



## Global Grievance Policy

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Hillsong Church Inc. (“Hillsong Church”, “Hillsong” or “We”) recognizes the importance of listening and responding to grievances. It is important to speak up when something isn’t right or when you see concerning conduct. This is why the Global Grievance Policy (the “Policy”) has been created, so that grievances may be received where:

- A grievance concerns Campus leadership or Executive leadership
- An individual believes their grievance was handled inappropriately by a Hillsong Church location
- An individual is unsatisfied with the conclusion of their grievance with a Hillsong Church location
- An individual believes their grievance is of a nature that cannot be handled adequately by the Hillsong Church location

This Policy will also be applied where a grievance is of a serious nature, including:

- Harassment
- Sexual misconduct
- Financial mismanagement
- Regards a child
- Regards an individual in Campus or Executive leadership

Grievances of this nature will be governed by this Policy in order to reduce conflicts of interests, ensure confidentiality and non-retaliation.

We are open to receiving feedback and grievances from individuals covered in the Scope of this policy as defined below, and will do our best to address and resolve issues raised.

Hillsong’s grievance policy is consistent with our [governance framework](#), and places a high value on accountability and partnership. We are committed to effectiveness, a high standard of conduct, and ongoing learning. Confidentiality in these matters is of the utmost importance and will be addressed as described below.

This policy is also to represent the minimum standard for Hillsong Churches globally (“Hillsong Church locations”). Hillsong Church locations are expected to adopt these minimum standards and any additional standards as required by national or state laws and regulations. Hillsong Church locations are permitted to amend the policy to reduce or amend the standards outlined in this policy solely to comply with national or state laws and regulations, and/or to increase the ways members of Hillsong Church can report a grievance.

In the absence or interim of Hillsong Church locations adopting this Global Grievance Policy, individuals are able to report their concerns via this Policy.

This Policy does not cover whistleblower reports, for more information see [www.hillsong.com/concern](http://www.hillsong.com/concern) which will direct you to the appropriate whistleblowing policy in accordance with local laws.

## **2. PURPOSE**

This Policy is created to ensure that grievances are handled fairly, effectively and in accordance with Hillsong's governance framework.

This policy provides guidance for individuals covered in the Scope of this policy wishing to file a grievance as to the key principles, concepts, and processes within our grievance management system laid out in this policy and corresponding procedure.

## **3. SCOPE**

This policy specifically applies to all those who attend a Hillsong Church service, whether in person or online, as well as volunteers, interns and staff members, that have a grievance in accordance with Section 2 above. This policy shall NOT apply to grievances of employees as it relates to their employment. Any employment related grievances where the concern is related to an employee's condition of employment or a grievance concerning another full-time employee shall be made to the nominated individual as outlined in the Personal Grievance Policy or the Employee and/or Volunteer Codes of Conduct.

### *Conflict Resolution*

Hillsong believes in the biblical example of conflict resolution as found in Matthew 18:15-17. However, Hillsong Church understands that it is not always possible to be able to resolve a grievance directly with the other individual. This policy governs when direct contact is not possible or inappropriate given the nature of the grievance.

## **4. POLICY STATEMENT**

All staff responsible for instituting this Global Grievance Policy or who are otherwise directly approached with a grievance will understand and comply with the Grievance Policy, by:

- Being aware of the Grievance Policy and corresponding procedures;
- Handling all grievances with confidentiality and timeliness as required below;
- Treating all stakeholders with respect, including those who file grievances, committing not to engage in any retaliatory or harassing behavior individually or organizationally;
- Assisting people who wish to file grievances to access our grievance process; and
- Being alert to grievances and assisting staff handling them to resolve matters promptly.

Staff who hold responsibility for managing the grievance process will demonstrate quality grievance handling practices, by:

- Ensuring the Grievance Policy and procedures are accessible to all relevant stakeholders;
- Treating all people with respect, including those who file grievances;
- Assisting people to file grievances, as required;
- Complying with the procedures outlined in this Grievance Policy to effectively respond to grievances;
- Respecting confidentiality and privacy and behaving in a respectful and cooperative manner; and
- Providing feedback to management on recommended improvements to the grievance management system and implementing changes arising from any grievances or review.

Hillsong will promote a culture that values feedback and the effective resolution of grievances, by:

- Reviewing all grievances and always seeking to refine and improve its grievance handling;
- Supporting and providing direction to key staff handling grievances; and
- Inviting and supporting recommendations for improving the grievance handling system from those that may file a grievance utilizing this policy.

