

# Grievance Policy & Procedure

6 January 2023 (v3)



## 1. Purpose

Immanuel Lutheran Church seeks an organisational culture that includes good relations among employees, management, and members/volunteers. The grievance process provides for issues that arise to be addressed in a timely and confidential manner with the goal of achieving an acceptable outcome for all parties involved.

## 2. Scope

This document applies to employees, church management, and volunteers/ members at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Buderim (referred to as "church").

## 3. Policy

### 3.1 Who can lodge a grievance?

- A church *employee* may choose to lodge a grievance in order to resolve an issue with another employee or church management.
- A person on a church *management board* (e.g. Church Council) may choose to lodge a grievance in order to resolve an issue with a pastor/employee or another board member.
- A *volunteer or member* of the church may choose to lodge a grievance, in order to resolve an issue with a church employee or church management.

Before commencing any grievance process, persons should objectively consider all information relating to the issue. Refer to the flow chart at the back of this document to assist in understanding and commencing a grievance process.

The grievance resolution process has three stages:

Stage	Action	Timeframe
1 — Lead Pastor	Issue is referred to the Lead Pastor, who leads the resolution process.	Receipt of grievance within 2 business days, resolution within 14 business days.
2 — Church Council	Issue referred to Church Council chairperson, who leads the resolution process.	Receipt of grievance within 2 business days, resolution within 14 business days.
3 — LCA	Issue referred to LCA churchwide complaint procedure.	Timeframes as per LCA complaint procedure.

At any time, persons may choose to lodge a grievance using the Lutheran Church of Australia (LCA) churchwide *Complaints Handling Procedure*. The process described in this document will be suspended, and the complaint will be handled via the LCA procedure. Details are given in section 4.3.

<https://www.lca.org.au/departments/office-bishop/complaints/>

If a person is at immediate risk of harm, emergency services should be called on 000.



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### **3.2 Employee Assistance Program (EAP) — church employees only**

Should it be considered beneficial, church employees may also seek referral to the *Employee Assistance Program (EAP)* to support the grievance procedure.

The EAP provides confidential and private support provided independently through Converge International to eligible church workers to assist in short-term, solutions-oriented counselling and coaching. This may support you in meeting the challenges and demands of your work and personal life.

- Services are available 24 hours a day via phone; however, you can access face-to-face services by appointment.
- You can download an app to your phone for easy access, providing contact details at your fingertips.
- You will be given access to Converge's online portal with a host of resources.
- Pastors, lay workers, and other employees paid through the LCA HRS are registered with Converge. If you are eligible and you experience difficulties accessing services please contact the Church Worker Support Office: [churchworkersupport@lca.org.au](mailto:churchworkersupport@lca.org.au) or by phone: 08 8267 7300.
- This is 100% confidential — no identifying information about individuals using services is provided to LCA.
- It is also available to members of your direct family living with you.

## 4. Procedure

### 4.1 Stage 1 — Lead Pastor led resolution

Step	Action	Responsibility
a	Inform the Lead Pastor of your grievance, and provide a written statement if requested. <i>If your grievance is against the Lead Pastor, you may choose to proceed to Stage 2.</i>	Person lodging grievance. The person lodging the grievance is encouraged to nominate a support person.
b	The Lead Pastor will facilitate the resolution to the problem, taking into account the needs of the person lodging the grievance. Consultation and negotiation with all parties will be attempted to resolve the issue.	Lead Pastor facilitates investigation and discussions.
c	Advise all parties of the problem, the outcome, and decisions made and reasons for them, and follow-up actions to be taken (if any).	Lead Pastor.

### 4.2 Stage 2 — Church Council led resolution

Step	Action	Responsibility
a	Inform the Church Council Chairperson of your grievance, and provide a written statement if requested. <i>If your grievance is against the Church Council Chairperson, you may choose to proceed to Stage 3.</i>	Person lodging grievance. The person lodging the grievance is encouraged to nominate a support person.
b	The Church Council will facilitate the resolution of the problem, taking into account the needs of the person lodging the grievance. Consultation and negotiation with all parties will be attempted to resolve the issue.	Church Council Executive facilitates investigation and discussions.
c	Advise all parties of the problem, the outcome, and decisions made and reasons for them, and follow-up actions to be taken (if any).	Church Council Executive.

### 4.3 Stage 3 — LCA Complaints Handling Procedure

At any time, persons may choose to lodge a grievance using the Lutheran Church of Australia (LCA) churchwide *Complaints Handling Procedure*. The process described in this document will be suspended, and the complaint will be handled via that procedure.

