

Complaints Guidelines

Easy Read Version



How to Use This Document

easy read



This information is written in an easy to read way. We use pictures to explain some ideas.



This document has been written by Our Voice Our Choice. When you see this picture it means all of Our Voice Our Choice Team.



This easy read document is a summary of another document.



You can ask for help to read this document. A friend, family member or supported person may be able to help you.

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What is a complaint?



We offer you different services

- Accommodation - a place to live
- Day activities – your day activities
- Case Co-Ordination – looking after the services you use
- Employment – the work you do

If you aren't happy with our service, you can tell us.

This is called a complaint.

Someone who makes a complaint is called a complainant.

Complaints we deal with

We deal with complaints about 5 main areas of our services:



1: Service access – finding & using services we offer.

2: Service delivery – our direct service

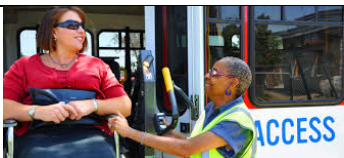
3: Policy – the way we do things

4: Privacy – how we handle our information



5: Staff – how staff behave & how they treat people.

Service Access

We will listen to complaints about:





Access to services we already offer

 	<p>Not giving you a reason why we won't provide you with a service.</p> <p>Not having enough services available</p>
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Service Delivery

We will listen to complaints about:

 	<p>Direct services we provide</p> <p>How we provide these services</p>
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Policy

We will listen to complaints about:

	<p>The policies we have</p>
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How well our staff follow policies

Privacy

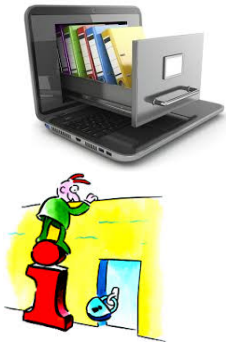
We will listen to complaints about:



How we collect your personal information



How we use your personal information



How secure we keep personal information we collect

Your right to access information we keep about you

Staff

We will listen to complaints about:



How Our Voice Our Choice staff behave

How well Our Voice Our Choice staff treat you



If your complaint about our staff is serious it may need to go to an external company

They will handle serious complaints about...

Abuse – treating you badly & making you feel unsafe

Neglect – leaving you alone or ignoring you

About our services



“We are committed to providing service which help people”

Meet their needs
Use their strengths
Meet their goals



“We want to make sure any complaint we get is handled in away that”

Is fair & everyone is treated equally

Matches what we say,
The law, &
Our policies

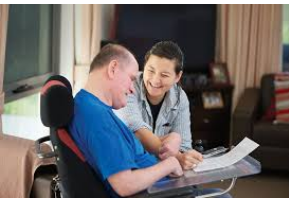
Gets a good result for everyone



“We want to make sure that older people & people with a disability”

Have choice & control over their own lives

Are valued active members of the
community



We want to work closely with families & carers so we can help them too

“Our service charter talks about”

The standard of service you can get from us

How you can help us meet your needs




What can you do if you don't think the service is good enough

Why do we need guidelines?





The guidelines help our staff deal with complaints about our service

“We need guidelines so that complaints are”

  	<p>Treated in a way that is fair</p> <p>Handled so results match what the law says</p> <p>Handled so results match what our policy says</p>
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They help us make sure we are:

 	<p>Providing the best disability direct services we can</p> <p>Treating all complaints in the same way</p>
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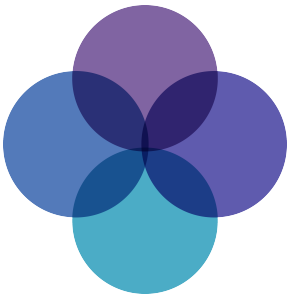
“We need to review these guidelines”



Every 3 years



If there are changes to the law



If there are big changes at OUR Voice Our Choice

Other Complaints



The guidelines don't apply to every type of complaint

Other types of complaints will be handled differently

“These include”



Problems between our staff

Appeals made against decisions we make about services

Contracts we have with service providers

Requests for services or information

Feedback – ideas about things we could do differently

Concerns – things you worry about

Incidents – things that happen causing damage or causing people to get hurt

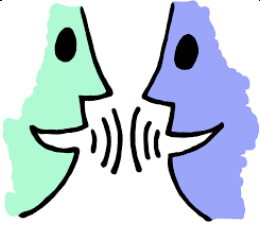
Fraud – giving us information that is not true

