

Objective:

This document provides a framework for the resolution of complaints and administration of feedback. This process is an important tool for ongoing quality control and continuous improvement and is used to audit and evaluate *Latrobe Lifeskills* service delivery. An effective feedback and complaint handling system addresses the principles of visibility and accessibility, responsiveness, assessment and investigation, feedback, improvement focused and service excellence.

Latrobe Lifeskills will ensure that all complaints are heard and dealt with in a timely, respectful and systematic way.

Scope:

Whole of Organisation

Policy Statement:

Latrobe Lifeskills welcomes feedback from stakeholders. All feedback is used to evaluate performance and service delivery as well as guide future development. A complaint as defined by the Oxford Dictionary is 'a statement that something is unsatisfactory or unacceptable'. A grievance is defined as 'a real or imagined cause for complaint, especially unfair treatment'.

It is the policy of *Latrobe Lifeskills* that all persons who are employed or use the service have the **right** to:

- Complain and provide feedback without fear or discrimination
- Use an advocate or representative when seeking resolution or making a complaint
- Respect for their human worth and dignity
- A fair hearing and resolution of their complaint through an agreed process
- Confidentiality
- Continue to work or receive service until the dispute is settled. No party shall be prejudiced as to the final settlement by the continuance of work.

All persons who are employed by or use *Latrobe Lifeskills* services have the **responsibility** to:

- Seek resolution and take prompt action on work related grievances/concerns through an agreed process, rather than allowing escalation through inaction
- Continue to work or receive service until the dispute is settled. No party shall be prejudiced as to the final settlement by doing this
- Conduct themselves according to the Staff Code of Conduct when employees of *Latrobe Lifeskills*.

Latrobe Lifeskills is committed to ensuring that response to complaints will:

- Include the development of an organisational culture that is encouraging and supportive of anyone providing feedback
- Be timely, comprehensive, fair and unbiased
- Include regular updates to the complainant of the complaints progress

- Ensure, where possible, resolution by negotiation and discussion between the parties.

Process Steps:

Responsibilities Links

1 Process for general feedback and complaints

Feedback can be submitted verbally, by phone, through email, in writing or through the regular evaluations that occur. Stakeholder surveys may also be undertaken periodically. General feedback and more formal complaints can be documented using a feedback form. If person (Participant / staff member) is experiencing unacceptable behaviour it should be reported immediately to the CEO / Managers and documented on a complaints form.

Complaints Flow Chart ((LL) Administration form)

Complaints/Feedback Form ((LL) Administration form)

All staff, Participants and their advocates will receive information about the *Latrobe Lifeskills* complaints process, including the right to go directly to relevant external bodies such as Fairwork Australia, Complaints Resolution Referral Service, or the Disability Services Commissioner when inducted. Information is available in all handbooks and dKnet.

It is expected that staff will document all feedback so *Latrobe Lifeskills* can use the information to improve services and evaluate performance and service delivery. In any case of complaint, Managers will be responsible for monitoring, investigating and reporting on an outcome to the CEO. The investigation will be formally documented either physically, or electronically for future references. If the complaint is not resolved satisfactorily or is unable to be resolved, it will be escalated to the CEO for consideration.

No person making a complaint will be discriminated against in any way because of this action. A person making a complaint has the right to request review of the decision and has the right to withdraw the complaint at any stage. The person making a complaint can nominate the format they would like to receive the response in. This can be in written format, verbal format by phone or face to face, or via an advocate.

2 A complaint will be managed formally when:

- The matter is unresolved and the complainant wishes to pursue the matter further
- The matter is not of a routine nature but of a

((LL) All

serious nature and warrants a formal investigation

A **complaint** is to be made in writing, this can be on a Form found on the *Latrobe Lifeskills* website or obtained from the *Latrobe Lifeskills* Head Office. Where this is not possible, the complainant will be invited to a meeting and the issues documented. The written complaint must include specific details about the complaint, location, date, times, and witnesses.

Acknowledgement of the complaint will be made in writing and forwarded to the complainant within three working days.

All complaints will be addressed within one week of their receipt, and a response given in the shortest possible time. Serious allegations will be addressed within 24 hours. If the matter requires investigation and negotiation, the person making the complaint will be given a probable time of completion.

Where an apology is provided, it must be sincere and accept responsibility for what occurred and the impact.

Regular updates will be provided to the complainant if the resolution is delayed.

Complaints will be dismissed if the CEO determines they are vexatious or malicious in nature. In the event that this occurs the CEO will discuss the matter with the complainant and counsel them about their action.

All feedback and complaints will be monitored for continuous improvement and relevant information forwarded to the Executive Team for review. Registers for feedback and complaints will be kept with the CEO.

3 If you are not satisfied

The Disability Services Commissioner can provide a free confidential service to assist Participants and carers; any person can make a complaint about disability services to the Commissioner. This includes people with a disability, their families and carers, staff working in disability services and any other person who wishes to make a complaint.

A complaint can be made to the Commissioner about:

- The provision of a disability service

- The way a disability service provider has managed a complaint about a disability service.

The Disability Services Commissioner encourages and assists the resolution of complaints in a variety of ways including informal discussions, conciliation processes, or under certain circumstances, formal investigation.

The Commissioner is independent of government, the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing Services and disability service providers.

Latrobe Lifeskills adheres to all reporting requirements including online reporting of complaints lodged against the organisation which are sent directly to the Disability Services Commissioner.

