Client or Patient Complaints Regarding HCANZA Members:

All HCANZA members are bound by behaviour standards enshrined in the HCANZA Code of Conduct and Scope of Practice. If you believe a HCANZA Accredited Health & Wellness Coach, Associate member or student member is in breach of these standards, you can lodge a formal complaint with HCANZA.

If you are dissatisfied with a service, you have received from a HCANZA member we encourage you to first raise this with the individual member. Complaints are often more easily and quickly resolved informally.

If the informal approach has not worked or you do not feel comfortable approaching the HCANZA member, then you can lodge a written complaint for HCANZA to investigate.

HCANZA is committed to investigating all complaints regarding its members in a fair and impartial manner. Our approach is one of conflict resolution and redress action where possible.

We will investigate only formal, written complaints received in the appropriate form. We can only investigate complaints made against HCANZA members; we have no jurisdiction over coaches who are not members.

Important considerations before making a complaint:

All **formal complaints must be in writing and cannot be anonymous.** You can, however, ask that your identity not be disclosed to the subject of the complaint, although this may limit our ability to take specific redress action that may be required.

A **complaint can be made on behalf of a minor or vulnerable adult by a legal guardian or other authorised person.**

In addition, complaints **can also be initiated by another HCANZA member,** if they become aware of a breach of our Code of Conduct or Scope of Practice standards.

You must give **sufficient detail of the circumstances** to proceed (see section "How to make a complaint")

The complaint will ideally be **lodged within six (6) months of the incident**.

If your complaint is upheld, HCANZA can issue redress recommendations to a practising member including but not limited to:

- further training or mentoring,
- temporary suspension from HCANZA or
- removal from the association altogether.

For more detail, please see the redress section below under "What happens when HCANZA receives your complaint?".

Every HCANZA professional and associate member has professional indemnity insurance. We will direct the member to consider their professional indemnity insurance Financial Services Guide in detail and if the complaint is related specifically to an item under insurance coverage, we will recommend they report the complaint.

HCANZA cannot stop a person practising as a health & wellness coach in Australia, New Zealand or elsewhere or mandate that damages, of any kind, are paid.

Other avenues to complain:

Making a complaint to HCANZA does not prohibit you from making a complaint to the Commissioner or body in your State or New Zealand that oversees health practitioners that are otherwise unregulated. These regulatory bodies can make determinations regarding cessation of practice or damages where they feel it is appropriate. The list of such authorities within Australia and New Zealand and their contact details are listed at the end of this policy document.

How to make a complaint:

To fill out the complaint form you will need to:

- refer to our Code of Conduct and Scope of Practice standards page to be clear about what ethical standard that the health & wellness coach has violated
- have a clear account of what happened and what went wrong
- have the date/s of the incident and name of the health & wellness coach and the type of service in question including location and consultation type (zoom, in person, clinic rooms)
- decide if you are prepared for your identity to be known to the subject of the complaint, understanding that withholding your identity may limit the actions we can take. It is also important to understand that even if you do not wish your identity to be disclosed, the nature of the complaint may mean the health & wellness coach will be able to determine your identity anyway.
- Email your completed form to: admin@hcanza.org

What happens when HCANZA receives your complaint?

On receipt of the completed complaints form, the Executive Officer will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 5 working days.

The Executive Officer will then verify that the subject of the complaint is a HCANZA member and that the incident being reported is a breach of our Code of Conduct and/or Scope of Practice standards.

If the subject of the complaint is not a HCANZA member OR the matter is not a breach of our Code of Conduct or Scope of Practice standards, you will be notified of this outcome and the case will be closed. You are entitled to make a formal complaint to other government regulatory bodies. The contact details and websites of those organisations are listed at the end of this policy document.

If your complaint can be investigated, the Executive Officer will discuss the complaint with the Board Chairperson and then email you again to:

- inform you that HCANZA will investigate the matter
- provide an estimate of the timeframe for the complaint to be responded to
- advise you of your rights if you are not satisfied with HCANZA response.

At this stage only you, the Executive Officer and the Board Chair know the complaint details.

Next, the HCANZA member against whom the complaint has been made will be contacted in writing by the Executive Officer. They will receive a summary of the complaint made against them and the name of the person making the complaint unless you have asked to remain anonymous.

They will have up to 28 days in which to prepare a written reply to the complaint. This must be emailed to the Executive Officer.

The Executive Officer and the Board Chair will together consider both your complaint and the response from the member. If the matter is clear, they will make a determination for action or redress within 28 days. If the matter is complex/unclear, they may seek further information from both parties and/or they may refer the matter to the full Board for its consideration.