How we take care of complaints

Receiving a complaint



In Writing



By talking to us

“Written complaints can be made by”

Writing a letter or an email

Filling out a complaint form – on paper or online

“You can tell us your complaint”

In person

On the telephone

If you need help to make your complaint, we will find the best way for you

Responding to a complaint

**WE HAVE
RECEIVED A
COMPLAINT.**

QUOTEID.COM

Melissa Marr

We will let you know straight away we have received your complaint.



We will respond to your complaint in the same way you give it to us.
For example, if you send us an email, we will send you an email.



We will respond to your complaint within 5 days of receiving it.



If we can fix a complaint straight away, we will.

Recording Complaints



We have a system for recording information about complaints.



The information we record needs to be:
Accurate



Recorded within 5 days of receiving the complaint.

Working out what you expect



After we receive your complaint we will contact you to find out:

What you think should happen

How long you think it should take

Information we have is not clear, we will talk to you before we look into the complaint.

We will try our best to do what you need us to do.

Taking a further complaint

**WE HAVE
RECEIVED A
COMPLAINT.**

QUOTEID.COM

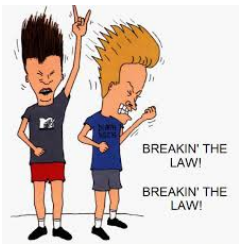
Melissa Perez



All complaints should be taken care of by staff in the office that receives the complaint.

Our staff should make sure they talk to the right person before they look into the complaint.

The best person to talk to is the person who looks after the service or the area the



complaint is about.

Serious complaints should be taken straight to the manager.

Serious complaints might be about abuse or somebody breaking the law.

If a complaint can't be taken care of by our staff in the office that receives the complaint, our senior managers will decide:
What to do about it
Who will look into it

Looking into a complaint

**WE HAVE
RECEIVED A
COMPLAINT.**

QUOTED.COM

Melissa Hertz



When we look at a complaint, we will gather all the facts first.

We might talk to the manager so we can work out how to handle the complaint.



We might develop an action plan that has the steps we take to resolve the complaint.

Sometimes an external party may need to get involved with a complaint.

They might:

Give you advice

Look into the complaint themselves

Managers need to think whether our external party should be involved when they first get the complaint.

If they think an external party should be involved they should definitely talk to them.

It shouldn't take more than 20 days to resolve a complaint.

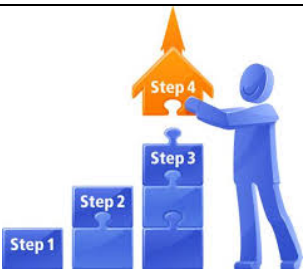


It might take longer than that if:
We have trouble getting information
The case is harder to solve than we expected

We will let you know if there is a delay.

We will keep information about the delay in our records.

Closing a complaint



When we have gone through all steps of the guidelines, we will close the complaint.



We will record the outcome in our system.



We will tell you the outcome & how you can appeal the outcome if you're not happy with it.



We will ask you for feedback about how we handled your complaint.



We can't always make you happy with the outcome of your complaint or give you everything you want.



If you're not happy, you can ask us to review our decision.



The complaint will be reviewed by staff who didn't take part in fixing the complaint first time.



They need to follow all steps in these guidelines.



They should only change the outcome if it Didn't match what is in our policies
Was different from similar complaints made before
Brings up new information we didn't have first time.



The NSW Government has people who can look into complaints about government agencies & the people who work for them.



You can contact them if you don't like the outcome of the complaint you have made.



This is called an external review
Their contact details are on page 23

Other things to think about



Anonymous Complaints
You don't have to tell us who you are when you make a complaint.
We call this an anonymous complaint.



We will:
Accept complaints that are made anonymously
Look into them as much as we can



They will be treated with the same importance as other complaints.

Natural Justice



We are committed to handling complaints in a way that provides “natural justice”



This means we will do everything we can to:

Be fair & treat everyone equally



Let everybody involved in the complaint know what to expect

Be open about what we do

Be seen doing the things we need to do

Let you choose somebody to be your contact person

Give everyone an equal chance to take part

Treat everyone with respect

Give reasons for the decisions we make

Privacy & Confidentiality



We need to keep your identity private in case somebody gets upset about the complaint.



