

# COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT & RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

Applies to: The Organisation

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Authorised by: CEO



## 1. Purpose

Direct Care Australia (DCA) is committed to having a feedback and complaints mechanism that supports the rights of individuals to provide feedback and/or raise any problems or concerns in a non-threatening (blame-free) and confidential manner so that a resolution can be reached in a timely manner. In so doing DCA acknowledges the following:

- (a) Feedback and complaints can lead to improved services, communication and sometimes changes to policies and procedures, and the way we deliver services.
- (b) Complaints and feedback are used to inform how we train and educate our people.

Customers can lodge complaints, feedback and/or raise an enquiry/dispute in writing via post, email, in person at our head office, or over the phone with a member of our team.

**Phone:** 08 8336 8861 between the hours of 8:00am - 5.00pm.  
**After Hours Emergency Only:** 08 8336 8861 (5:00pm – 8:00am)  
**Email:** [feedback@directcare.com.au](mailto:feedback@directcare.com.au)  
**Website:** [www.directcare.com.au/contact/feedback](http://www.directcare.com.au/contact/feedback)  
**In Writing:** [PO Box 1029 Campbelltown SA 5074](mailto:PO Box 1029 Campbelltown SA 5074)

## 2. Scope

This policy relates to any persons in receipt or impacted by Direct Care Australia. This includes clients, their representatives, staff and contractors.

## 3. Delegations

The Chief Executive Officer as responsible officer has delegated authority to ensure the satisfactory resolution of all feedback and complaints.

The Business Support Manager and Client Relationship Manager will manage the receipt and resolution of all feedback and complaints.

All DCA staff are required to know how to respond and refer feedback and complaints to ensure timely acknowledgement and resolution.

## 4. Process

Direct Care Australia categorises the level of complaints into first, second, third level resolution. The level of resolution depends on the type and nature of the complaint. This section describes each of these categories and the steps undertaken to resolve the complaint.

In the first instance, and if they feel comfortable in doing so, we encourage complainants to lodge their complaint directly with Direct Care Australia following the procedures stated below. However, if a complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of our processes, or if they feel more comfortable, the complainant has the right to lodge the complaint directly with the relevant external agency detailed in **section 5** below.

### 4.1 First Level Resolution

A First Level Resolution complaint is defined as either:

- (a) First contact resolution – the complaint is resolved at the time of contact, through the appropriate distribution channel and **within 3 working days of receipt**, or
- (b) Staff review – where the first contact resolution complaint has been unsatisfactorily resolved, or the complaint is sensitive or complex in nature, a second level review is undertaken by an appropriately

nominated staff member. All First Level Resolution complaints must be resolved within **three (3) working days** of receipt of the complaint.

#### **4.2 Second Level Resolution**

A Second Level Resolution complaint is defined as follows:

(a) Referred to Line Manager – the First Level Resolution has failed to resolve the complaint/dispute, or the complaint/dispute is more sensitive or complex in nature; the complaint/dispute is then escalated to the Line Manager for review and consideration.

(b) All Second Level Resolution complaints/disputes must be resolved **within 14 working days** of receipt of the complaint.

#### **4.3 Third Level Resolution**

A Third Level Resolution complaint is defined as:

(a) Escalation of complaints and disputes (Level 1 and Level 2).

Direct Care Australia must respond directly to the complainant and advise relevant parties (including relevant external agencies if applicable) of the action taken and response provided.

(b) All Third Level Resolution complaints will require intervention by relevant external body and/or ombudsman.

(c) **Serious complaints** involving dangerous bodily harm, criminal activity, abuse and/or neglect MUST be reported immediately to the Chief Executive Officer who will promptly report the matter to the NDIS Quality & Safeguards or Aged Care Quality & Safety Commission for investigation.

If possible, all Level 3 complaints must be resolved **within 14 days** of referral to a relevant external agency. Direct Care Australia must respond promptly to a relevant external agency to facilitate and encourage prompt resolution of matters.

### **5. External Contacts:**

#### **5.1 NDIS Q&S Commission Complaints**

- Phone: **1800 035 544** (free call from landlines) or TTY **133 677**. Interpreters can be arranged.
- National Relay Service and ask for 1800 035 544.
- Completing a complaint contact form online: [www.ndis.gov.au/contact/feedback-and-complaints](http://www.ndis.gov.au/contact/feedback-and-complaints)

#### **5.2 Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission Complaints**

- **Online:** [agedcarequality.gov.au](http://agedcarequality.gov.au)
- **Phone:** 1800 951 822
- In writing address your written complaint to:

Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission  
GPO Box 9819  
(Your capital city and state or territory)

#### **5.3 Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner**

Helps people, carers and service providers resolve complaints about most health and community services in South Australia. <http://www.hcsc.sa.gov.au/>, phone (08) 8226 8666, or 1800 232 007 (SA regional)

#### **5.4 Ombudsman SA**

Can investigate complaints about the administrative actions of the **Department for Health and Ageing**, and the **Local Health Networks**. You can find contact information for state government

departments and bodies at [www.sa.gov.au/government](http://www.sa.gov.au/government) and contact details for local government at [www.lga.sa.gov.au](http://www.lga.sa.gov.au).

## **6.0 Monitoring and reporting on complaints**

Monitoring and reporting is an important part of the complaints handling process. It is the responsibility of the Client Relationship Manager to monitor and review various aspects of the complaints handling process. To this end, procedures have been established to enable appropriate monitoring, review and for continuous improvement.

## **7.0 Independent Advocacy**

Direct Care Australia recognizes the right of all complainants and their representatives to access and engage independent advocacy to exercise choice and control and to have their voice heard in matters that affect them. We acknowledge the important role of advocates (including independent advocates) and other representatives of persons with disability; and we will cooperate with, and facilitate arrangements for, advocates (including independent advocates) and other representatives.

### **7.1 Advocacy Finder**

To find a disability or aged care advocate:

[Disability Advocacy Finder](https://disabilityadvocacyfinder.dss.gov.au/disability/ndap/)

<https://disabilityadvocacyfinder.dss.gov.au/disability/ndap/>

[Aged Care Advocacy Finder](https://www.myagedcare.gov.au/quality-and-complaints/advocacy-services)

<https://www.myagedcare.gov.au/quality-and-complaints/advocacy-services>

## **RELATED LEGISLATION OR STANDARD**

Guardianship and Administration Act 1993

National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013

NDIS Practice Standards – Core Module (Standard 2)

Aged Care Act 1997

User Rights Principles 2014

Complaints Principles 2014

Aged Care Quality Standards (Standard 6)

Privacy Act 1988

National Disability Insurance Scheme - *Complaints Management and Resolution Rules 2018*

## **RELATED FORMS**

Feedback Form

Have Your Say Fact Sheet