



## Policy for Handling Complaints, Allegations & Grievances

### 1. Introduction

Savoyards is a community-based theatre company governed by an elected team of volunteers. This team is supported by many others managing the Society's operations and assisting to maintain its reputation for professionalism in the Brisbane community theatre scene.

### 2. Purpose

Savoyards aims to provide a strong team/family atmosphere at all functions, rehearsals and performances and is committed to providing an environment where all involved, both on and off the stage, are treated with dignity and respect.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a fair and effective process for dealing with and responding to complaints, allegations and grievances.

### 3. Scope

This policy applies to all participants and activities undertaken under the banner of Savoyards Musical Comedy Society Inc.

### 4. Roles and Responsibilities

Director	The director is responsible for the artistic direction of a production within the general policy and budget determined by the management committee.
Musical Director	The Musical Director is responsible for the musical direction of a production as it aligns with the Director's vision and within the general policy and budget determined by the management committee.
Choreographer	The choreographer is responsible for the choreography of a production as it aligns with the Director's vision and within the general policy and budget determined by the management committee.
Executive Producer	The Executive Producer is the key point of contact between the management committee and the production team, technical team and cast of a Savoyards production.
Cast Representative	The cast representative is an appointed member of the cast of a show who acts as a support person for the rest of the cast and a liaison between the cast and production team or management committee.
Stage Manager	The stage manager is in charge of production and responsible for all members of the production both on and off stage once it moves to the theatre.

Technical Teams	There are a number of technical teams involved in each production including but not limited to costume team, hair and makeup, set design and construction team, lighting and sound teams.
Cast	Successful auditionees who are invited to become members of a specific production.

## 5. Definitions

Bullying	Bullying is when people repeatedly and intentionally use words or actions against someone, or a group of people, to cause distress and risk to their wellbeing. These actions are usually done by people who have more influence or power over someone else, or who want to make someone else feel less powerful or helpless. Bullying is not the same as conflict between people (like having a fight) or disliking someone, even though people might bully each other because of conflict or dislike. (Source: <a href="#">Australian Human Rights Commission</a> )
Complainant	A complainant is a person involved in any aspect of Savoyards' activities who raises a complaint.
Respondent	A respondent is the person responding to the complaint as the defending party.
Discrimination	Discrimination occurs when anyone involved in any aspect of a production is treated less favourably because of their disability, race, colour, national or ethnic origin, religion, gender affinity, age or some other characteristic specified under discrimination or human rights legislation.
Frivolous	Frivolous is the nature of a complaint which has little or no weight, worth of importance and not worthy of serious notice.
Grievance	A grievance is a complaint against another person involved in a production over something perceived to be wrong or unfair and may arise in a situation that is believed to adversely or unfavourably impact on the complainant.
Harassment	Harassment is the act or instance of harassing, or disturbing, pestering, or troubling another person or group of people repeatedly.
Malicious Complaint	Where a complaint is considered to be malicious and false, or found to have been made with the deliberate intention of getting another person into trouble.
Relevant Matter	The subject of the complaint.

Vexatious	Vexatious is the lodging of a complaint without sufficient grounds and serving only to cause annoyance to the respondent.
Victimisation	The action of singling someone out for cruel or unjust treatment.

## **6. Policy Statement & Principles**

### **6.1 Policy Statement**

Savoyards will respond sensitively, fairly and appropriately to all complaints and allegations. Savoyards aims to improve its operations and team member strength through identifying issues and reconciling relationships.

### **6.2 Policy Principles**

- a) Relevant matters that are not addressed have the potential to grow into major problems that can cause tension, low morale and reduced performance.
- b) Relevant matters should be treated seriously and sensitively having due regard to procedural fairness, confidentiality and privacy.
- c) Relevant matters should be handled as quickly as possible.
- d) Wherever possible, relevant matters should be resolved by a process of discussion, cooperation and conciliation. The aim is to reach an acceptable outcome that minimizes any potential detriment in ongoing relationships.
- e) Both the participant raising the relevant matter (Complainant) and the person against whom the grievance is made (Respondent) will receive appropriate information, support and assistance in resolving the grievance. Parties may bring a support person to any interview.
- f) Every person has a right to raise a relevant matter for consideration and expect a response

## **7. Procedure**

### **7.1 Preliminary Action**

With any group of people working on a show there can be times where there can be disagreement or a difference of artistic opinion, but this does not always constitute a grievance. In these cases, it is hoped that the difference or concern can be addressed through an informal process. Wherever possible, relevant matters should be resolved by a process of discussion, cooperation and conciliation. The aim is to reach an acceptable outcome that minimizes any potential detriment in ongoing relationships.

If a member of the Savoyards production has a concern or complaint it is important for them to contact the Cast Representative and/or the Executive Producer of the show to discuss the matter. For the period following Bump-In to the theatre, the Stage Manager may be contacted in addition to, or in the absence of the Executive Producer. The Executive Producer should be advised of the complaint at the

earliest possible opportunity. If after this initial discussion with the Cast Representative, Executive Producer, and/or Stage Manager the issue cannot be resolved then the following process will be followed.

### **7.2 Recording a Complaint**

The following process is to be used to record and attempt resolution of a complaint:

1. Complainant to record their concern to clarify the issue.
2. Complainant to meet with the Cast Representative, Executive Producer, and/or Stage Manager to discuss their concerns and how they would like to see the issue resolved.
3. Cast Representative, Executive Producer and/or Stage Manager to make contact with the Respondent and make them aware that a concern has been raised. A meeting between the complainant and respondent will be organised.
4. At the meeting both parties will discuss and seek any information that may relate to the situation. Often information from others will clarify a situation for all concerned.
5. The aim of the meeting is to reach a resolution that both parties are happy with.
6. Minutes are taken at this meeting so there is a record of all relevant information.
7. If a resolution is unable to be reached the matter will be forwarded onto the Savoyards Committee.

### **7.3 Escalation of Complaint**

If the complainant is not happy with the outcome of the initial meeting with the respondent, they may escalate the complaint to the Savoyards management committee.

The Executive Producer will notify the management committee (via the Secretary) of the grievance and it will be tabled for discussion at the next committee meeting.

The Savoyards management committee will review all statements and minutes from the initial meeting and decide on a resolution. This may involve meeting with both the complainant and respondent to clarify any information on the issue.

The management committee will agree on a resolution and the Secretary will notify both parties in writing.