**Confidentiality:** All grievance information will be handled sensitively, treating all aspects of the procedure confidentially to the extent necessary, and following any relevant data protection requirements.

**Reporting:** Hillsong Church may have reporting obligations to authorities in certain circumstances. For example, grievances involving a child will be referred to the relevant authorities. Grievances involving health and safety will be referred to the appropriate Health & Safety Officer and must follow the Health and Safety incident reporting process. Where a grievance involves a claim of any illegal activity or a protected class, Hillsong Church will immediately report the same to the proper legal authorities as may be required by law.

**Grievance Procedure:** Hillsong Church will have an electronic mail address for an individual to file a grievance and a webform page (with the option to report a grievance anonymously). The grievance procedure will detail what information is to be collected, and the process to Acknowledge, Review, Investigate, Respond and Escalate the grievance as appropriate.

## 5. DEFINITIONS

**Campus leadership or Executive leadership** means Campus Pastors of a Church Location (for example: Hillsong California) or Executive Leadership roles within a Church Location (such as General Managers, Chief Operating Officers, Business Managers, or Hillsong Executive Management).

A **grievance** is an expression of dissatisfaction about any aspect of Hillsong Church's processes, service, staff, or volunteers where the grievance is related to misconduct or behavior that may be a violation of policies and/or principles of Hillsong Church .

**Hillsong Executive Management** includes the Global Senior Pastor(s), General Manager, Chief Financial Officer, Head of People and Development (if concerns regard staff), the Head of Safe Church, General Counsel and assisting legal counsel.

## 6. ACCOUNTABILITY

Hillsong will ensure that grievances are recorded and easily accessible for reporting and reviewed by Hillsong Executive Management. Information recorded will include:

- the number of grievances received;
- the outcome of grievances;
- issues arising from grievances;
- all parties, including staff, leaders, or volunteers identified in grievances;
- any systemic issues identified; and
- the number of requests for review of how we handled a grievance (collectively referred to as 'grievance data').

We are committed to implementing appropriate system changes arising out of the review and analysis of systems and grievance data. Reports and analysis of grievance data will be anonymized and will not identify an individual to the extent possible.

Reports and their analysis will be provided to Hillsong Executive Management and the Global and Local boards for review.

Our grievance management system will be monitored to ensure its effectiveness in responding to and resolving grievances and identifying and correcting deficiencies in operation.

If a grievance concerns anyone in Hillsong's Executive Management, they will be excluded from any correspondence regarding the report.

## **7. RESPONSIBILITY**

***Responsibility:*** Hillsong's Executive Management shall be responsible for implementing this policy and overseeing the global grievance handling process to ensure adequate resolution of grievances. A Hillsong Location Lead Pastor, or its delegate, is responsible for ensuring a Grievance Policy is implemented in its location in accordance with this Policy.

## **8. DOCUMENT VERSION INFORMATION**

*Document Title: Global Grievance Policy*

*Version: 1.0*

*Version Approved: George Aghajanian*

# Grievance Handling Procedure

## Introduction

All Hillsong personnel involved at any level in the implementation of this Global Grievance Handling Procedure are to act in accordance with the Global Grievance Policy, which, along with the grievance submission form, can be found [here](#). The handling of any grievances shall also consider any other relevant policies and procedures pertaining to the specific grievance.

The six stages for handling any grievances received are:



All grievances may be provided by email, [webform](#) on our website, or in person. Emails shall be directed to [grievance.global@hillsong.com](mailto:grievance.global@hillsong.com).

A grievance may also be made in person with any Hillsong staff member, who in turn shall communicate all relevant details of such as soon as possible, and in no event, later than 48 hours after receipt of the same via:

- [grievance.global@hillsong.com](mailto:grievance.global@hillsong.com); or
- Hillsong's [grievance webform](#).

## No Retaliation

Hillsong does not tolerate retaliation. If you are filing a grievance, you should not suffer adverse consequences for doing so, nor for refusing to do something that is against Hillsong's policies or the law. Anyone who retaliates against another person because of their grievance report or investigation of a grievance will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination and/or requirement to stand down from volunteering activities.

## Grievance Handling Procedure

### 1. RECEIVE

All grievances will be recorded along with supporting information, and the report will be assigned with an identifying code. The In-House Legal function will triage every report received.

