

## **Sexual Assault Response Services of Southern Maine RESPONDING TO COMPLAINTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Complaints from the public, including those concerning discrimination, will consist of verbal or written communication from a person who specifically addresses conduct or an illegal act that directly involves a SARSSM employee, volunteer or Board member. Complaints from the public will be directed to the Executive Director. The Executive Director may be reached at 828-1035, ext. 100 or in writing at 8-4 pm, M-F or in writing at PO Box 1371, Portland, ME 04104.

If the complaint involves the Executive Director, the complaint should be directed to the Chair of the Governance Committee and the President of the Board by the person initially receiving the complaint. Because SARSSM receives funding from the Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MECASA), you may also file a complaint with MECASA. Reports may be made to MECASA's Compliance Coordinator; they can be reached at [207.626.0034](tel:207.626.0034) from 8-4 pm, M-F or in writing at [45 Memorial Circle, Suite 302, Augusta, Maine, 04330](https://www.mecasa.org/).

### **RECEIVING A COMPLAINT**

Upon receipt of a complaint, the Executive Director/Governance Committee Chair will take the following steps.

- Make an attempt to verify the source of the complaint.
- Verify that the subject of the complaint is an employee, volunteer or Board member. No complaint will be accepted for review or investigation if the main subject of the complaint is not an employee, volunteer or board member.
- Make a determination of whether the complaint warrants an investigation or can be handled as a matter of day-to-day operations.

With the exception of complaints that can be handled as a matter of day-to-day operations, the Governance Committee Chair will be made aware of the complaint as soon as possible.

If the complainant cannot be verified or contacted, the complaint will be considered anonymous. (See section on anonymous complaints.)

### **INVESTIGATING A COMPLAINT**

The Executive Director will obtain facts surrounding the complaint by contacting the person making the complaint. Initial contact with the complainant will be made within 5 business days whenever possible. If the complaint involves the Executive Director, the Governance Committee Chair will contact the complainant. The Executive Director/ Governance Committee Chair will also contact any relevant persons or agencies who might have information concerning the complaint and/or who can help to verify the complaint.

Upon completion of fact gathering, the Executive Director/ Governance Committee Chair will interview the employee/volunteer/Board member involved and obtain the remaining facts and/or versions of the incident that prompted the complaint.

If the complaint involves possibly illegal acts, the complaint may be forwarded at any time to an outside agency (police department, Department of Health and Human Services, etc.) for investigation.

### RESOLVING A COMPLAINT

The Executive Director/ Governance Committee Chair will forward a report to the Governance Committee within 10 working days of completing the investigation. This report will include:

- A synopsis of the complaint:
- Investigative findings:
- Violations of SARSSM Policies or procedures;
- Potential violations of Law.
- Recommendation for appropriate action to resolve the complaint.

The Governance Committee will review the complaint, the facts as determined, the findings, and the recommendation for resolution. Following their review, they will accept or refine the recommendation for resolution in writing. The Executive Director/ Governance Committee Chair will then advise both the employee/volunteer/Board member and the complainant about the resolution of the complaint, except that the details of any corrective action will not be disclosed to the complainant.

### ANONYMOUS COMPLAINTS

Complaints from the public must be verified through an identifiable source. Complaints from an unknown source or based on rumor will not be considered a valid complaint and will not prompt an investigation.

Anonymous complaints will be documented by the Executive Director and forwarded to the Governance Committee Chair.

Multiple consistent anonymous complaints about the same employee/volunteer/Board member that might affect the safety of that person will prompt the Governance Committee Chair and the Executive Director to have a discussion regarding the need for any further action.

Approved by BOD 5/21/18