

It's OK to complain!

Plain English Brochure with Pictures 2015



It's
OK
to complain



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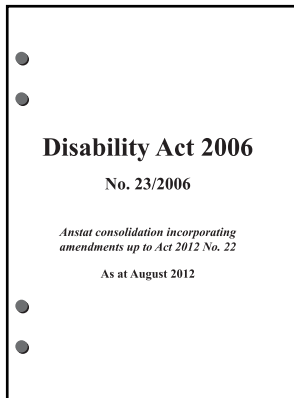


not happy

What is a complaint?

A complaint is when you tell someone that you are **not happy** with something about your service provider.

It's **OK** to complain. It can make services better.



The Disability Act (rules)

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

The Disability Act has some important rules about complaints. Every service provider must have a way for people to make a complaint about things they are not happy about.

It is against the law for people from your service provider to treat you badly if you make a complaint.

The Disability Services Commissioner



Laurie Harkin

The Government created a job for someone to help people make complaints about service providers. This job is called the Disability Services Commissioner (the Commissioner).

Laurie Harkin is the Commissioner.

When you make a complaint to the Commissioner, our staff will work with you and your service provider to try to **fix the problem** and improve the service.



fix the problem

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

If you decide to make a complaint to the Commissioner, we will treat your complaint confidentially (privately) and treat you with dignity and respect. We will not pass on information about your complaint unless you give your permission.

You can let us know if you do not want our office to help you with your complaint anymore.

What services can you complain about to the Commissioner?

The Commissioner can help with complaints about supports or services for people with a disability that are funded by the Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS).

These supports or services are provided by DHHS and lots of other organisations in the community, and include:



individual or flexible support packages



group homes

- services funded by individual or flexible support packages, such as personal care and other supports
- day services
- group homes
- planning
- case management
- respite services
- advocacy services
- aids and equipment services
- financial intermediary services
- information services
- other services such as therapy, outreach, recreation, and behaviour support services.



It's OK to complain about any of these supports or services if there is something you are not happy about. You can ask your service provider how to make a complaint to them and what they will do about your complaint. You can also contact us to talk about how we might help you with your complaint.

Who can make a complaint?



anyone 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 is not happy with your disability services and supports.

It's always a good idea to tell your service provider what you are not happy about.

If you think that will be hard to do then it's OK to talk us first.



ring us

You can **ring us** to talk about what you are not happy about. We can help with advice about how to make a complaint to your service.

What can you make a complaint about?

If you are not happy about services you receive you can make a complaint. For example you can make a complaint if:

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



problems with your support worker/s

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



tells your private information

Someone tells someone else your **private information** without you saying it's OK.



you feel scared

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

What can the Commissioner do about your complaint?



Talking or meeting

We try to help you and your service agree on how the problem can be fixed. We do this by:

- **Talking, or meeting** with you (and a support person if you choose to have one) to understand what you are not happy about.
- **Talking, or meeting** with your service provider about your complaint.
- **Meeting** with you and your service provider together to work out how your problem or concern can be fixed.
- **Looking into** your complaint by **visiting** your service provider and asking them lots of questions, looking at their policies (rules) and the plans you have written down with them.

Most complaints can be fixed by us helping your service provider to:



understand

- **Understand** what you are not happy about.
- **Give you information** about why something happened.
- **Take action** to change the way services are provided.
- Say **sorry**.

If you and your service provider cannot agree on how the problem can be fixed, **the Commissioner** can decide to look into the complaint more, or tell the service provider what else should be done to improve things.

How can you make a complaint?

Sometimes it can be hard to talk to your service provider about what you are not happy about.

You can talk to us first if you want to.

Sometimes we can help to fix the problem without you making a complaint. We will ask you

- what you are not happy about
- who is involved
- what you want to happen
- some questions about you.

We can help you to write down your complaint.

We can visit you or arrange for you to visit our office.

We will also give you information about things you could do to fix the problem.

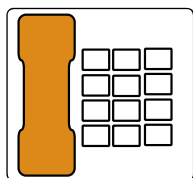
There are some complaints that the Commissioner cannot accept. If we cannot help you with your complaint we will let you know who else can help.

It will not cost you anything to use our service.



contact us to talk

You can contact us by



Phone

1800 677 342
(free call from landlines)



TTY

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



Interpreter

We can arrange an interpreter if you need one.
There is no cost for arranging an interpreter.



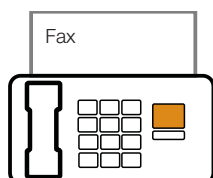
Email

complaints@odsc.vic.gov.au



Writing

Disability Services Commissioner
Level 30 - 570 Bourke St,
Melbourne VIC 3000



Faxing

03 8608 5765



Skype

You can request a Skype call by
phone, TTY, fax or email.



National Relay Service users:

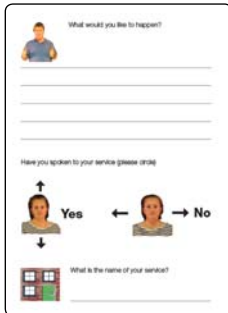
Deaf, hearing impaired or speech impaired

TTY users: 1800 555 677 then 1800 677 342;

Speak and Listen users:

1800 555 727 then 1800 677 342.

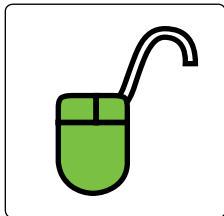
For more information: www.relayservice.gov.au



Filling in a complaint form:

You can ask your service or support worker to give you one of the Commissioner's complaints forms. You can get a complaint form off our website or you can call our office and we will post one to you. We have a form in Easy English. We can also help you with writing down your complaint.

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



www.odsc.vic.gov.au

or contact us for information in other formats.

If you need some help to make your complaint call us on

1800 677 342

We can visit you or arrange for you to visit us at our office.

Disability Services Commissioner is an independent voice promoting rights and resolving complaints about disability services.

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