

4.02 Complaints and Service Commitment

The Cowichan Valley Basket Society (CVBS) is committed to delivering a high standard of service to anyone of our guests. We believe that the best way to improve our service is by learning from the guests who use it.

We welcome comments, compliments, and complaints from the guests, who use our food bank, lunch program or other programs offered. We also welcome comments staff, volunteers, and anyone else we come into contact within CVBS. All comments help us to see what we are doing well and where we can make improvements.

Our promise and commitment

We recognise that there may be times when our services and activities do not meet your expectations. If this happens, it is important that we know about it as soon as possible so that we can deal with the situation effectively to try to prevent it from happening again and to learn from it. We promise to take all feedback and complaints seriously and to deal with them in a timely manner.

Guiding Principles

- It is in the interest of all parties that complaints are dealt with promptly and resolved as quickly as possible.
- Review of complaints is fair, impartial, and respectful to all parties.
- Complainants are advised of their options to escalate their complaint to a more senior staff person if they are dissatisfied with treatment or outcome.
- Complainants are provided clear and understandable reasons for decisions relating to complaints.
- Updates are provided to complainants during review processes.
- Complaints are used to assist in improving services, policies, and procedures.

Types of Complaints

Definition: A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about the service, actions, or lack of action by the Cowichan Valley Basket Society as an organization or a staff member or volunteer acting on behalf of society.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- Perceived failure to do something agreed upon;
- Failure to observe policy or procedures.
- Error made by a staff member/volunteer; or
- Unfair or discourteous actions/statements by a staff member/volunteer.

Anyone personally affected can complain and their complaint will be reviewed in accordance with this procedure.

Procedures

Complaint Receipt and Handling

A complaint may be received verbally (by phone or in person) or in writing (by mail, email). A staff member or volunteer who receives a complaint will determine the proper person to handle it. This will generally be the person who has the primary relationship with the complainant or

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has the specific knowledge that is needed to resolve the problem. It is the responsibility of the person who receives the complaint to either resolve it or transfer it to another person who can resolve it. If the complaint is transferred, the recipient must acknowledge to the transferor that he/she has received it and will act on it.

The person who initially receives the complaint should acknowledge to the complainant that the complaint has been received and will be acted on either by him/herself or another staff member. If a timeframe for action can be determined, that should be included in the acknowledgement. Basic contact information including name, phone number and email address should immediately be recorded.

Resolving the Complaint

Every effort will be made to resolve complaints received in a timely fashion. When receiving a verbal complaint, staff will attempt to resolve it immediately. Complaints received in writing will be acknowledged within 2 business days and staff will attempt to resolve the matter within 10 business days.

Where a complaint cannot be easily resolved, it should be escalated to the relevant supervisor. If they cannot resolve the complaint, it will be escalated to the Executive Director. If the complaint is about the Executive Director, it will be handled by the Chair of the Board of Directors. Complainants will be kept informed of the status of their complaint. CVBS will make every attempt to resolve escalated complaints within an additional 10 business days so that all complaints are resolved within a month of having been received.

Documenting the Complaint

The Cowichan Valley Basket Society will keep a record of information on all complaints received. Information includes a description of the complaint, the person who handled it, what was done to resolve the complaint, timeframe, and a description of the resolution and any follow up required.

A summary of the complaints is provided annually to the Board of Directors for their awareness of the nature and number of complaints received by Cowichan Valley Basket Society.

Appeal Process

For any unresolved complaints, you may use Food Banks Canada's Customer Service Hotline, which will allow unresolved complaints to be escalated to the provincial organization and/or Food Banks Canada.

Phone: 1+ (877) 280 – 0329 Email: complaints@foodbankscanada.ca

A link to the complaint policy is listed on the Society Page on the CVBS.CA website.

Additionally, the complaint policy is posted in the CVBS lobby.

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| Issue Date: | February 2026 | Review Frequency: | 3 years |
| Revision Date: | | Revision Number: | |