



Government of Western Australia  
Department of Communities

Children and young people

# MAKE A COMPLAINT

Speak Out. Be Heard. Get Support.



**Complaints Kit -  
For children and young people.**

## Tell us about your complaint

### What is a complaint?

Making a complaint is a way of telling us that you are unhappy or worried about something we have done, and you want it fixed or explained to you. It means making a real effort to talk about the problem together. We will listen to your views and tell you what your rights are.

### What sort of things can I make a complaint about?

You can make a complaint about anything you are not happy about or something we have done that you want fixed or changed. You can tell us your ideas about how the problem can be fixed.

### Is there anything that I can't make a complaint about?

You can make a complaint about anything but there are some things that the complaints team cannot try to change for you. These are care plan decisions or the decisions that a judge at a court has made about you or your family. We also can't help with your complaint if you contact us anonymously. We need to know who you are to help you and to be able to speak to the right people who know what is happening for you.

If you want to discuss something that isn't a complaint, we will make sure you have had your rights and views considered and help with other ways that the problem may be looked at again.

## Do I have to make a complaint this way to get something fixed?

You can talk to us about your complaint and the ways to fix the problem. You can decide to make an informal complaint, which is when we will talk to your case worker and team leader and give them a chance to talk with each other and you about the problem and try to fix it.

A lot of people try this first and many problems are solved this way.

### How to make a complaint?

There are many ways you can make your complaint. You can call us at the Complaints Management Unit on 1800 333 325 to talk about your problem and make a complaint, we will help you and make sure you have the right supports.

You can have any one you like to help you to make a complaint. Your family, carer, friend or someone you trust.

You can call the Advocate for Children or Young People in Care on (08) 9222 2518 or 1800 460 696 (country free call) or mobile or text 0429 086 508 - we can work together to help fix your problem.

You can make an online complaint - [www.communities.wa.gov.au/complaintschildrenyoungpeople](http://www.communities.wa.gov.au/complaintschildrenyoungpeople)

You can fill in the **Complaint Form** at the end of this brochure and post it to the Complaints Management Unit, Department of Communities, Locked Bag 5000, Fremantle 6959.

## What will happen if you make a formal complaint

### Step 1 - Make a complaint

If you have tried to have your complaint looked at informally and you don't feel like you have been heard or the problem fixed, or you just want to have your complaint responded to in a formal way, you can let us know.

The team at the Complaints Management Unit will listen to you to make sure we understand your complaint and to let you know your rights and what to expect. The Complaints Management Unit will send your complaint to the District Director to start sorting out the problem.

You will get a letter from the district team to let you know they have received your complaint.

Within seven working days someone from the district will contact you to talk with you or offer to meet with you. You can include anyone you want when this happens. The reason for talking with you is to hear from you about your complaint and to understand what you think will fix the problem. The aim is to try to fix it as quickly and easily as possible.

They will either tell you the outcome in person or write you a letter explaining what has been done and what the plan is to fix the problem. If we can't fix it the way you hoped, we will tell you the reason and what we have tried to do.

### How long will it take?

We will try to fix your complaint within a month (21 working days). If for some reason more time is needed the Complaints Management Unit will let you know when it is likely to be finished.

### What if I am not happy at the end?

If you don't think your problem has been fixed then you can take things further. You can do this by taking Step 2 and contacting the Complaints Management Unit again.

## Step 2 - The Complaints Management Unit

The Complaints Management Unit will talk with you and your supports to find out what you are still not happy about and what your district team have done to try to fix the problem. We will look into whether everything possible has been thought of to try to fix the problem. We will make sure that you have been included properly and have had everything explained to you.

### How long will it take?

The Complaints Management Unit will try to fix your problem or concern within a month (21 working days). We will try to do this quicker if possible, so you are not kept waiting longer than needed.

### What if I am still not happy?

Sometimes even when we have done our best, we can't all agree on how to fix something and there is nothing else that the Department of Communities can do to change things. You can choose to go to someone who is not part of Communities and take Step 3 below by calling the Ombudsman of Western Australia.

## Step 3 - Not the Department of Communities

The team at the Ombudsman of Western Australia's office will make sure the Complaints Management Unit have done everything we can to fix the problem and that we have been fair and followed the rules. They will talk with you and your supports to make sure they have all the information they need to try and fix your problem or concern.

Telephone (08) 9220 7555 or 1800 117 000 (country free call).