<https://www.lca.org.au/departments/office-bishop/complaints/>

Complaints can be lodged with the LCA Professional Standards Department (PSD), using the following contact details:

**Phone**

1800 644 628 Australia

**Mobile phone text message**

+61 (0) 438 320 218

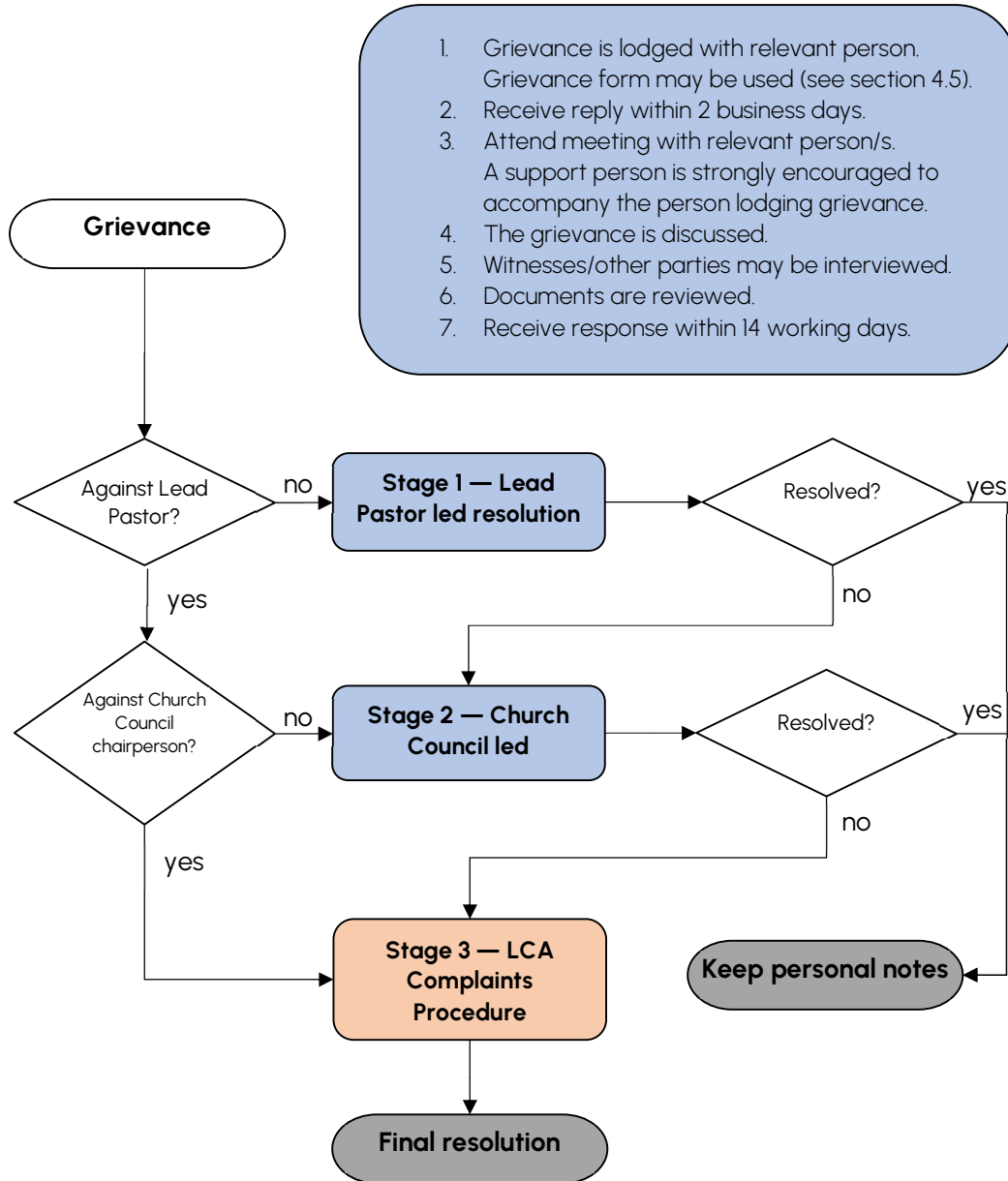
**Email**

complaints@lca.org.au

**Mail**

Confidential  
PO Box 519  
MARDEN SA 5070  
Australia

#### 4.4 Flowchart





### 4.5 Grievance Form

Important Information:

- This form allows for a grievance to be recorded as part of the resolution.
- This form is part of the Immanuel Church *Grievance Policy & Procedure* document. Please refer to this document for guidance on the resolution process.
- The church will treat all information disclosed confidentially, however please be aware that if your complaint is about another person, certain details may need to be disclosed to that person in order to obtain their response.

PERSONAL INFORMATION (PERSON LODGING GRIEVANCE)	
Name:	Position:
Contact details:	Ministry area:
Date:	

INFORMATION ABOUT GRIEVANCE
<p><b>Is your grievance about another person?</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>If 'Yes,' please identify the person:</p>
<p><b>Provide specific details of your grievance:</b></p> <p><i>Please provide as much detail as possible. For example, what happened, when (give approximate times and dates), who was there, etc. If you require more space, please attach additional pages.</i></p>



**What impact has this had on you?**

**Has this happened before?**

Yes /  No /  Not applicable

If 'Yes,' please provide details:

**INFORMATION ABOUT GRIEVANCE PROCESS**

**What outcome/remedy are you seeking to resolve your complaint?**

**Have you taken any action to resolve your complaint?**

Yes /  No

If 'Yes,' please describe what you have done so far:

**OTHER INFORMATION**

**Is there any other information you would like to include?**