



The Buddhist Society of Western Australia (Inc.)

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## Grievance Policy

**Version: 2.1**

Date approved: 31 July 2022

Approved by: BSWA Committee

Last Review: 19 April 2023

Next Review: 31 July 2024

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## Version Control

| Version # | Author                      | Approved Date (By)                         | Summary of Change   |
|-----------|-----------------------------|--|---|
| 2.1       | Lay Har<br>Goh (Ops<br>Mgr) | 19 Apr 2023<br>Administratively<br>updated | Corrected policy version to 2.1 and previous version<br>being 2.0. Added version control table. |
| 2.0       | Lay Har<br>Goh (Ops<br>Mgr) | 31 Jul 2022<br>BSWA Committee              | Deleted bullet item on parties appealing against a<br>decision and other minor edits            |
| 1.0       | Sol Hanna<br>(VP)           | 12 Nov 2017<br>BSWA Committee              |   |

Internal grievances and disputes may be resolved through the following informal and formal procedures. Informal procedures are the most common avenue for managing individual grievances and disputes between people. However, if informal discussions fail, then a formal procedure is followed that usually involves a more thorough investigation by a committee. Both informal and formal procedures must be fair and non-discriminatory, and deal with grievances promptly.

#### Steps involved in an informal procedure

- The person making the complaint approaches the chairperson or a person designated to deal with grievances and disputes such as a complaints officer to discuss the matter.
- The person receiving the complaint needs to obtain as much information as possible, evaluate the grievance/dispute and explore options for resolution.
- The person making the complaint should be advised of his or her right to submit a formal grievance if he or she is not satisfied with the decision and outcome of the informal process.

#### Steps involved in a formal procedure

- If informal discussions fail to resolve a grievance or dispute, a formal complaint is made in writing to the chairperson, complaints officer or other appropriate person designated to deal with formal grievances.
- The complainant must set out all the details of the grievance or dispute.
- The complaints officer, or person designated to deal with the complaint, attempts to resolve the matter with the complainant.
- If the complaint involves another person or persons, it is necessary to discuss the matter with the other person or persons concerned to get their side of the story.
- If there is a dispute between two or more people, mediation may be recommended at this stage, where an impartial third party attempts to assist the parties to resolve their dispute. The mediator may be a member of the association or an external person. The mediator must be acceptable to the parties and should not have any stake in the outcome. The mediator facilitates the discussion between the parties and guides them towards a solution. Each party is given a fair opportunity to state their case. The mediator does not decide the dispute or impose a solution on the parties. The role of the mediator is to assist the parties find their solution.
- If mediation fails or it is not considered appropriate in the circumstances, the matter is referred to an impartial grievance committee.
- The grievance committee invites the parties to attend a hearing and gathers all the necessary information needed to make a decision.
- At the hearing the parties have an opportunity to outline the basis of the grievance or dispute, to present documentation and call persons. Where the grievance or dispute involves complex issues the parties may be entitled to legal representation.
- The committee sums up the issues and after considering all the information presented to them, the committee makes a decision. The committee informs the parties of their decision or recommendations.
- The committee should keep detailed and accurate notes of the hearing and the outcome.

A notice of a grievance or dispute may be withdrawn at any time.

Note: This policy is adopted from The Dispute Resolution Policy from the 2017 Associations Guide (pages 86 -97).