

Pennsylvania Association of Nonprofit Organizations
Complaint Policy & Procedures for Program Participants

Included:

Organizational Policy Framework, Purpose, Complaint Policy, Complaint Procedures

Revised:	March 12, 2024
Reviewed by Executive Committee:	March 13, 2024
Approved by the Board:	March 21, 2024

I. PANO’S VISION, MISSION, VALUES

In addition to the framework defined in PANO’s Policy Preamble and Overview, every policy and practice seeks to live out PANO’s vision, mission, and values.

- A. **Vision:** PANO envisions an equitable, inclusive community where all individuals are able to reach their fullest potential.
- B. **Mission:** PANO amplifies the voice, value, and impact of community benefit work to transform lives.
- C. **Values:**
 - **Accountability:** We hold ourselves, and ask others to hold us, responsible for living by and in our values.
 - **Bridge Building:** We bring groups and people together to create innovative solutions.
 - **Justice:** We mindfully embed justice-based practices into all policies and programming.
 - **Respect:** We model appropriate boundaries and listen with empathy to understand the boundaries set by others.
 - **Risk-Taking:** We are curious and explore new strategies for achieving systemic change.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- A. Provide a policy and process for program participants to provide feedback to PANO regarding concerns they have had with any aspect of PANO’s programming, including but not limited to our training partners, facilitators, sponsors, promotional activities, registration process, content, and/or evaluation.
- B. Provide a policy and process for PANO to deliberately respond in a value-based, participant-centered way, while holding to the organization’s vision, mission, and strategic objectives.
- C. Ensure that this Complaint Policy for Program Participants aligns with the following strategic objectives:
 - 1. **Racial Justice:** PANO’s practices, policies, and programming will promote the creation of deliberate systems and supports to achieve and sustain the fair treatment of all people of all races and equitable opportunities and outcomes for all.
 - 2. **Sector Wellness:** PANO’s practices, policies, and programming will prioritize enhancing the well-being of the nonprofit sector to strengthen and maximize the impact of community benefit work.
 - 3. **Organizational Wellness:** PANO will ensure that all resources are in place to fulfill our strategic objectives and mission.

III. COMPLAINT POLICY FOR PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

PANO is committed to living out our vision, mission, and core values in all aspects of our work – including but not limited to addressing participant complaints when they occur. PANO will comply with all legal and ethical responsibilities to be non-discriminatory in promotional activities, program content, and in the treatment of program participants. While PANO goes to great lengths to assure fair treatment for all participants and attempts to anticipate problems, there may be issues which require intervention and/or action on the part of the staff. In addressing complaints, PANO starts from the assumption of best intent from all parties, while also acknowledging best intent is not enough and can cloud actual impact of words and actions.

IV. PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING PARTICIPANT COMPLAINTS

The following guidelines outline PANO's practices and demonstrate how seriously each complaint is handled.

- Contact information for every staff member is made publicly and readily available to allow program participants to express any problems they may have as quickly as possible.
- Staff members immediately report any problems to organizational management.
- Staff members will work as collaboratively as possible to address complaints. If the complaint:
 - Concerns training partners, sponsors, and/or facilitators, a staff member will address the identified issues with the party involved.
 - Concerns a speaker, the content presented by the speaker, and/or the style of presentation, a staff member will pass the comments to the speaker, assuring the confidentiality of the individual submitting the complaint.
 - Concerns the facilities in which the workshop is offered, a staff member will pass the comments onto the main contact at the event facility.
 - Concerns a PANO staff person, in a specific regard, the Executive Director will mediate.

If the PANO staff person determines that action is needed or if the participant requests action, PANO staff will work with the participant and within the guidelines of this policy to determine the best response given the specific situation.

V. PUBLIC AWARENESS OF COMPLAINT POLICY & PROCEDURES FOR PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

This policy and related procedures are posted on the [Training Page](#) of PANO's website, under the FAQs.