



Complaints Factsheet

Principles

- Fair: the department deals with complaints impartially, confidentially and with empathy.
- Accessible: information about how to make a complaint is easy to find and complaints can be made online, verbally or in writing.
- Responsive: the department responds appropriately and supports people with particular needs.
- Efficient: complaints are resolved or referred as early as possible.
- Integrated: complaint management is integrated with departmental business processes.

Making a complaint

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about how the department's functions, services, decisions or conduct have been carried out.

Complaints may be made verbally or in writing. Contact details for the department are available on the department website.

Where a complaint has been lodged verbally and there is uncertainty about the situation, or if complex or serious matters are raised, the complainant may be encouraged to provide the complaint in writing.

Where another organisation is better placed to investigate, the department may assist the complainant to contact the relevant organisation.

The department adopts a no wrong door approach and directs complaints to the appropriate area for action.

Referral to police or support services

Where a complaint raises a risk of significant harm or an allegation of criminal conduct, the matter will generally be referred to police or another appropriate authority.

Anonymous complaints

The department will generally consider anonymous complaints, although investigation or response options may be limited.

Confidential complaints

A complainant may request confidentiality. The department will explain any limitations this may create.

Unreasonable complainant conduct

The department manages unreasonable complainant conduct in line with Commonwealth Ombudsman guidance.

Examples of unreasonable complainant conduct:

- Persistently requesting unreasonable remedies
- Insisting on speaking only to the head of the department
- Seeking to direct how a complaint is handled
- Aggressive language or behaviour

Management of complaints

Where possible, complaints are addressed quickly and informally. More complex complaints may require assessment and investigation.

Step	Description
1. Acknowledgement	The department will acknowledge the complaint within five business days.
2. Assessment	The complaint will be allocated for assessment, prioritisation and action
3. Investigation	Where necessary, an investigation will be undertaken to resolve the issues raised.
4. Response	The department aims to provide a response within 30 calendar days, subject to complexity.
5. Review	Internal or external review options may be available, including through the Commonwealth Ombudsman.