

# Information for Service Providers

The Disability Services Commissioner (DSC) is an independent oversight body resolving complaints about Victorian disability service providers, and promoting the right of people with a disability to be free from abuse.

DSC works with service providers and all parties to try to resolve complaints about the provision of Victorian disability services.

## What do service providers have to do?

Disability service providers in Victoria are required by the *Disability Act 2006* to:

- have a complaints management system in place with a clear process to receive and resolve complaints about their services and supports (ss. 104, 106A);
- ensure that people with a disability who are using services know how to make a complaint to the service provider and to the Disability Services Commissioner (s. 89 (2)(c));
- take all reasonable steps to ensure that no person is adversely affected because of the cooperation or assistance to DSC (s. 132ZA);
- report every year to DSC about the number and types of complaints received, including how they were resolved (s. 105); and
- cooperate with DSC investigations by providing information and documents on request, and by allowing DSC authorised officers access to disability service premises and relevant documents (ss. 132J, 132K, 132M).

**National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) registered Victorian disability service providers need to comply with these requirements.**

## How can DSC support service providers?

If appropriate, DSC encourages the person making the complaint to try to resolve the complaint directly with the service provider before involving DSC.

DSC can assist your organisation by:

- providing an independent complaints resolution process which focuses on ways to improve services for people with a disability;
- providing advice and recommendations on improving your service following a complaint, review, or investigation;
- providing a free web-based annual complaints reporting tool (ACR Tool) to record and report your complaints data;
- providing education and information sessions for people using your service, their families and carers;
- assisting you to respond more effectively to complaints through staff training, policy review, resources and guides, and consulting on complaint issues; and
- providing brochures and materials that can be distributed by your organisation to people using your services, their families and carers.

## Who can make a complaint?

Anyone can contact DSC with a complaint. They may be a person with a disability, family member or friend of someone with a disability, staff member, carer or a member of the community.

People can contact us to discuss their concerns without making a complaint. We may be able to assist them to raise their concerns directly with the service provider without the need for a complaint to DSC.

Service providers are also welcome to contact us for advice on resolving complaints received.

## What types of issues can a complaint be about?

A complaint to DSC can be about:

- the disability services a person receives or;
- how a disability service provider has handled a complaint.

This includes complaints about NDIS planning by Local Area Coordinators.

DSC can consider complaints about Victorian disability services that are funded by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Transport Accident Commission and the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

## Why is DSC contacting my service even though there is no complaint?

Under the *Disability Act 2006*, DSC has the power to initiate investigations into Victorian disability service providers even if a complaint has not been received.

The Commissioner can also investigate and review matters that are referred by the Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing, or the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services.

## Contact us for more information about DSC

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<b>Phone (preferred)</b>	1800 677 342 (free call from landlines) or TTY 1300 726 563
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.odsc.vic.gov.au">www.odsc.vic.gov.au</a>
<b>Fax</b>	03 8608 5765
<b>Email</b>	<a href="mailto:complaints@odsc.vic.gov.au">complaints@odsc.vic.gov.au</a>
<b>National Relay Service</b>	<a href="http://www.relayservice.gov.au">www.relayservice.gov.au</a> then 1800 677 342

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