



GOVERNANCE & COMPLIANCE

Complaints & Feedback Handling Policy

How anyone can raise a concern, and how we respond · v1.0 (DRAFT) · June 2026 · Owner: Business Manager

1. Purpose & commitment

Anthem Church wants to be a place where anyone — a member, a parent, a child, a volunteer, a visitor or a member of the public — can raise a concern and be heard with respect. Feedback and complaints help us care well for people, keep children and vulnerable people safe, and keep improving. We welcome them rather than fear them. This policy explains what you can raise, how to raise it, and how we will respond.

2. Who and what this policy covers

Anyone connected with the life of the church may make a complaint or give feedback — about our people, conduct, programs, services, facilities, decisions or safety. It also covers compliments and suggestions, which we value just as much.

What this policy is not

Some matters have their own dedicated process, and are handled there rather than as a general complaint:

If the concern is about:	It is handled under:
Harm, or risk of harm, to a child	The Child Safe Policy — contact the Safer Churches Officer (SCO) immediately. Do not handle it as an ordinary complaint. If a child is in immediate danger, call 000.
Reportable conduct by a worker toward a child	The Reportable Conduct Procedure (via the SCO).
A staff member's own employment grievance	The Performance Review & Disciplinary / Grievance Policy.
Serious misconduct, fraud or wrongdoing	The Whistleblower Policy (Whistleblower Protection Officers).
A privacy breach or misuse of personal information	The Privacy Policy and Data Breach Response Plan.

If you are unsure which applies, raise it anyway — tell us your concern and we will make sure it reaches the right process. You never need to know the 'right door' before you speak up.

3. Our principles

- **Accessible** — easy and free to make a complaint, with more than one way to do it, and help available for anyone who needs it.
- **Child-focused** — children and young people can raise concerns in ways that suit them, are taken seriously, and are supported through the process.
- **Fair & impartial** — we listen to all sides, give anyone complained about a fair chance to respond, and don't prejudge.
- **Confidential** — information is shared only with those who need it to resolve the matter, or where the law requires, and is handled under the Privacy Policy.
- **Free from victimisation** — no one is disadvantaged for raising a genuine concern in good faith, or for supporting someone who does.
- **Timely & transparent** — we acknowledge quickly, keep you informed, and explain our decisions.

4. How to make a complaint or give feedback

You can raise something in whatever way is easiest for you:

- **In person** — to any pastor, ministry leader or team leader, or at the Welcome Desk.
- **By phone** — the church office on (07) 5377 0234.
- **By email** — [complaints@anthemchurch.com.au — to confirm], marked for the Complaints Officer.
- **In writing** — using the Complaints & Feedback Form (available at the Welcome Desk and on the website).

You may bring a support person, ask someone to raise it on your behalf, or make a complaint anonymously. Tell us if you need an interpreter, or any adjustment to take part fully. The more detail you can give — what happened, when, who was involved, and what outcome you're hoping for — the better we can help; but don't let missing detail stop you raising it.

5. Children & young people

Children and young people have every right to speak up, and we want them to feel safe doing so. A child can tell any leader, a parent or carer, or a trusted adult; leaders are trained to listen, take it seriously, and pass concerns on. Children may have a parent, carer or support person with them. We respond in a way that is appropriate to the child's age and circumstances, and keep them and their family informed as far as it is safe and appropriate to do so.

If a complaint suggests a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, it stops being an ordinary complaint. Contact the Safer Churches Officer (SCO) immediately, follow the Child Safe Policy and the Reportable Conduct Procedure, and make any report the law requires. If a child is in immediate danger, call 000.

6. How we respond

Our usual process once a complaint is received:

1. **Acknowledge** — we confirm we've received it, normally within 5 business days, and explain what happens next.
2. **Assess & route** — the Complaints Officer records the complaint and decides how to handle it, or refers it to the right process (for example, a child-safety or whistleblower matter).
3. **Look into it** — we gather the facts fairly, give anyone complained about a fair opportunity to respond, and keep the matter confidential so far as possible.
4. **Resolve** — we aim to resolve most complaints within 28 days. If it will take longer (for example, a complex matter or one being investigated), we tell you why and keep you updated.
5. **Communicate the outcome** — we let you know the outcome and the reasons, and any action taken, subject to the privacy of others involved.

7. If you are not satisfied

If you are not satisfied with how your complaint was handled, you can ask for it to be reviewed internally by a senior leader not previously involved — ordinarily the Senior Pastor, or the Board Chair where the Senior Pastor is involved. You can also raise the matter outside the church at any time. Depending on the issue, external avenues include:

- **ACC State Safer Churches** — for child-safety and safer-church concerns (1800 Safer Churches Helpline).
- **Queensland Police / 000** — for any criminal matter or immediate danger.
- **The ACNC** — for concerns about how the charity is run (acnc.gov.au).
- **The Office of the Australian Information Commissioner** — for privacy concerns (oaic.gov.au, 1300 363 992).
- **The Fair Work Ombudsman or Workplace Health & Safety Queensland** — for employment or workplace-safety matters.

Going to an external body is your right, and using this policy first is not a precondition.

8. No victimisation

No one who makes a complaint in good faith, or who supports, witnesses or helps with one will be treated unfairly, excluded or disadvantaged because of it. Victimising someone for raising a concern is itself a breach of conduct and will be dealt with seriously.

9. Records, privacy & learning

Complaints are recorded in a confidential complaints register and the personal information involved is handled under the Privacy Policy, stored securely, accessed only by those who need it, and disclosed only as necessary or as required by law. We review complaints regularly for patterns and lessons, and the Business Manager reports a summary to the

Board at least annually so the church keeps improving how it cares for people and keeps them safe.

10. Roles

- **Complaints Officer** (Shannon Harrison shannon@anthemchurch.com.au) — receives, records and coordinates complaints, and keeps complainants informed.
- **Safer Churches Officer (SCO)** — handles any complaint involving harm or risk of harm to a child or vulnerable person.
- **Pastors, ministry & team leaders** — receive concerns warmly, act on what they can, and pass matters to the Complaints Officer or SCO.
- **Senior Pastor & Board** — oversee serious complaints and internal reviews, and receive complaint reporting.

11. Review

This policy is reviewed at least every 12 months, and after any significant complaint or change in the law, to ensure it remains accessible, child-safe and effective.

Document control

Version	1.0 (DRAFT)	Owner	Business Manager
Effective	June 2026	Next review	June 2027
Approved by	Board of Anthem Church Ltd		