The Disability Services Commissioner can be contacted:

Level 30, 570 Bourke Street
Melbourne 3000

Phone: 1800 677 342 (free call)

Phone: 1300 728 187 (local call)

TTY: 1300 726 563

Fax: 03 8608 5765

Email: complaints@odsc.vic.gov.au

Website: www.odsc.vic.gov.au

Fair Work Ombudsman

The Fair Work Ombudsman is there to give advice and help employees understand their workplace rights and responsibilities. The role of the Fair Work Ombudsman is to work with employees, employers, contractors and the community to promote harmonious, productive and cooperative workplaces. They can investigate workplace complaints and enforce compliance with Australia's workplace laws.

The Fair Work Ombudsman can be contacted:

Phone: 13 13 94

TIS(Translating & Interpretation Service):

13 14 50

TTY: 13 13 94

Website: Fairwork.gov.au

Department of Families, Fairness and Housing

The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing

develops and delivers policies, programs and services that support and enhance the wellbeing of all Victorians.

Telephone: 1300 475 170

Web: <https://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/>

4 Feedback administration

Stakeholder feedback will contribute to the continuous improvement of *Latrobe Lifeskills* services. General feedback information will be monitored and reported to the appropriate Executive of *Latrobe Lifeskills*. This information will be used to monitor satisfaction, identify gaps and trends, provide data for which to base future strategic planning. Feedback used in this manner will be de-identified of stakeholder personal details unless this information is relevant.

A register will be kept in the CEO's office to record all feedback. Compliments and complaints recorded for any DFFH State funded service provision will be reported to the Office of the Disability Services Commissioner.

5 Definitions

Complaint:

Expression of dissatisfaction made to or about an organisation, related to its products, services, staff or the handling of a complaint, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required.

Internal Files/Links:

Complaints process VALID compic	dKnet General Info
Complaints to the Commissioner	dKnet General Info
VALID compic	

Quality Document References:

Duty of Employees: Policy -(LL) Human Resources/Industrial Relations
 Bullying & Harassment: Policy and Procedure -(LL) Administration
 Discrimination & Victimisation: Policy and Procedure -(LL) Human Resources/Industrial Relations
 Feedback - Staff & Community: Policy and Procedure -(LL) Human Resources/Industrial Relations
 Staff Discipline & Termination: Policy and Procedure -(LL) Human Resources/Industrial Relations

External Files/Links:

National Standards for Disability Services
 Office of Disability Services Commissioner
 Rights and Outcomes
 ODSC Home page



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References to Standards and Legislation:

- : DISABILITY ACT 2006**
 - : DISABILITY ACT 2006 - Amendments**
 - : OHS (COMMONWEALTH EMPLOYMENT) ACT 1991**
 - CDSS: Cwealth Disability Service Standards**
 - HSS: Standard 1 - Empowerment**
 - HSS: Standard 1 - Empowerment**
 - HSS: Standard 4 – Participation**
 - NDIS: Provider Governance & Operational Mgt**
 - NDIS: Rights and Responsibilities**
 - NDIS: Rights and Responsibilities**
 - NSDS: Standard 1 - Rights**
 - NSDS: Standard 1 - Rights**
 - NSDS: Standard 4 - Feedback and Complaints**
 - NSDS: Standard 4 - Feedback and Complaints**
 - NSDS: Standard 4 - Feedback and Complaints**
- :DISABILITY ACT 2006**
 - :Amendments Disability act 2006**
 - :OHS (COMMONWEALTH EMPLOYMENT) ACT 1991**
 - 7:C'wealth Disability Service Standards**
 - 1.1:Criteria 1.1 – People understand their rights and responsibilities.**
 - 1.2:Criteria 1.2 – People exercise their rights and responsibilities**
 - 4.1:Criteria 4.1 – People exercise choice and control in service delivery and life decisions, where appropriate**
 - :2.5 Feedback and Complaints Management**
 - :1.1 Person Centred supports**
 - :1.3 Privacy and Dignity**
 - 1.2:The service, its staff and its volunteers recognise and promote individual freedom of expression**
 - 1.4:The service provides support strategies that are based on the minimal restrictive options and are contemporary, evidence-based, transparent and capable of review**
 - 4.1:Individuals, families, friends, carers and advocates are actively supported to provide feedback, make a complaint or resolve a dispute without fear of adverse consequences**
 - 4.2:Feedback mechanisms including complaints resolution, and how to access independent support, advice & representation are clearly communicated to individuals, families, friends, carers and advocates**
 - 4.3:Complaints are resolved together with the individual, family, friends, carer or advocate in a proactive and timely manner**

NSDS: Standard 4 - Feedback and Complaints

4.4:The service seeks and, in conjunction with individuals, families, friends, carers and advocates, reviews feedback on service provision and supports on a regular basis as part of continuous improvement

NSDS: Standard 4 - Feedback and Complaints

4.5:The service develops a culture of continuous improvement using compliments, feedback and complaints to plan, deliver and review services for individuals and the community

NSDS: Standard 4 - Feedback and Complaints

4.6:The service effectively manages disputes

NSDS: Standard 6 - Service Management

6.4:The service has monitoring feedback, learning and reflection processes which support continuous improvement

NSDS: Standard 6 - Service Management

6.6:The service has systems to strengthen and maintain organisational capabilities to directly support the achievement of individual goals and outcomes

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