



YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg  
3550 Portage Avenue  
Winnipeg, MB R3K 0Z8  
Telephone: 204-832-7002  
[www.ywinnipeg.ca](http://www.ywinnipeg.ca)

# Complaints Policy

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**YMCA-YWCA OF WINNIPEG  
COMPLAINTS POLICY**

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## **1. Background and Purpose**

The YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg (also referred to as “the Association” or ‘YMCA-YWCA’) is committed to providing excellent programs and services. We recognize from time to time our stakeholders may have complaints they wish to raise and that they need avenues to do so. The YMCA-YWCA recognizes that when a person has a complaint about the Association, the way in which it is handled is critical to the person’s ongoing relationship with the organization.

This policy is applicable to complaints received from members of the public about our activities, programs, services, facilities, staff or volunteers. This policy does not apply to employees and volunteers as they are covered under the Whistleblower Policy, HR Policy or Volunteer Policy.

## **2. Policy Statement**

The YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg is committed to ensuring that stakeholder complaints are dealt with respectfully, consistently and in a timely manner.

## **3. Guiding Principles**

- It is in the interest of all parties that complaints are dealt with promptly and resolved as quickly as possible.
- The review of complaints is fair, impartial and respectful to all parties.
- Individuals raising a complaint are advised of their options to escalate their complaint to a more senior staff person if they are dissatisfied with treatment or outcome.
- Individuals raising a complaint are provided clear and understandable reasons for decisions relating to their complaint. Updates are provided to the individual during review processes.
- Complaints are used to assist in reviewing the Association’s activities and make changes that could improve programs, services and operations, thereby helping to fulfil our mission.

## **4. Definitions**

### **4.1 Complaint**

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with regard to a service or program, facilities, an action or decision taken by the YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg, or the way in

which YMCA-YWCA employees or volunteers carry out their duties. Complaints typically arise when a person believes:

- The YMCA-YWCA has failed to do something agreed upon or expected
- A YMCA-YWCA policy or procedure has not been followed
- A YMCA-YWCA policy or procedure is unfair or inadequate
- An error has been made by the YMCA-YWCA
- YMCA-YWCA employees or volunteers have acted in a manner that does not align with our mission, purpose or values.
- A prior concern addressed by the individual has not been satisfactorily resolved.

#### **4.2 Senior Leadership Team**

The senior leadership team of the YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg consists of the President and Chief Executive Officer, the Vice Presidents of the YMCA-YWCA and other employees who may be designated as so by the President and Chief Executive Officer.

#### **4.3 Stakeholders**

For purposes of this policy, YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg stakeholders includes any member of the public who engages with the YMCA-YWCA, except active employees or volunteers.

### **5. Procedures**

#### **5.1 Complaint**

Many complaints can be resolved easily and quickly, often at the time they arise by speaking face to face with the staff member who is directly involved in the situation and/or has the specific knowledge needed to resolve the problem. Individuals may also address their complaint by phone, or by email.

Every effort will be made to resolve complaints in a timely fashion.

If your complaint is not resolved or if you are uncomfortable discussing the issue with the staff member directly involved, you may inform the Supervisor, Coordinator or Director for the program or service area. If the matter is not resolved at this stage, you can escalate your complaint to the Manager and/or General Manager for the program or service area.

#### **5.2 Formal Complaint**

If you have been unable to resolve your complaint through the process described above, a formal complaint may be made. In order for us to respond to your formal complaint, you must let us know of your intent to register a formal complaint, provide your name and contact

information (including a valid email address and phone number), the date the issue occurred and a description of the issue.

Formal complaints are to be forwarded to the Vice-President of the program or service area. The Vice-President who receives the formal complaint will be the complaint lead. If the Vice President of the program or service area is involved with the complaint, the role of complaint lead will be taken by the President and Chief Executive Officer or their designate. The complaint lead will notify the Vice President of Finance and Risk Management. If the Vice President of Finance and Risk Management is involved with the complaint, the complaint lead will notify the President and Chief Executive Officer.

There may be rare occasions when we choose not to respond to a complaint. These include:

- When a complaint is about something that the YMCA-YWCA has no direct connection to. We may choose to reply to clear our name, but we are not obliged to.
- When someone unreasonably pursues a formal complaint that we have already responded to.
- When a complainant is being obviously abusive, prejudicial or offensive in their manner.
- When a complainant is harassing a staff member.
- When a complaint is illegible or incoherent.
- When a complaint has clearly been sent to us and numerous other organizations as part of a bulk mailing or email.
- The YMCA-YWCA cannot respond to a complaint made anonymously. However, we may investigate the complaint and use the information to improve in any way we can.

At the YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg, we are committed to excellence in serving all customers in a way that is consistent with the principles of independence, dignity and equity. If you require an alternative format by which to file your complaint, please contact the YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg at 204-832-7002. Alternatively, you can request accommodation support in writing at

[WIN-accessibility@ymanitoba.ca](mailto:WIN-accessibility@ymanitoba.ca) or

Attention: People & Culture  
YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg  
3550 Portage Avenue  
Winnipeg, MB R3K 0Z8

### **5.3 Acknowledging a Formal Complaint**

Once you have registered a formal complaint, the YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg is committed to handling the complaint promptly, consistently, and fairly. You will be treated with respect and kept informed of the status of the complaint. The YMCA-YWCA will respond to your complaint within **two business days** of receiving the complaint to confirm the complaint has been received and indicate expectations for how long the investigation will take if it can be reasonably assessed at that point.

### **5.4 Investigating a Formal Complaint**

Upon receipt of a formal complaint the complaint lead will plan an investigation of the complaint. The YMCA-YWCA aims to resolve all complaints within **ten business days** of receiving them. If this timeline cannot be met, the complainant will be informed of the reasons and given a revised timeframe.

### **5.5 Resolving a Formal Complaint**

Upon completion of the investigation, the complainant will be contacted by the complaint lead. This may be in writing, by telephone or in person. The complainant will be provided with the decisions made and clear reasons for the decisions.

### **5.6 Closing a Formal Complaint**

A formal complaint will be closed when one of the following occurs:

- The complainant does not provide requested information within a reasonable period of time (no shorter than **five business days**).
- The investigation has been completed, the results have been communicated to the complainant, and no appeal has been made within **ten business days**.
- The complainant makes a written request to drop/close the complaint.
- Based on investigation results, the complaint lead and the Vice President of Finance and Risk Management make a reasonable assumption that the complaint was not made in good faith.

## **6. Confidentiality**

The YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg will make every effort to ensure confidentiality for the person reporting a complaint or concern. In some programs that receive funding from partner agencies, complaints may need to be shared with those agencies.

**7. No Retaliation**

No person who submits a concern/complaint shall suffer harassment or retaliation from YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg employees or volunteers.

**8. Records**

Unless it is felt that the complaint might result in future legal proceedings, complaint investigation records will be kept for a period of one year after the close of the investigation. Summary records of complaints will be kept on file for a minimum of seven years.

**9. Accountability**

Formal complaints will be tracked by the Vice President of Finance and Risk Management and will be reviewed by the President and Chief Executive Officer.

A report will be made to the Board of Directors at least annually on the number and types of formal complaints received, disposition of complaints, and time to resolve complaints.