If the matter goes before the full Board, the names of both the HCANZA member and the person complaining will be excised from any documentation. Thus, the complaint is still only shared between the accused member, the complainant and the Executive Officer and the Chair of the Board. The decision of the Board will be final, and you will be notified of the outcome, usually within 90 days of our receipt of your complaint.

If your complaint is upheld

If your case is investigated by HCANZA and upheld we will email you a report of your complaint, outlining the investigations, conclusions and redress actions that were applied.

Redress actions may include but are not limited to:

- Censure of the member
- Advising the member to stop the activity that breaches the Code of Conduct or Scope of Practice standards
- Further training required to be undertaken by the member (at their own expense)
- Targeted supervision required to be undertaken by the member (at their own expense)
- Temporary suspension of the member from HCANZA for a certain period
- Removal of the member from HCANZA.

If your complaint is not upheld

If your case is investigated by HCANZA but not upheld, the Executive Officer will email you with an outline of your complaint, the investigations we undertook and the reason why it was not upheld.

Any member who is the subject of a complaint which proceeds to the investigation stage will be notified, given access to any material HCANZA has in relation to the complaint and given the opportunity to respond to the complaint.

Our general approach when a complaint is upheld is to help members who are the subject of a complaint to improve their knowledge, training, skills, and practice.

Complaints arising from lack of skills, knowledge, or awareness

When a complaint seems to have arisen from a lack skills or knowledge, HCANZA will work with the member to rectify the issue, specifically to require additional training and/or additional supervision. The subject of the complaint will need to undertake this at their own expense. We will follow up to ensure the work has been completed satisfactorily, for instance, by requiring a report from a supervisor or a certificate of completion if additional training is required.

However, if the subject of the complaint in these situations refuses or fails to comply with our recommendations, we will terminate the health & wellness coach's HCANZA membership.

Complaints involving inappropriate relationships

When a complaint involves an inappropriate relationship with a client, HCANZA will recommend termination of membership if the complaint is upheld. An inappropriate sexual relationship would automatically invoke termination of HCANZA membership.

Terminating membership

If we terminate membership, all mention of HCANZA must be removed from the former member's written, web or social media-based material within one month.

Upheld complaints

All complaints that are upheld will be recorded in the member's file. The same confidentiality as is provided with a written complaint is kept in relation to the filing of the complaint. The Board may, at its discretion, impose more stringent redress requirements upon members or applicants previously found to be in violation of the Code of Conduct and Scope of Practice standards (in the case where this is not the first offence).

NDIS

Australian HCANZA members, please be aware that any complaint that is upheld and related to National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) clients, this will be reported to the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA).

Other avenues of complaint

Each State and Territory in Australia has its own Health Complaint Entity / Commissioner with independent legal authority to investigate consumer complaints against healthcare practitioners, including health & wellness coaches. Following is a list of Health Complaints Entities/Commissioners in each Australian State and Territory.

In Australia there is a National Code of Conduct for health care workers which sets minimum standards of conduct and practice for all unregistered health care workers who provide a health service. Under this code, you can complain about incompetent or impaired health care workers or those behaving in exploitative, predatory or illegal ways.

A similar regulatory body in NZ is listed below.

These entities, including for New Zealand, are coordinated nationally through the Australasian Council of Health Complaint Entities (ACHCE), formed in December 2025.

Health Coaches
AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND ASSOCIATION

Australian State Regulatory Authorities	
ACT The ACT Human Rights Commission www.hrc.act.gov.au/health/ P: 02 6205 2222	**New South Wales** The Health Care Complaints Commission www.hccc.nsw.gov.au P: 02 9219 7444 1800 043 159
Victoria Health Complaints Commissioner hcc.vic.gov.au P: 1300 582 113	**Queensland** Office of the Health Ombudsman www.oho.qld.gov.au P: 133 646
South Australia Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner www.hcscc.sa.gov.au/making-a-complaint P: 08 8226 8666 1800 232 007	**Tasmania** Health Complaints Commissioner www.healthcomplaints.tas.gov.au P: 1800 001 170
Northern Territory Health and Community Services Complaints Commission www.hcscc.nt.gov.au P: 08 8999 1969 1800 004 474	**Western Australia** Health and Disability Services Complaints Office www.hadsco.wa.gov.au P: 08 6551 7600 1800 813 583
New Zealand Complaints Authority	
New Zealand Health and Disability Commissioner www.hdc.org.nz/making-a-complaint National Freephone: 0800 11 22 33	