



Queensland Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research

Consumer rights and dispute resolution process

Context

The Queensland Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research (CDFVR) is jointly funded by CQUniversity and the Queensland Department of Communities. The Department of Communities provides defined-term funding to CQUniversity to deliver specific, agreed, activities through CDFVR. In addition, CDFVR occasionally receives grants from other sources to conduct research and implement professional development or educational activities.

Purpose

CDFVR's primary purpose is to create and disseminate knowledge to influence policy, programs and practice in the field of domestic and family violence prevention across Queensland. We do this through research, professional development, education and community engagement activities pertaining to domestic and family violence.

Philosophy, values and principles

CDFVR operates with a feminist/intersectional analysis, understanding that domestic violence is an expression of unequal power and an ongoing pattern of abusive behaviour aimed at dominating and controlling the life of another. Domestic violence, specifically, intimate partner abuse, is highly gendered and an expression of unequal power between men and women. CDFVR recognises that the women's experiences of domestic violence, and responses to it, are also shaped by other factors, such as race, class, ethnicity and disability. Domestic violence is seen as a breach of fundamental human rights and safety from such violence is seen as a whole of community responsibility. Responses to domestic and family violence must be just and equally accessible to all, regardless of culture, language and other diversity. CDFVR also values knowledge-based practice and accountability to those for whom services are delivered, as well as accountability to funding bodies.

Location

Organisationally, CDFVR is located within CQUniversity's Institute of Health and Social Science Research (IHSSR) and is affiliated with the School of Health and Human Services, Faculty of Sciences, Engineering and Health. CDFVR is physically located at CQUniversity's Mackay Campus.



Consumer rights

CDFVR's consumers are the individuals and agencies (including government and non-government agencies) that utilise the information and resources provided by CDFVR through its range of products. These products include fact sheets, a quarterly publication, web-based resources, seminars, an annual Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum, research reports and scholarly articles.

Consumers have the right to expect that CDFVR staff will comply with:

- its stated philosophy, values and principles;
- CQUniversity's *Code of Conduct* (available at: <http://policy.cqu.edu.au/Policy/policy.jsp?policyid=299>), which is built on four principles: 1) to respect the inherent dignity of the individual; 2) to act on the basis of a well-informed conscience; 3) to participate as part of a community of scholars; and 4) to uphold the public interest.
- CQUniversity's *Code of Conduct for Research*, including adherence to the National Health and Medical Research Council's:
 - *National Statement on Ethical Conduct Involving Humans* (<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/publications/synopses/e35syn.htm>); and
 - *Values and Ethics: Guidelines for Ethical Conduct in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Research* (<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/publications/synopses/e52syn.htm>)
- relevant legislation including, but not limited to the:
 - *Community Services Act 2007*
 - *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991*
 - *Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995*
 - *Copyright Act 2001*



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Dispute resolution procedure

A dispute is defined, here, as *a circumstance (perceived or actual) regarded as just cause for complaint*. A dispute with CDFVR occurs when a consumer believes that his/her rights have been breached by CDFVR or its representative/s. Consumers who have a dispute with CDFVR have the right to:

- raise their dispute;
- be made aware of this right;
- not feel disadvantaged or victimized in any way in continuing to access CDFVR's services; and
- expect that any dispute will be dealt with promptly and respectfully.

All disputes will be treated confidentially; only those who 'need to know' will be provided information about the dispute. The consumer raising the dispute ('the complainant') will be consulted prior to a third party being given any such information.

Procedure

In the first instance the complainant will raise their dispute with the individual from CDFVR with whom they have a dispute. The consumer may, for cultural reasons, choose to have a representative raise their dispute on their behalf, or may request that it be raised directly with another member of staff or a CDFVR Advisory Group member (see www.noviolence.com.au/aboutcdfvrag.html for details). The CDFVR representative will respond to the complaint as soon as practical, and within 14 days of receiving the complaint. If the dispute is not resolved to the complainant's satisfaction within that response, the complaint should then be raised with the CDFVR Director, in writing and as soon as is practical after receiving the initial response from the individual concerned.

Where the dispute is with the Director, or where the complainant perceives that the dispute involves a breach of CQUniversity's *Code of Conduct*, the matter should be referred to the Director, IHSSR. The *Code of Conduct* details the procedure to be followed in the event of allegations of non-compliance by CQUniversity staff. If the dispute is still unresolved, the complainant may choose to contact the Queensland Ombudsman's Office (www.ombudsman.qld.gov.au).

A confidential 'dispute record' file will be maintained by the CDFVR Director for use in reviewing CDFVR operations.





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DISPUTE RECORD FORM

Date of complaint.....

Name of complainant.....Contact number.....

Initial complaint made by:

- Telephone
- Letter (attached)
- In person
- Other

Date of initial response..... (*within 5 working days*)

Date of follow-up:.....Date resolved.....

INFORMATION TO BE GIVEN TO THE COMPLAINANT

1. Reassurance that all complaints are treated confidentially and that they will not be disadvantaged in any way because they have made a complaint
2. An explanation of the complaints resolution procedure
3. Assurance that CDFVR values all feedback as a mechanism to continuously improve its performance.

Details of complaint (*attach separate page if necessary*)

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Outcome (*including any referral e.g. to Director, IHSSR*): *attach separate page if needed*).

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