

Action Plan for Addressing Complaints

Objective: To effectively manage and resolve complaints that have been submitted through the complaint form while ensuring transparency, support for involved parties, and adherence to established procedures.

Complainant/Reporter: Person filing the complaint

Respondent/Other Party: Person or persons about whom the complaint is filed

Documentation: All documents related to the complaint are confidential to the Board, SOBI office, and complainant. Documents related to the complaint in the respondent's file are only accessible to the respondent if the complainant gives permission.

Reporting Illegal Activities: If the situation involves illegal activity, the matter needs to be investigated through legal authorities. SOBI will wait for the legal authorities to complete their investigation before making any internal decisions or taking further action. Further information can be found [here](#).

Step 1: Initial Reporting

- **Action:** Ensure all members are aware of the process for reporting complaints
 - **Responsibility:** Office Staff
 - **Timeline:** Immediate
 - **Resources:** Create informative materials (emails, website) outlining the reporting process.
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Step 2: Continue with Complaint Process or File a Grievance

- **Action:** Determine if the reporter wants to file a formal grievance.
 - **Responsibility:** Office Staff
 - **Timeline:** Within 48 hours of receiving a report
 - **Notes:** If a grievance is filed, follow grievance policy. Complaint process ends. If no formal grievance is filed, continue with complaint steps.
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Step 3: Initial Contact with Reporter

- **Action:** A Board member contacts the reporter to discuss the complaint.
 - **Questions to Address:**
 - What additional information can they provide?

- Did the other party's actions impact others besides the reporter?
 - What did they think when they realized what had happened?
 - What impact has this incident had on them and others?
 - What has been the hardest thing for them?
 - What do they think needs to happen to make things right?
 - Do they need assistance from SOBI?
 - Does the reporter feel able to speak to the other party directly?
 - This is not required if they feel unable to do so.
 - Would they like the Board to reach out to the other party, keeping in mind this opens the possibility for the other party to self-correct and for both parties to heal?
 - If so, proceed with remaining steps.
 - If no contact with the other party is desired, skip to Step 6.
 - **Responsibility:** Board Member (usually the President)
 - **Timeline:** Within 1 week of report
 - **Notes:** Document all conversations and store in both parties' files. If the complainant is not a member, start a file for them.
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Step 4: Contact with Respondent

- **Action:** If the reporter feels they cannot resolve the issue directly, or if their conversation with the other party is unproductive, and if the reporter wishes, the Board member will reach out to the other party.
 - **Topics to Cover with the Other Party:**
 - Inform about the reported concern.
 - Ask if they are aware of the situation and seek their perspective.
 - What additional information can they provide?
 - What impact is this incident having on them?
 - What has been the hardest thing for them?
 - What do they think needs to happen to make things right?
 - Do they need assistance from SOBI?
 - Do they think they need to make amends?
 - Does SOBI think they need to make amends?
 - **Responsibility:** Board Member (usually the President)
 - **Timeline:** Within 2 weeks of initial report, with complainant's permission
 - **Notes:** Document responses and willingness to self-correct. If neither the respondent nor SOBI feel that the respondent needs to make amends, skip to Step 8.
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Step 5: Evaluate Self-Correction and Amends

- **Action:** Assess the respondent's openness to self-correction.

- **Questions to Address:**
 - Are they willing to make amends? If so, how?
 - How can SOBI assist in the process?
 - **Responsibility:** Board Member (with support from Office Staff)
 - **Timeline:** Within 1 month of report
 - **Notes:** Maintain clear documentation of outcomes in both parties' files. If the complainant is not a member, start a file for them.
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Step 6: Follow-Up

- **Action:** Determine whether it is appropriate to follow up with the reporter and the respondent (when applicable) post-resolution.
 - **Responsibility:** Board Member
 - **Timeline:** 1 month after resolution
 - **Notes:** Gather feedback on the process and address any remaining concerns.
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Step 7: Review and Improve Procedures

- **Action:** Periodically review the effectiveness of the complaint handling process.
 - **Responsibility:** Board and/or Office Staff
 - **Timeline:** Annually
 - **Notes:** Use feedback and outcomes to refine procedures and training.
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Option: Group Complaint or Grievance Consideration

- **Action:** Addressing multiple complaints
 - **Multiple Complaints for Different Behaviors:** If multiple complaints have been filed against the same member, and the Board was not previously allowed to speak with the respondent, the Board may decide to contact previous complainants to ask for permission to contact the respondent.
 - **Multiple Complaints for Related Behaviors:** If multiple complaints have been filed against the same member for the same pattern of behavior, and self-correction (when possible) was not forthcoming, assess interest from reporters in filing a group complaint in order to speak with the respondent and give them an opportunity to self-correct.
 - If a group complaint is not desired, assess the interest in the reporters filing a group grievance. A group grievance is considered as one new grievance encompassing all complaints from parties that agree to participate, excluding any past grievances.
 - **Responsibility:** Board Member or Office Staff

- **Timeline:** As needed based on reports
- **Notes:** Communicate the implications of a group complaint or grievance, including matters regarding confidentiality, and gather consensus if they would like to file a group complaint or grievance. Follow complaint or grievance process as appropriate.