Information recorded will include contact information for the person filing the grievance (if the individual has provided their contact details), the date the grievance was received, all parties including staff, leaders and volunteers involved, issues raised by the individual and their desired outcome/s, other relevant information provided by the individual, and any additional support the person filing the grievance requires.

### 2. ACKNOWLEDGE

Hillsong shall acknowledge receipt of any written grievance no later than 30 working days via a medium selected by the reporter.

Verbal grievances received by Hillsong Church staff members should be acknowledged immediately, and the same shall be communicated to [grievance.global@hillsong.com](mailto:grievance.global@hillsong.com) within 48 hours of receipt of the same, and the corresponding response time for acknowledgement above shall be reduced by the time taken between receipt of the grievance and communication of the same as required hereunder. Communication should include all information; including contact information for the person filing the grievance, the date the grievance was received, all parties including staff, leaders and volunteers involved, issues raised by the individual and their desired outcome/s, other relevant information, and any additional support the person filing the grievance requires.

If a grievance is acceptably resolved upon receipt, it will be documented in accordance with the above, additionally there will be no additional steps taken to resolve the grievance by Hillsong.

#### *Anonymous Reports*

Anonymous grievances made via the webform will not be acknowledged due to the lack of identifying information but will be logged for statistical purposes. However, individuals that stipulate they would like their identity to not be disclosed, will need to identify themselves in the initial complaint, and Hillsong will maintain the confidentiality of the individuals identity to the fullest extent possible. Some allegations that require investigation of conduct from an individual that requires procedural fairness, may require the identity of the individual being disclosed to fulfil legal obligations.

### **3. ASSESS**

Hillsong will review the information provided related to the grievance and communicate with the reporter filing the grievance to clarify any facts and underlying issues. In doing so, Hillsong shall consider the outcome being sought by the individual and whether there are separate issues that also need to be addressed.

When determining how a grievance will be managed, Hillsong will consider:

- How serious, complicated, or urgent the grievance is;
- Whether the individual raises concerns about health and safety or an illegality;
- How the individual is being affected; and
- The risks involved if resolution of the grievance is delayed.

Hillsong shall complete this initial assessment process as quickly as reasonable, but in no event shall the same take longer than 30 business days. Within such time period, Hillsong shall communicate with the individual filing the grievance what specific action is to be taken in regard to the same and in accordance with section 4 (Investigate) below. In the event the grievance is of such a nature that its assessment cannot be achieved within such time period, or where the grievance requires reporting the same to Hillsong Global or local authorities for further handling, this also shall be communicated to the individual lodging the grievance.

#### *Anonymous Reports*

If an anonymous report is received which does not provide sufficient information to substantiate a claim Hillsong may have limited options on how to proceed.

### **4. INVESTIGATE**

In considering how to resolve the grievance, Hillsong may:

- Give the individual information or an explanation;
- Gather additional information about the issue, person(s), or areas related to the grievance;

- Report the grievance to local authorities as may be required by the nature of the grievance; and/or
- Investigate the claims made in the grievance (Hillsong reserves the right to externalise the investigation process if it deems appropriate).

An investigation will be conducted as required. Any actions to be taken will be tailored for each grievance and consider any statutory requirements. The individual filing the grievance will be kept up-to-date on progress and any delays. The investigation stage may take up to 60 days and an investigation report will be prepared within that time period. Should the investigation require longer, the individual will be notified.

Where an investigation reveals serious or willful misconduct, steps taken will follow other relevant policy responses to the behaviors identified, including the Employee and/or Volunteer Codes of Conduct and including any external obligations to report.

## **5. DETERMINE OUTCOME & RESPOND**

The individual filing the grievance will be contacted through an appropriate medium and advised of:

- The outcome of the grievance handling process and any action taken, if doing so would not constitute a violation of privacy or confidentiality,
- The reason/s for the decision made or action taken,
- The proposed remedy or resolutions, and
- Any available options for the individual to review, if there are multiple potential resolutions that the individual can be offered to choose from.

## **6. CLOSE - DOCUMENT & REVIEW**

Documentation will be kept regarding how we managed the grievance, the outcome, and any outstanding actions to be followed up on.

Any systemic issues that become clear pertaining to repeated grievances requiring action will be considered. This policy is meant to ensure that outcomes are properly implemented, monitored, and reported to appropriate management within Hillsong.