

A large, solid green exclamation mark is positioned at the top left of the text block.

It's
OK
to complain

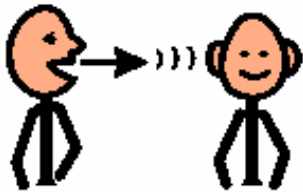


**Plain English Brochure with
Pictures**



The new Disability Law (rules)

The Government has made new laws (rules) about services and supports for people with a disability. The new laws are in the Disability Act 2006.



The new Disability law has some important rules about complaints. The new law tells disability service providers that they must tell you how to make a complaint.



What is a complaint?

A complaint is when you tell someone about a problem or a concern that you have about something or someone.



The Disability Services Commissioner

The Government has created a new job for someone to help people with a disability with their complaints. This job is called the **Disability Services Commissioner** (the Commissioner).

Laurie Harkin is the Commissioner. He and his staff (the people who work with him) will listen to and help you work through the complaints (problems and concerns) you have about the services and supports you get.



It's important to know that the Commissioner does not take sides.

If you decide to make a complaint to the Commissioner, the Commissioner and his staff will treat your complaint confidentially (private) and treat you with dignity and respect.

What are disability support or service providers?

These include support or services like day programs, community residential units (CRUs), planning, case management, respite, advocacy or therapy. These supports or services are provided by

the Department of Human Services (DHS) and lots of other agencies in the community.



It's Ok to complain about any of these supports or services if you have a problem or concern about them.

Who can make a complaint?

Anyone can make a complaint to the Commissioner. This includes you, your family or carers, your advocate or anyone else who has a concern or issue about disability services and supports.



It's always a good idea to tell your service or support provider about your problems or concerns before you complain to the Commissioner but if you think that will be hard to do then it's OK to complain to the Commissioner first.

What can you complain about?

If you have a problem or concern about the supports or services you receive you can make a complaint. For example you can complain if:



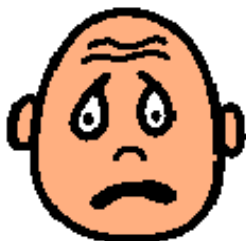
You think your service or support provider is not treating you fairly or they are being mean to you



you have other problems with your support worker/s or the services you are getting



someone tells someone else your private information without letting you know



you feel scared or worried about the supports and services you receive

What can the Commissioner do about your complaint?

If you make a complaint to the Commissioner there are different ways his staff can help you:

Meet with you (and a support person if you choose to have one) to understand what your issues and concerns are about

OR



Talk, or meet with your service or support provider about your complaint

OR

Meet with you and your service provider together to work out how your problem or concern can be fixed

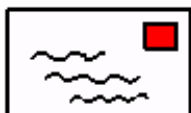
OR

Look into your complaint by visiting your service or support provider and asking them lots of questions, looking at their policies (rules) and the plans you have written down with them.



When the Commissioner has enough information about your complaint he can make a decision about what your service or support provider must do to fix the problem.

How can you make a complaint?



By filling in a complaints form:

You can ask your service or support provider to give you one of the Commissioner's complaints forms. You can get a complaints form off the website or you can call the Commissioner's office and they will post one to you. The Commissioner's staff can also help you with writing down your complaint.



By writing to the Commissioner:

Level 30, 570 Bourke Street
Melbourne 3000



By Phoning:

1800 677 342 (free call)
1300 728 187 (local call)



By TTY:

1300 726 563 (for people who are Deaf or hearing impaired)

By Fax:

(03) 8608 5765



You can also have a look at the Commissioner's Website for some more information:

<http://www.odsc.vic.gov.au>



If you need some **help** to make your complaint or to write it down then you can call the Commissioner's office on **1800 677 342** and someone will help you.