



The Country Women's Association of Victoria Inc.

Grievance Policy and Procedures

Version: 02.1

Responsible Person: State President

Approved by the Board on 22.01.2019

Scheduled Review Date: January 2021

Introduction

The Country Women's Association of Victoria Inc. is committed to reaching a speedy and just resolution of any disputes or grievances that may arise and that may threaten the harmonious functioning of the Association.

Purpose

This Grievance Policy is designed to set out the process for resolution of disputes or grievances involving members that are unable to be resolved through respectful debate in meetings.

Policy

Disputes will be resolved by discussion and/or mediation. Disputes are handled respectfully, confidentially, and in accordance with natural justice.

Responsibilities

All members are responsible for resolving disputes in accordance with this policy. Members are not to express their grievances or their opinions in relation to disputes on social media.

It is the responsibility of the State President to ensure that all members of the Board and of State Council are aware of this policy, and to facilitate the resolution of disputes.

It is the responsibility of the Chairpersons of State Committees, of Group Presidents, and of Branch Presidents, to ensure that all members of the Committee, Group or Branch, respectively, are aware of this policy, and to facilitate the resolution of disputes within the Committee, Group or Branch. If the parties to the dispute cannot agree on a mediator, or the dispute is not resolved by mediation, the Chairperson or President is to inform the State President immediately.

Procedures

1. These procedures apply to disputes between:
 - a) a member and another member; or
 - b) a member and the Association.
2. The parties to the dispute must meet and discuss the matter in dispute, and if possible, resolve the dispute within 14 days after the dispute comes to the attention of all parties.
3. If the parties are unable to resolve the dispute at such a meeting, or if a party fails to attend that meeting, then the parties must, within 10 days, hold a meeting in the presence of a mediator.
4. The mediator must be:
 - a) a person chosen by agreement between the parties; or
 - b) in the absence of agreement:
 - i) if the dispute is between a member and another member, a person appointed by the Board;
 - ii) if the dispute is between a member and the Association, an independent mediator.
5. A member or employee of the Association can be a mediator, but a member who is a party to the dispute cannot be a mediator.
6. The parties to the dispute must, in good faith, attempt to settle the dispute by mediation.
7. The mediator, in conducting the mediation, must –
 - (a) give the parties to the mediation process every opportunity to be heard; and
 - (b) allow due consideration by all parties of any written statement submitted by any party; and
 - (c) ensure that natural justice is accorded to the parties to the dispute throughout the mediation process.
8. The mediator must not determine the dispute.
9. The mediation must be confidential and without prejudice.
10. If the mediation process does not result in the dispute being resolved, the parties may seek to resolve the dispute in accordance with the Act or otherwise at law.
11. If the dispute is between the Association and any of its members, the Association must not take disciplinary action related to the same matter until the grievance procedure is completed.