

Handling your complaint

The Disability Services Commissioner (DSC) is required to assess all complaints and decide whether the complaint can be resolved during assessment, or is best referred to conciliation or investigation.

What are the first steps in dealing with my complaint?

The first step involves assessing whether the complaint can be handled by DSC. There may be issues that we are unable to assist you with. When this happens we will try to refer you to the right place.

If you have made the complaint on behalf of a person with a disability we will ask whether they are aware of the complaint and if they have given their consent. We will seek their views where possible.

Our focus is on what is important to and for the person receiving the service, and we seek to involve them in the process as much as possible.

How long will it take to assess my complaint?

We need to make sure that we have the information we need to assess your complaint.

Under the *Disability Act* 2006, assessment may take up to 90 days. The majority of complaints are resolved during the assessment period.

Your prompt response to phone calls, emails and letters will help to facilitate this process.

You may withdraw a complaint at any time by telling us.

What happens during the assessment of my complaint?

We work with you to fully understand your complaint and how it could be resolved. Our process is to document your issues and desired outcomes. We will ask you to confirm that these are correct.

We will also talk to the service provider to get their views and may ask them for a written response to your complaint.

We talk to you about the information we get from your service provider and work with both you and the service provider to find ways to resolve the complaint. We try to find a resolution to the complaint during the assessment period if possible.

Where possible, we encourage you to maintain contact with the service provider during the complaint process. Keep us informed of your discussions with the service provider and of any changes in circumstances so we know what is happening.

What does DSC ask of me?

We ask that you respond to our requests for further information or contact; advise us of all relevant information; and work with us on ways in which your complaint could be resolved.

What happens next?

Following the assessment process:

- (a) Your complaint may be **resolved** during assessment. The majority of complaints are resolved during the assessment stage.
- (b) DSC may decide to **conciliate** your complaint. This is where DSC will try to help you and the service provider to reach an agreement about how the complaint can be resolved; or
- (c) DSC may decide to **investigate** your complaint.
- (d) DSC may decide that we are unable to consider your complaint or that no further action by our office is possible; and/or
- (e) DSC may decide to provide advice or referrals to deal with the issues identified in the complaint.

At the end of the assessment process, we will write to you and the service provider about DSC's decision and outline the information that led to this decision.

When is DSC unable to consider a complaint?

DSC is unable to consider a complaint if it is not related to the provision of Victorian disability services.

This might include complaints about access to services, employment, health or education services. This might also include matters that have been or will be investigated or determined by another body, court, board or tribunal.

Where possible, we will provide details of other avenues that may assist you with resolving your complaint.

What can I expect from DSC?

You can expect our work to reflect:

- Our Values: rights; fairness; respect; and
- Our Principles: accessible; person-centred; accountable; responsive; and excellence.

Contact us to make a complaint

Phone (preferred)	1800 677 342 (free call from landlines) or TTY 1300 726 563
Website	www.odsc.vic.gov.au
Fax	03 8608 5765
Email	complaints@odsc.vic.gov.au
National Relay Service	www.relayservice.gov.au then 1800 677 342

Skype calls are available by appointment. You can request a Skype call by phone, TTY, fax or email.