



COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT POLICY FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE



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COMPLAINTS POLICY

The Department of Communities (Communities) wants to hear from children and young people if there is anything that makes you feel unsafe, unhappy or worried about.

A complaint is a way of telling Communities that something has not been done well and needs to be fixed or improved. A complaint can also be where Communities has not provided a service.

This document explains what children and young people can do to have their complaints responded to by Communities.

Communities will try and resolve or fix your complaint:

- At the local office (the District office with your Case Manager, Team Leader and District Director).
- At head office (the Complaints Management Unit).
- Or by assisting you to contact the Ombudsman Western Australia who assists children and young people to resolve or fix complaints.

WHAT CAN I COMPLAIN ABOUT?

You can complain about:

- A service you are getting or a service you think you should have received.
- How you have been treated by someone.
- Something that has made you feel unhappy or unsafe.
- Something to do with where you live.

- Communities not doing anything about something that happened to you or your being unhappy with what we did trying to fix it.

ARE THERE THINGS I CAN NOT COMPLAINT ABOUT?

There are some things the complaints process can not help you fix or resolve. Communities staff can put you in contact with other people and services who may be able to help you with these issues.

Some things Communities can not help you with are:

- Decisions made by Courts or matters currently before the Court.
- Formal Care Plan decisions.
- Recommendations of the Care Plan Review Panel.

IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT THE COMPLAINTS POLICY

- You will not get in trouble for making a complaint.
- Any child or young person can make a complaint about Communities.
- Communities staff will work with you to try and resolve or fix your complaint.
- Communities staff will try and fix or resolve your complaints as quickly as possible.
- Communities staff will try and make the complaint process as simple as possible.
- Communities staff will be fair to everyone involved in the complaints process.
- If you are complaining about another person they can tell their side of the story.

- We try and keep your complaint private but sometimes we need to discuss it with someone else to try and fix the complaint.
- Keeping children and young people safe is the most important job. If you tell us something that makes us concerned that another child or young person is not safe we will need to share that information with other people.

HOW DO I MAKE A COMPLAINT?

You can make a complaint by:

- Speaking to a staff member at the District office. This may be your Case Worker, Team Leader, Aboriginal Practice Leader, Assistant District Director, District Director or any staff member you feel comfortable with.
- Speaking with a staff member where you live.
- Online: www.communities.wa.gov.au/complaints-and-feedback.
- Calling the Complaints Management Unit on 1800 333 325.
- Filling in the 'Make a Complaints' form and giving it to the reception staff at any District office or to your case worker.

HOW COMMUNITIES WILL TRY TO RESOLVE OR FIX YOUR COMPLAINT.

1. Once you have made a complaint a Communities' worker will contact you to discuss your complaint and what you would like to happen to try and fix your complaint.
2. Staff at the District office will try respond to your complaint within 21 working days.

3. If you are not happy with the work of the District office in trying to fix your complaint you can speak with someone from the Complaints Management Unit and ask them to try and fix your complaint.
4. Staff at the Complaints Management Unit will try and fix your complaint.
5. If you are not happy with the work of the Complaints Management Unit in trying to fix your complaint you can be put in contact with someone from the Ombudsman Western Australia and ask them to try and fix your complaint.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE CEO'S CARE

If you're in care or you're a care leaver up to the age of 25 you can ask for help from the Communities' Advocate for Children in Care. The Advocate's job is to give you advice and support if you want to raise a worry or concern, have a decision reviewed or make a formal complaint. The Advocate can be contacted on Freecall 1800 460 696, text 0429 086 508 or email advocate@communities.wa.gov.au

The Advocate can help you to have your voice heard or to access the complaints process.

EFFECTIVE DATE

1 February 2020

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