

A guide to making a complaint

Our commitment to you

The Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services works to strengthen and protect the wellbeing of Queenslanders, particularly those who are vulnerable and most in need. Our aim is to build fair, cohesive and vibrant communities, and to promote positive community outcomes.

To achieve this, we connect people to services, and each other.

If you are not satisfied with a service we have provided, or a decision we have made, we would like to know.

Your complaint will provide us with information to help improve the quality of our services and decisions made.

The department believes community members have a right to express dissatisfaction with services offered by the department without fear of reprisal. This includes women, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, seniors and frail aged people, young people, children and families, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people with mental illness, volunteers, people with a disability, their families and carers, and people who are homeless.

You can make a complaint at your nearest regional office at any time. To find your nearest office, visit our website at www.communities.qld.gov.au.

If staff are unable to help you, they may refer your complaint to the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services Complaints and Review area for further assessment.



Photo: Jupiterimages/Comstock/Thinstock

What can I complain about?

The Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services can deal with complaints regarding all departmental and funded non-government services provided (or not being provided) to community members.

Complaints can be made regarding a range of issues, including:

- actions taken or decisions made by the department
- standards of care or access to programs
- appropriateness and quality of services
- agency practices, policies and procedures, and their impact on the community.

How do I make a complaint?

To make a complaint, there are some steps you can take to help us help you.

1. Make your complaint clear

Write down everything relevant to the issue in the order in which it happened.

Make sure you include a description of what happened, dates, phone calls, letters and meetings.

Let us know the outcome you are seeking or the action you want us to take with regard to your complaint.

2. Then go local

Many complaints can be resolved by speaking with departmental staff or the service provider in the first instance.

3. The next step

If you are unhappy with the response to your complaint, please tell the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services Complaints and Review area as soon as possible. We can then take further action on your behalf.

What if I am uncomfortable reporting my complaint to local staff?

If you do not wish to report your complaint to local staff, or they have not been able to deal with a complaint to your satisfaction, you can take your complaint to the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services Complaints and Review area.

How can I make a complaint to the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services Complaints and Review area?

You can make a complaint by sending an email, letter or speaking to any complaints officer at the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services Complaints and Review area.

If necessary, a complaints officer will help you get the issue clear in your mind and write down all the details of your complaint.

The complaints officer will then consider if they need to gather further information before deciding on the best way to help. They will try to find an approach to resolve the problem in a way that meets your needs. This may mean asking the organisation that provided the service to talk with you directly about resolving the problem.



Photo: Jupiterimages/Comstock/Thinkstock

What if I need help to make my complaint?

We are keen to make sure you have all the help you need to make a complaint. We can help you by:

- arranging an interpreter
- letting you know where you can get further help and information
- providing help if you are hearing impaired
- providing support to access an independent support person of your choice
- providing information in appropriate formats when required.

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.

How will my complaint be managed?

The Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services is committed to providing an accessible, responsive and timely complaints management process.

The department uses the Australian Standards AS ISO 10002 – 2006 Customer Satisfaction – Guidelines for complaints handling in organisations as a guide for managing complaints.

How will I know what is happening with my complaint?

The departmental officer managing your complaint will keep you informed on the progress of your complaint and any action taken.

On completion of the complaint process, the departmental officer will take note of how your complaint was managed and whether you are satisfied with the outcome.

What can I do if I am unhappy with how my complaint has been handled?

If you are unhappy with how the department has handled your complaint, you can request the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services Complaints and Review area to assess how your complaint was handled. If, following this review, you are still unhappy, you can contact the Queensland Ombudsman to request an independent review by calling 1800 068 908 or emailing ombudsman@ombudsman.qld.gov.au.

If the department cannot resolve my complaint, which agency may be able to help?

While every attempt will be made to resolve your complaint, sometimes the department may not be the most appropriate agency or organisation to resolve your complaint.

Other key complaint resolution contact numbers are:

Office of the Adult Guardian..... **1300 653 187**

Health Quality and Complaints Commission..... **1800 077 308**

Anti-Discrimination Commission of Queensland..... **1300 130 670 or TTY 1300 130 680**

Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency..... **1300 419 495**

Queensland Civil and Administration Tribunal..... **1300 753 228**

Queensland Ombudsman..... **1800 068 908**

Crime and Misconduct Commission **1800 061 611**

What to do if you have witnessed a life-threatening or time-critical emergency

If you have witnessed a life-threatening or time-critical emergency, you should call Triple Zero (000).

To report non-urgent matters or to make general police non-urgent enquiries, call Policelink 131 444 or visit your local police station.

For more information or help with making a complaint

Write to us

Complaints and Review
Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services
GPO Box 806, Brisbane Qld 4001

Email us

feedback@communities.qld.gov.au

Call us

- For complaints about Child Safety or Disability and Community Services, call the Central Complaints and Review Unit on free call **1800 080 464**.
- If you are deaf, or have a hearing or speech impairment, and need assistance with making a complaint, contact the National Relay Service, NRS, on **1300 555 727**.

- For a copy of this brochure in an alternative format, including large print, contact the Central Complaints and Review Unit on **1800 080 464** or email feedback@communities.qld.gov.au.
- For an interpreter, contact the Translating and Interpreting Service, TIS National: call **131 450** and ask to be connected to **13 QGOV (13 74 68)**.
- For general enquiries about the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, call **13 QGOV (13 74 68)**.