We will make sure that only the people looking into the complaint know who you are.



If we need extra people to help us with the complaint, we will ask you before we tell them who you are.

Sometimes we need to take complaints to people outside HunterLife



We need to tell police about criminal behavior



We need to tell police & community services about people being treated badly

I·C·A·C

INDEPENDENT COMMISSION
AGAINST CORRUPTION

NEW SOUTH WALES

We need to tell the Independent Commission Against Corruption about very bad behavior

Unreasonable Complaints



Sometimes people who are upset or angry make complaints because of how they are feeling



We call these complaints unreasonable or vexatious



They might involve someone:

Always asking for the same thing or things they don't deserve



Who isn't listening to what they have been asked



Arguing or disagreeing with other staff



Doing things at work that they shouldn't be doing



If we think a complaint is unreasonable or vexatious we will listen to the complaint but won't take it any further.

We will tell the person:



Why we aren't looking into their complaint
Who else might be able to help them

Abusive complaints or complainants



Our staff deserve to be treated with respect when they handle complaints.



Our staff will be respectful and courteous when they handle complaints.

Our staff will stop looking into a complaint if you:



Are rude
Make threats
Harass them



Before we stop we will think about:
Your emotional state of the complaint
How well you communicate.






We will tell you we will look after your complaint when you can:

Be calm
Behave in a respectful way.





We will make sure we have:

Responded to all the important details you have given us

  	<p>Done an internal review of how we handled the complaint.</p> <p>Referred the complaint to somebody outside Our Voice Our Choice if needed.</p> <p>We might need to think about how we work with you in the future.</p>
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Making a complaint

 	<p>Complaints in writing</p> <p>You can send your complaint in an email to: feedback@ourvoiceourchoice.com.au</p> <p>You can complain online: www.ourvoiceourchoice.com.au > feedback button or contact us. Make a comment, enquiry, complaint or compliment</p>
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You can send it to us in the mail:
Our Voice Our Choice
10 Morpeth Road
East Maitland NSW 2323

You can call us to make a complaint:
0419 915 100

Contacts for external review



Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW
For complaints under the Anti-Discrimination act 1977 (NSW)
www.antidiscrimination.justice.nsw.gov.au
PH: 02) 9268 5544
1800 670 812 (regional only)

Guardianship Division within NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal
For adults who can't make their own decisions and who might need a guardian.
www.ncat.nsw.gov.au
PH: 1300 006 228



**Health Care
Complaints
Commission**

Health Care Complaints Commission
For complaints about individual health practitioners, such as doctors, and health service organisations, such as hospitals NSW.

www.hccc.nsw.gov.au

1800 043 159



NATIONAL DISABILITY
ABUSE AND NEGLECT
HOTLINE
1800 880 052

TTY 1800 301 130 | NRS 1800 555 677 | TIS 13 14 50

National Disability Abuse and Neglect
Hotline

For reporting abuse and neglect of people with disabilities using government funded services.

www.disabilityhotline.net.au

1800 880 052

NSW Ombudsman (Ombo)

About the behavior of a community service provider or their staff.

www.ombo.nsw.gov.au

1800 451 524 (toll free) or 02) 9286 1000
(Sydney)

Office of the Australian Information
Commissioner



Australian Government

**Office of the Australian
Information Commissioner**

For complaints about agencies covered by the Privacy Act 1988 (privacy act) or the handling of your personal information.

www.oaic.gov.au

1300 363 992

Complaining to us is free, here is a form on the next page to help you make a complaint.

Complaint form



Person making the complaint

First Name:



Surname:

Who is the complaint about?



It's about me



It's about someone else.

How do you know this person?



How do you like to be contacted?

On my home phone, my number is



On my mobile phone, my number is



On my work phone, my number is



By mail to my home, my address is



By email, my email address is



Do you any special communication needs?

No

Yes

Please tell us what you need:

What is your complaint about?

What would you like us to do about your complaint?

Have you already told someone from Our Voice Our Choice about your complaint?

Yes

No

Who did you tell?
