

Schedule 3 – Complaints information

Document no.	Date	Document	Status	Reason for Exemption	Online release status
1	Undated	Fact sheet: short guide to complaints handling	Full release		Full release
2	Undated	Alternative avenues for pursuing concerns regarding services provided by the Office for Children, Youth and Family Support	Full release		Full release



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Short Guide to Complaints Handling

Improving Services

The Community Services Directorate provides a wide range of human services to the Canberra community. By listening to your concerns we can improve our services. We will deal with your concerns promptly, fairly and respectfully.

Complaints

We define a complaint as an expression of dissatisfaction in relation to a service provided by or on behalf of the Community Services Directorate.

You or your representatives have the right to raise your concerns. This information supports us to improve services and supports your right to make decisions and choices about services delivered or funded by us.

You can expect to:

- Be treated respectfully, fairly and in confidence
- Have the matter dealt with as soon as possible
- Be informed of progress
- Be told of the outcome

If I have a complaint, what should I do first?

If you have a complaint or concern, here are some steps you can take to help us help you:

1. **Go local first:** Concerns can often be resolved quickly and easily by speaking to the staff you have most direct contact with. Give them a chance to fix the problem if you think they can.
2. **Act quickly:** Please tell us about the problem as soon as possible. The earlier you tell us the faster we can act.
3. **Provide information:** Make sure you give us as much information as possible to help us resolve your problem.



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Who else will know about my complaint?

Your complaint will be dealt with in a confidential manner and will only be discussed with the people directly involved in responding to the management of the complaint.

What happens once I make a complaint?

- Usually the best way to resolve a problem is to talk to the person in the area who provides the service or has made the decisions concerning you or your family.
- If you are dissatisfied after this you can talk to a supervisor, Team Leader or Manager about your complaint.
- If you are still dissatisfied you can ask to be referred to the Business Unit Complaint area.
- The complaint area will try to clarify the issues of your complaint, the main concerns you want us to look into and the expectations you have with regard to the issues raised and the outcome you are seeking.
- If you choose to lodge a complaint within the Directorate you can expect the following:
 - A written acknowledgement of the complaint within **two (2)** working days following the receipt of the complaint.
 - A written response to the complaint issues within **thirty (30)** working days unless an extension has been agreed to in consultation with you. This can sometimes occur when there are complex issues to investigate.
 - Advice on what steps you can take if you are dissatisfied with the response.

How do I make a complaint?

- Call us directly on 13 3427 (13DHCS) and ask to speak with a Manager of the Business Unit you wish to complain about
- Send an email to CSD@act.gov.au
- Fill in the online Client Feedback Form at:
www.dhcs.act.gov.au/home/complaints_and_advocacy/client_feedback_form
- Ask any staff member for a copy of our Complaints/Feedback Form. You can give the form to one of our staff or post it to us at PO Box 158, Canberra ACT, 2601



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Where else can I go for help?

ACT Human Rights Commission

You can also make a complaint to the relevant Commissioner at the ACT Human Rights Commission if you are dissatisfied with a service provided by us. The Commission recommends that you first try to resolve your complaint directly with us where possible. For more information, visit: www.hrc.act.gov.au or call (02) 6205 2222.

ACT Ombudsman

Information about the role of the ACT Ombudsman can be found at www.ombudsman.act.gov.au or call 1300 362 072.

Contact details of other external review agencies are available on a separate Factsheet called 'ACT External Review Agencies'.

Further information

The Community Service Directorates *Complaints Handling and Management Platform* outlines the principles for management of complaints and provides detailed guidelines to help our employees in responding to complaints received. A copy is available at www.dhcs.act.gov.au.

You can also get a copy from the Consumer Advocacy and Quality Service on (02) 6207 4504 or 6205 0473 or via email at senioradvocate@act.gov.au.

Need help with reading this form?

If you have difficulty reading a standard printed document and would like to receive this publication in an alternative format – such as large print or audio – please telephone (02) 6205 0619.

If English is not your first language and you would like the translating and interpreting service please telephone 131 450.

If you are deaf or hearing impaired and would like the TTY typewriter service please telephone 133 677.

**Alternative avenues for pursuing concerns regarding services provided
by the Office for Children, Youth and Family Support**

Decision Review Panel, Office for Children, Youth and Family Support

The Decisions Review Panel (DRP) has been established as a mechanism for reviewing administrative decisions made by the Office for Children, Youth and Family Support. Referrals to the DRP are accepted according to certain criteria. For more information contact the Complaints Officer on 6207 5294 or at OCYFS@act.gov.au.

Consumer Advocacy and Quality Services (CAQS)

CAQS' role is to advocate for individuals and seeks to improve services provided by the Community Services Directorate. CAQS can be contacted on 6205 0473 or 6207 4504.

Office of the Public Advocate (ACT)

The Public Advocate represents the rights of people who are not able to represent themselves. Further information can be obtained at www.publicadvocate.act.gov.au or call 6207 0707

The Commissioner for Children and Young People

The Commissioner for Children and Young People can help resolve complaints about services for Children and Young People. Further information can be obtained from www.hrc.gov.au or call 6205 2222.