

# BRISBANE PROGRESSIVE JEWISH CONGREGATION



## COMPLAINTS POLICY

Updated October 2012

# Brisbane Progressive Jewish Congregation

## Complaints Policy

This policy tells you how to make a complaint at Brisbane Progressive Jewish Congregation (Inc) (BPJC).

This is the policy that we will follow if your complaint is about someone's conduct or behaviour. This could be because you think that someone has behaved in a way that is unsafe, unprofessional, discriminatory, offensive or intimidating. Or it could be because you think someone has broken important rules or policies.

However, if you believe that a person may have broken a law, or you need urgent advice about someone's safety or welfare, or you need specialist advice, then you should make your complaint direct to the relevant enforcement, safety or welfare agency or make contact with a relevant specialist advisor, such as a lawyer.

### What is a "complaint"?

"An expression of dissatisfaction made to an organisation, related to its products / services, or the complaints-handling process itself where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected".

A complaint should be distinguished from a:

- *Request for information* – enquiry or request for information about BPJC services, policies or procedures.
- *Request for service* – request for action to be taken in relation to a service or product provided by BPJC.
- *Suggestion* – proposed service or product improvement.

### Values and principles

You have the right to complain: we take complaints seriously. You should not be harassed, bullied or put at a disadvantage because of making a complaint.

Equality: you should receive a proper response to your complaint, regardless of your age, gender, disability, race, religion, nationality, social status, sexual orientation or political persuasion.

Fairness: we believe that complaints should be dealt with fairly and openly. Unless it would put other people at risk, those affected by a complaint should have a chance to contribute and respond to any investigation.

Safety and welfare: we will always give priority to concerns that affect safety and welfare. Issues affecting children will be treated very seriously.

Confidentiality: we treat complaints as confidentially as possible.

Sometimes we have to discuss complaints with other organisations. If we are worried about a risk to a person or to the public, we might need to pass on our concerns to the right authorities. If necessary, we will get advice from other organisations such as the Union for Progressive Judaism (UPJ), its Rabbinic Council or the Queensland Police.

### How to make a complaint?

If you have a complaint, it is often best to start by having a conversation with someone at BPJC. There are some suggestions below about who to speak to. They may be able to help to resolve your problem. You could also make a written complaint. The address for written complaints is at the bottom of this policy.

If your complaint needs to be looked into further, you will normally be asked to put your complaint in writing. We accept anonymous complaints, but it is often very difficult to investigate these properly. It is easier for us to handle your complaint if you provide as much detail as possible.

### **Whom to contact to make a complaint?**

Complaints will usually be handled by BPJC's President or its Board. Useful contact details have been included at the bottom of this policy.

- BPJC Board: you can speak to any of our Board members
- BPJC Minister: Cantor David Bentley is trained to assist in resolving complaints
- Advisory Rabbi: BPJC's Advisory Rabbi (allocated by the UPJ's Rabbinic Council) can also tell you how to make a complaint or assist you
- Anyone else involved at BPJC that you trust.

The address for written complaints has been included at the bottom of this policy.

### **What will we do to investigate?**

We will give an initial response to your complaint as soon as practicable. We will investigate your complaint fairly. This means that we will discuss the complaint with all of the relevant people. We will try to gather any information that may be relevant to handling your complaint.

Sometimes we may need to show copies of information from the investigation to other people to allow them to respond. This is because we believe in fairness and openness.

### **How will I know what is happening?**

You will be given the details of a person who will be your point of contact at BPJC. That person will make sure that you understand the process, and will help to answer any questions or concerns that you have. You will be given an update on the progress of your complaint. If there are delays in handling your complaint for any reason, we will keep you informed.

If your complaint leads to action against someone, we will usually inform you about the outcome. We will not tell you the outcome if that person is a child, or if we believe that telling you might create a risk to other people. In this situation, we will still try to tell you about how you are affected by the action that we have taken.

### **What are the possible outcomes or results of my complaint?**

In many cases, we are able to resolve problems informally. This might include:

- A change in arrangements for particular activities
- An explanation or apology
- An agreement to communicate or act differently in future
- If an informal resolution is not suitable, then the Board will look at the information about the case. We will try to make sure that its consideration does not include anyone directly involved with your complaint. They might decide to take the following action:
  - Formal action under BPJC Rules
  - Informal action in response to your concerns, or
  - Closure of your complaint without action.

## Is there anyone else I can talk to?

Sometimes it can be useful to speak directly to someone outside BPJC where:

- You don't want to discuss the issue with someone at BPJC
- Your complaint is very serious or of a sensitive nature
- Your complaint involves other Jewish organisations.

Apart from confiding in family, friends or work colleagues, you may wish to consider:

**Queensland Jewish Community Services** (Attention: Ari Heber)

Contact: [ari@qjcs.org.au](mailto:ari@qjcs.org.au) , Tel: 0423 194 737.

Purpose: The provision of welfare services for people in the Jewish Community.

Further information: <http://www.qjcs.org.au/index.php?page=about>

**Union for Progressive Judaism** (Attention: Steve Denenberg)

Contact: [steve@upj.org.au](mailto:steve@upj.org.au) , Tel: 02 9328 764.

The Union for Progressive Judaism exists to honour our tradition, inform the present, and guide the future of our communities in the Australian, Asian and New Zealand region. Further information:

[http://www.upj.org.au/?page\\_id=21](http://www.upj.org.au/?page_id=21).

**Queensland Jewish Board of Deputies** (Attention: Jason Steinberg)

Contact: [info@qjbd.org](mailto:info@qjbd.org) , Tel: 0407 145 739.

The Queensland Jewish Board of Deputies Inc. (QJBD) is the official roof-body of all Queensland Jewry. Further information: <http://www.qjbd.org/>.

## Contact details, and address for complaints

Secretary BPJC – 0419 267 529

Minister BPJC – 0424 100 473

President BPJC – 0423 155 463 (A/H)

Postal address:

The Secretary

Brisbane Progressive Jewish Congregation

PO Box 841

Coorparoo QLD 4151

Email: [bpjc@bpjc.org.au](mailto:bpjc@bpjc.org.au)

## Questions or queries about this policy

If you have a general query about this complaints policy, you should speak to BPJC's President or Secretary.