

External Grievance mechanism

Date: 19/06/2026 - Version 2
Owner: Head of Sustainability
Responsible: Head of Procurement
Accountable: CEO

External Grievance Mechanism

This external grievance mechanism forms an integral part of The Vegetarian Butcher Collective's Human Rights Policy and our commitment to respect internationally recognised human rights in line with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

It provides access to remedy for individuals and groups who may be adversely impacted by our activities or those of our business partners.

The Vegetarian Butcher Collective uses a formal complaints procedure that handles reports from its own organization and the value chain in a careful, transparent and independent manner (see figure below). For complaints from external stakeholders, The Vegetarian Butcher Collective refers to the publicly accessible whistleblower policy, which allows reporters to report safely, confidentially and without risk. All complaints are registered by the Quality Department in a structured and controlled manner, ensuring appropriate handling, confidentiality and tracking.

Grievances are handled in a timely manner, with clear steps for acknowledgement, assessment, investigation and response.

Entry points and relationship with other channels

External grievances can be submitted through The Vegetarian Butcher Collective's publicly accessible contact channels, including the website contact form and consumer careline, which together serve as entry points for concerns raised by external stakeholder.

Reports concerning suspected misconduct, legal violations or serious integrity concerns are handled under the Whistleblower Policy, which operates separately from this grievance mechanism.

Reports received through these contact channels that relate to human rights, labour rights, environmental impacts or other adverse impacts on people or communities are assessed and handled under this external grievance mechanism.

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The grievance mechanism defines how such concerns are registered, reviewed, investigated and, where substantiated, addressed and remedied.

The whistleblower policy operates separately and is intended for internal reporting of suspected misconduct, breaches of law or serious integrity concerns.

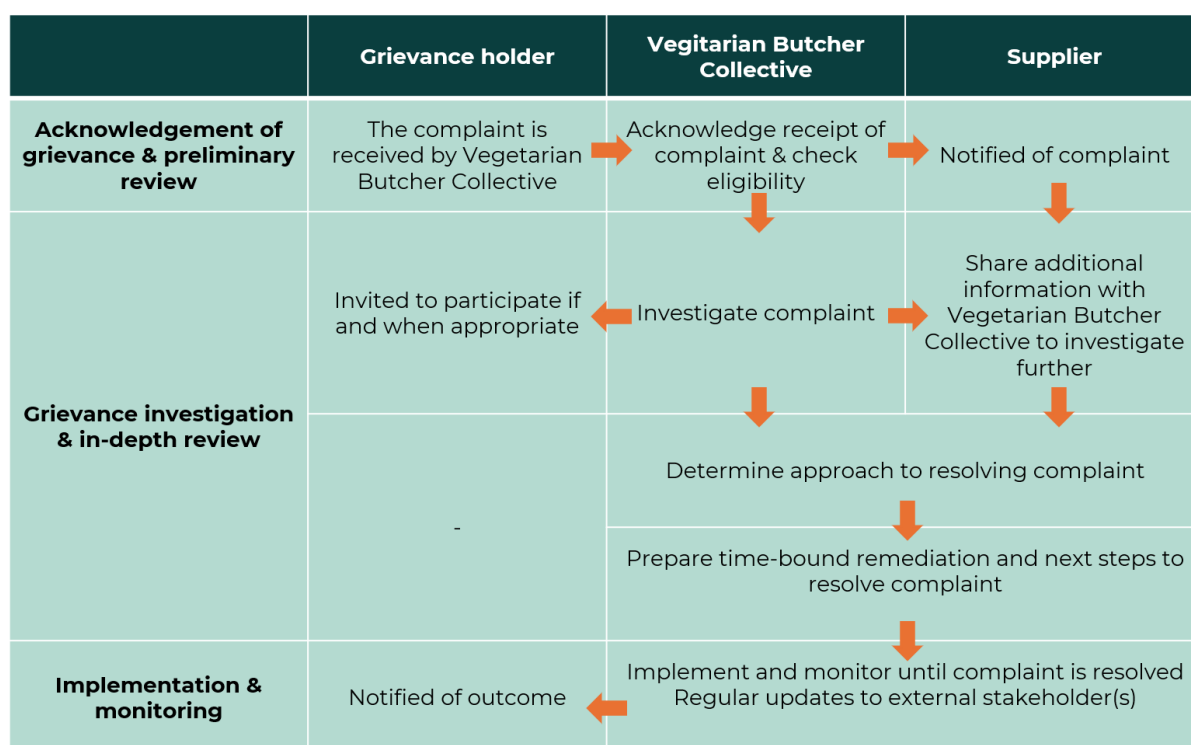
The Quality Department coordinates the handling of complaints, monitors progress, maintains contact with those involved and ensures confidentiality and- non-retaliation. Supervision of the functioning of the complaints mechanism lies with the Quality Manager, who reports monthly to the Operational Leadership Team (led by the COO) on trends, risks and necessary improvement actions.

The Quality Department is responsible for the coordination and administration of grievances, while decision-making on outcomes and remedies involves the appropriate responsible functions depending on the nature of the case.

An internal review is prepared monthly detailing the number, type and nature of complaints, as well as any rejections, recurring patterns and an assessment of the effectiveness of the procedure. This overview forms the basis for improvement measures and is discussed with the responsible management and later submitted to the Executive Team in the annual review.

The Vegetarian Butcher Collective reports publicly annually on the outcomes of the complaints mechanism, including numbers of complaints, grounds for rejection, processing times, remedies applied, any follow-up actions and, where possible, the satisfaction of reporters.

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*We recognize that concerns can differ in complexity, particularly when they touch on human rights or labour rights. In such situations, a thorough investigation may take more time. Throughout this process, we remain committed to transparent and timely communication with all parties involved.

The Vegetarian Butcher Collective believes sound integrity to be essential, and regards a grievance mechanism as an integral component of this.

Our grievance mechanism is designed to provide all stakeholders with a safe, accessible and transparent channel to raise concerns related to our operations or those of our business partners.

It applies to all external stakeholders, including workers in our value chain, communities, civil society organizations, suppliers, and any individual who may be affected by our activities.

We accept grievances relating to (but not limited to):

- violations of labour rights, human rights or environmental standards
- unsafe or harmful practices in our operations or supply chain
- misconduct by employees or suppliers
- breaches of our Code of Conduct, sourcing standards or legal obligations
- risks, impacts or incidents affecting communities, workers or the environment

Where a grievance is found to be substantiated, The Vegetarian Butcher Collective is committed to providing or contributing to appropriate remedy.

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Depending on the nature and severity of the impact, this may include corrective actions, mitigation measures, restitution, compensation, or other forms of remediation aimed at restoring affected rightsholders and preventing recurrence.

If an issue is not accepted as grievance, this will be explained. Furthermore, grievances do not require evidence at the time of filing and may be submitted anonymously if permitted by law.

Our procedure follows the steps outlined in the figure.

We are committed to ensuring that no individual faces retaliation for raising a grievance in good faith.

This includes protection against:

- dismissal or demotion
- intimidation, threats or harassment
- loss of opportunities
- any adverse treatment as a result of speaking up
- Any retaliation is treated as a serious violation and triggers immediate corrective action.

The mechanism is designed to be accessible to all rightsholders, including vulnerable or potentially disadvantaged groups in our value chain.

To prevent conflicts of interest, grievances are reviewed by personnel independent from the matter raised and, where necessary, may be escalated to senior management or external experts to ensure impartiality.

Where required, cases may be escalated to an internal compliance function or external experts to guarantee impartiality.