Complaints Procedure

1. Any complaint about any member of Companions in the Ministry of the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises, whether from another member or any person, shall be lodged in writing with the Secretary, email: secretary@companions.org.au

2. Any complaint shall be related to a breach of the Companions Code of Ethics and specify the grounds for complaint. (Companions Code of Ethics, www.companions.org.au/code-of-ethics/).

3. The following complaints procedure shall be observed. The Committee shall have the following discretions:

(a) If the nature of the complaint indicates that the subject material should be dealt with by any Court or tribunal, the Committee may decline to investigate or deal with the complaint until such a body has dealt with the issues which are the subject of the complaint.

(b) If this body effectively dismisses the complaint, the Committee may decide to take no further action.

(c) If the Committee decides to take further action they shall follow the procedures set out in point 4 of this Procedure.

4. The following procedures shall be observed when a complaint about any member is investigated and considered:

(a) The Committee will establish a special committee for the purpose of hearing and deciding upon the complaint.

(b) Any such committee shall not contain any person who has any direct or indirect interest in the complaint.

(c) The Committee shall give to the member, a written copy of the complaint.

(d) The Committee shall offer to the member a support person.

(e) The member shall have the opportunity to provide a detailed written response to the complaint within two weeks after receiving a copy of the complaint.

(f) Further inquiries may be made by or on behalf of the Committee, and the results of those inquiries shall be made known to the complainant and the member.

(g) The Committee shall allow the complainant and the member the opportunity to be heard by the Committee or any special committee established by it for the purpose of hearing and deciding upon the complaint.

(h) The Committee or any special committee hearing and deciding upon any complaint may:

(i) Dismiss the complaint or,

(ii) Uphold the complaint and take one of the following actions:

- censure the member,
- suspend the member from membership for a specified period,
- suspend the member from membership until the Committee is satisfied specific outcomes of educational or remedial work have been achieved by the member,
- alter the membership classification of the member,
- expel the member.

(i) Any action of suspension or expulsion will follow The Companions Constitution, Rule 17. Discipline, suspension and expulsion of members (www.companions.org.au/constitution/).

5. The Committee or any special committee hearing and deciding on any complaint shall respect the confidentiality of the proceedings.

6. The decision and any reasons (without any obligation to give such reasons) for that decision shall be conveyed to the complainant and the member in writing.

7. For decisions related to suspension or expulsion the member has the right to appeal as per Companions Constitution Rule 17(f).

8. A member whose membership is terminated under these Rules:

(a) will have his/her name removed from the membership list.
(b) is not eligible for any reimbursement of fees or subscriptions.
(c) shall cease to claim membership of Companions.

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