



COMMISSION FOR CHILDREN
AND YOUNG PEOPLE

For Official Use Only

External complaints regarding the Commission for Children and Young People - Policy

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1 Overview

This policy outlines the Commission for Children and Young People's (the Commission) policy and processes relating to external complaints received regarding the Commission.

Members of the public have the right to complain regarding the response of the Commission to their engagement with the services provided by the Commission. The Commission is committed to handling complaints appropriately and creating a culture that encourages feedback and complaints.

The Commission will aim to learn from complaints it receives to help improve the services provided.

This policy has been developed utilising the Victorian Ombudsman 'Complaints: Good Practice Guide for Public Sector Agencies (September 2016)'.

2 Objectives

This policy aims to:

- put in place an open and transparent complaint handling system
- specify the key performance indicators to which we will hold ourselves accountable
- establish our timeframes for resolving complaints
- clarify the roles and responsibilities of agency staff
- ensure staff handle complaints fairly and objectively
- set out how staff record and analyse complaint data to identify where we can improve our services.

3 Guiding principles

This policy is based on seven principles.

1. Commitment

We are committed to resolving complaints and having a culture that recognises an individual's right to complain. We value complaints and recognise them as being part of our business of serving our communities and improving service delivery.

2. Accessibility

People with a range of needs can easily complain and staff actively assist them to navigate the complaints process.

3. Transparency

We make it clear how to complain, where to complain and how the complaint will be handled. The steps taken to respond to a complaint are recorded and will stand up to scrutiny.

4. Objectivity and fairness

Complaints are dealt with courteously, impartially, within established timeframes and are assessed on merit.

5. Privacy

Complaint information is handled according to privacy laws and other relevant legislation. We provide clear information about how we handle personal information. Complaint data is de-identified if reported on more widely.

6. Accountability

We are accountable internally and externally for our decision making and complaint handling performance. We provide explanations and reasons for decisions and ensure that our decisions are subject to appropriate review processes.

7. Continuous improvement

Acting on, learning from and using complaint data helps us identify problems and improve the Commission's services.

4 Scope

This external complaint policy applies to all Commission staff, including contractors and volunteers.

5 Definitions

Complaint: an expression of dissatisfaction with the quality of an action taken, decision made, or service provided by an agency or its contractor, or a delay or failure in providing a service, taking an action, or making a decision by an agency or its contractor.

6 Roles and responsibilities of staff

Frontline staff: the initial contact point and resolution of informal (non-investigative) complaints.

Managers: responsible for signing off on informal complaints dealt with by frontline staff, or, manage complaints that have been escalated by frontline staff and/or require an investigation. Managers include the Director, Regulation.

Chief Executive Officer: to sign off on complaint investigations by Managers, or, deal with complaints that have been escalated by Managers.

7 How to make a complaint

A person can make a complaint a number of ways.

Mail: Level 18, 570 Bourke Street, Melbourne 3000

Telephone: 03 8601 5281

Email: contact@ccyp.vic.gov.au

8 Complaint resolution

The Commission will acknowledge all complaints within five business days of receipt.

Complaint handling staff will aim to resolve all complaints within 28 days. If it takes longer than 28 days to resolve a complaint, the Commission will contact the complainant prior to, or at this time, and explain why the matter cannot be resolved within that time.

Once a complaint is resolved, the Commission will write to a complainant and advise them of the outcome.

8.1 Responding to complaints from children

When a complaint is made by a child who may (or may not) also be an alleged victim of abuse, the Commission will incorporate an approach that is appropriate in responding to a child. This may include a support person such as a family member or carer of the child to assist in the process.

Depending on the scenario, additional support may need to be offered to any child who may be distressed as a result of an investigation into a complaint.

8.2 Internal review

A complainant may seek an internal review by the Commission of any outcome to a complaint.

The internal review will aim to be completed within 28 days.

An outcome letter signed by the senior officer responsible for the internal review will be provided to the complainant at the conclusion of every internal review.

A complainant will also be informed of any avenues of external review available in relation to the matter, such as the Victorian Ombudsman.

9 Privacy

When gathering information to respond to a complaint, the Commission will only:

- use it to deal with the complaint or to address systemic issues arising from the complaint
- disclose it in a de-identified format when disclosing data to the public
- share it with staff on a need to know basis.