within five (5) working days.

All complaints are assessed upon receipt and allocated to the appropriate person to manage the matter. During this triage process, OAU considers the nature of the complaint, the evidence provided, and what further fact-finding or actions may be needed to assess the issues raised. Complaints concerning misconduct — such as fraud, sexual harassment, or other unlawful conduct — are immediately escalated to the relevant subject matter expert or manager for appropriate handling.

Where possible, OAU aims to resolve complaints at the first point of contact, particularly those relating to administrative issues (such as the timing or quantity or content of Oxfam communications). More complex complaints, or those involving potential misconduct, may require additional time to investigate and resolve. All complaints are recorded, and information about complaints is reported to the OAU Board on a quarterly basis.

The owner of this Policy is responsible for ensuring complaints are handled in accordance with this Policy and associated procedures. Serious complaints requiring the attention of senior leadership will be escalated to the Executive Leadership Team. Ultimate accountability for the handling of complaints rests with OAU's Board.

OAU is committed to ensuring that all complaints are handled and resolved in a way that is fair, consistent, and timely.

How does Oxfam Australia provide safe ways to make complaints?

OAU is committed to protecting people who make complaints in good faith from retaliation or unfair treatment.

OAU provides people with choices about how to make complaints, including making anonymous complaints. Complaints may be made verbally (in person or by phone) or in writing (online, by email or by post). OAU also offers the [WHISPLI portal](#), which allows anyone to lodge an anonymous complaint and communicate securely with the complaint handler without disclosing their identity or personal contact information. Complainants can upload documents, save drafts, and submit their report when

ready. After submission, they can continue communicating through the portal, whether they choose to identify themselves or remain anonymous.

Where the complaint is made with respect to safeguarding misconduct, OAU is committed to providing appropriate assistance and referrals to survivors (e.g. assistance to complainants might include medical, social, legal and financial assistance, or referrals to such services) in line with OAU's Safeguarding & PSEAH Policies as well as OAU's Reporting and Case Management Procedures.

All complaints are documented, and related information is stored securely to protect confidentiality and privacy. Access to complaint information is restricted to staff who have a legitimate need to know. Complaints are de-identified when reported to OAU's governance bodies, including the Board.

When working with international partners, OAU encourages them to adapt complaint processes to ensure they are accessible and appropriate for their local context.

How does Oxfam Australia's complaint handling foster accountability and continuous improvement?

OAU documents complaints and generates reports about complaints to identify opportunities for improved processes, decision making or systemic issues.

Managers and subject matter experts are accountable for complaint handling and are required to ensure that conflicts of interest are managed appropriately. Reports about complaints are provided to the OAU Board for consideration.

What referral information does Oxfam Australia provide about complaints that do not fall within the scope of this policy?

OAU provides information about other complaint pathways including reporting matters about other charities or fund-raising organisations to the Australian Charities and Not-For-Profits Commission and the Fundraising Institute of Australia.

Where can people go if they are not satisfied with Oxfam Australia's handling a complaint?

OAU is a member of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) and is bound by the ACFID Code of Conduct. A complaint can be made against any ACFID member when it is believed that they have breached the Code. The independent Code of Conduct Committee (CCC) is responsible for receiving, managing and investigating complaints against ACFID members. Generally, complaints must

first be raised with the ACFID member organisation prior to going to the CCC. ACFID complaints information: <https://acfid.asn.au/code-of-conduct/complaints/>

OAU is a member of the Fundraising Institute of Australia. All members must comply with the FIA Code. Administration of the Code is overseen by an independent Code Authority whose responsibilities include ongoing monitoring, complaints adjudication, and compliance training. Complaints about members may be made the Code Authority in writing. More information is available here: <https://www.fia.org.au/s/about-fia-code/code-authority>

6. Related Documents

- OAU Complaints Flowchart
- Oxfam Australia Whistleblowing Policy
- Oxfam Australia Investigation Procedure
- Supporter and Public Feedback and Complaints Procedure
- ACFID Code of Conduct
- Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy – Australia Context
- Child Safeguarding Policy – Australia Context
- Digital Safeguarding Policy
- Safeguarding Youth Policy
- Oxfam Employee Code of Conduct
- Oxfam Non-Staff Code of Conduct
- Oxfam Policy on Community Feedback Mechanism

7. Information about this Document

Version	Date effective	Summary of amendment
1	August 2024	Document created
2	December 2025	Policy owner changed from Executive Lead Public Engagement (Fundraising, Partnerships and Community) to Executive Lead People & Integrity (Programs & Transformation). Policy number changed from FPC002 to PI001. Formatting updated to match Policy template. Roles and Responsibilities section added. Other sections updated to meet requirements / good practice in ACFID CoC.

