

Voicing Your Concerns

**Department of Human Services
Southern Metropolitan Region
Complaints Procedures**

The Department of Human Services provides a range of services to people throughout Victoria. The Department aims to enhance and protect the health and wellbeing of all Victorians, in particular, vulnerable groups and those most in need. The Department, its programs and staff endeavour to provide a high quality service.

You may wish to provide comment or congratulations, or make a complaint about the advice, actions taken or service received by staff.

The Department of Human Services, Southern Metropolitan Region welcomes your comments and complaints as they help us improve our work for the community of Victoria.

Making Your Comments

If you would like to congratulate the Department or make comment about the service provided by any program or from a staff member of the Department of Human Services, Southern Metropolitan Region you can ring or write to the Community Liaison Adviser.

You can complain about a service provided by any program or from a staff member of the Department of Human Services, Southern Metropolitan Region, if you believe they:

- Failed to provide satisfactory care.
 - Failed to provide enough information or denied you the right to choose.
 - Denied your respect, dignity or privacy.
 - Have been negligent or unprofessional
- or
- Caused you concern for any other reason.

At times, you may not be satisfied with a decision made by the Department. The Community Liaison Adviser provides you with an avenue for having your concerns looked at if you are dissatisfied.

Who Can Complain?

You can make a complaint about a service if you are a client of a service, a friend, relative or guardian of a client, a service provider or anyone with a legitimate interest in the issue.

Wherever possible, you should try to resolve the complaints directly with the staff you have been dealing with.

If the complaint is not resolved, you should ask to speak to the Manager, or you may want to contact the Community Liaison Adviser who will be able to assist you with your complaint.

Community Liaison Adviser

The Community Liaison Adviser reports directly to the Regional Director and is available to assist you with your complaint. Personal information provided in complaints will be handled in accordance with privacy legislation and policy.

The Community Liaison Adviser will:

- Listen to you.
- Give you information.
- Help you take your complaint to the relevant program area.
- Refer your complaint to external agencies for further action if necessary.
- Put you in touch with other people who can help you if needed.
- Be available as a single point of contact within the region in relation to complaints management.
- Provide advice on what you can expect in response to your complaint.
- Assist you in navigating your complaint through the process.

Making Your Complaint

If you have a complaint, you should speak to the staff member concerned or their Manager in the first instance and try to have the matter resolved. If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you should contact the Community Liaison Adviser by telephone or in writing detailing your complaint and the outcome you are seeking.

Responding to Your Complaint

You will receive an acknowledgement within three working days of receipt of your complaint, telling you who is dealing with it. A full reply will follow within 14 days, advising you of the outcome or of any delays.

Your complaint will be investigated by a Manager who has not been directly involved in the issue you are concerned about.

While your complaint is investigated, you can expect:

- To be informed of the progress.
- To be treated with respect.
- A reply to your complaint within 14 days.

The areas that you can make comment, congratulations or complaints about are:

- Services received directly from the Department of Human Services or its funded agencies.
- Programs managed by the Department of Human Services.
- Behaviour of staff within the Department of Human Services, Southern Metropolitan Region or its funded agencies.

Further Information

For further information contact:

Community Liaison Adviser

Southern Metropolitan Region

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Tel: 9213 2674

Fax: 9213 2400

Email: southern.Community-Liaison@dhs.vic.gov.au