

Complaints Guidelines

Easy Read Version



How to Use This Document



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



This document has been written by Our Choice Our Voice.



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
- 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

Not giving you a reason why we won't provide you with a service.

Not having enough services available

Service Delivery

We will listen to complaints about:



Direct services we provide

How we provide these services

Policy

We will listen to complaints about:



The policies we have



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 that way”

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”



Treated in a way that is fair

Handled so results match what the law states



Handled so results match what our policies state

They help us make sure we are:



Providing the best disability direct services we can

Treating all complaints in the same way

“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

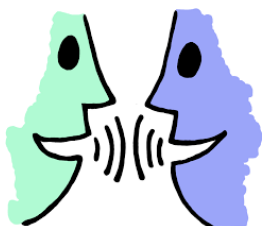


How we take care of our complaints

Receiving a complaint



In Writing



By talking to us



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.**

QUOTEHD.COM

Melissa Merz



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 Herz



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



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.

20



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.



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 Our Voice Our Choice



We need to tell police about criminal behavior

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

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

Done an internal review of how we handled the complaint.

Referred the complaint to somebody outside Hunter Life if needed.

We might need to think about how we work with you in the future.



Making a complaint



Complaints in writing

You can send your complaint in an email to:
feedback@ovoc.com.au



You can complain online:

<https://ovoc.com.au/contact/feedback/>



You can send it to us in the mail:

PO Box: 2110 East Maitland, 2323



You can call us to make a complaint:

(02) 4058 3358

Contacts for external review



**NDIS Quality
and Safeguards
Commission**

The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission is a new independent agency established to improve the quality and safety of NDIS supports and services.

<https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/participants/complaints>

PH: 1800 035 544



NSW Ombudsman (Ombo)
About the behavior of a community service provider or their staff.

<https://www.ombo.nsw.gov.au/>

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



Disability Advocacy NSW (DA) is a program of [Advocacy Law Alliance Inc.](#)

<https://da.org.au/contact-us/>

PH 1300 365 085 or
(02) 4927 0111



NCAT
NSW Civil &
Administrative Tribunal

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



Australian Government

**Office of the Australian
Information Commissioner**



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. On the next page is a form to help you make a complaint:

Complaint form

 	<p>Person making the complaint</p> <p>First Name:</p> <hr/> <p>Surname:</p> <hr/> <p>Who is the complaint about?</p> <p>It's about me</p> <p>It's about someone else.</p> <p>How do you know this person?</p> <hr/> <hr/>
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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?
