

We are committed to delivering timely high-quality service to meet the needs of our customers.

This includes being open to receiving complaints. When a customer is dissatisfied with their experience we want to know so that we can look to improve our service.

We are committed to providing a complaints process that is accessible to all. This includes being accessible to people from indigenous and culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as disadvantaged and vulnerable people.

The purpose of this policy is to

- ensure we deliver a consistent and high standard when managing complaints across the Department of Treasury and Finance, and
- ensure our customers experience a fair and transparent complaints process, and they understand what to expect from the complaints process.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees and branches within the Department of Treasury and Finance, for the use of responding to complaints made by our customers about the department. Where a branch has its own complaints management policy and procedure, these must adhere to this overarching policy.

What is a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction made to our department, about our products, services, employees or the handling of a complaint, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required.

Feedback is an opinion, comment or expression of interest or concern, made directly or indirectly by a customer where a response or resolution is not explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required. Feedback is not a complaint.

Our customers are the people who receive or use our services; they can be individuals or organisations who are directly affected by our services, policies or programs. Customers can be members of the public, or internal to government. A customer may nominate someone to act on their behalf when making a complaint.

In this policy, an employee refers to public sector employees and contractors performing contract work for a public authority or the Crown.

The complaint management process

When a customer makes a complaint, this is what they can expect from us:

We acknowledge the complaint within three (3) business days, through the customer's preferred method of communication.

We assess the complaint and prioritise it depending on the seriousness of issues raised. We may need to contact the customer to clarify details or for further information and we will inform them once an assessment has been made.

We investigate the complaint, impartially and confidentially. No assumptions will be made or actions taken until all relevant information has been collected and considered. The person handling the complaint will be different from any employee whose service or conduct is being complained about.

We respond to the complaint within 28 days of receiving it (or 21 business days), outlining our decisions, the reasons why we arrived at the outcome, and any action to be taken to resolve or remedy the complaint.

We record the complaint so that we can identify any opportunities to continually improve our services to our customers.

A complaint about a specific branch of the Department of Treasury and Finance can be made directly to that branch.

If a complaint involves multiple areas within our department, we will coordinate the complaint between these areas and ensure clear communication with the customer is also coordinated.

Where a complaint involves multiple organisations, we will work with the other organisations where possible to ensure that communication with the customer is clear and co-ordinated. Subject to privacy and confidentiality considerations, communication and information sharing between the parties will also be organised to facilitate a timely response to the complaint.

Where a complaint cannot be resolved within 28 days of receiving it (or 21 business days), we will provide the customer with an interim response along with a timeframe of when they can expect a full response.

Our process for managing complaints is underpinned by *the Department of Treasury and Finance: Complaint management principles*.

Escalating a complaint

Our employees will aim to resolve the complaint, and where this is not possible we may escalate the complaint to a more senior officer within the Department of Treasury and Finance for further investigation.

If the customer is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint they may seek external review of our decision, or the complaint management process, through Ombudsman SA.

We commit to continuously improve our service

By being open and transparent about the complaints we receive, we can continue to improve our service to meet the needs of our customers.

We will regularly review and monitor the complaints we receive. We will record the number and types of complaints received, the resolution outcomes, and the number and purposes for escalations. These will be reported to the Executive Leadership Group and included in the department's annual report.

We will use this information to identify any trends or areas where we can make improvements.

Related documents

Australian/New Zealand Standard: Guidelines for complaint management in organisations (AS/NZS 10002:2014)

Department of the Premier and Cabinet Circular 039 – Complaint Management in the South Australian Public Sector (November 2018)

SA Ombudsman's Audit Survey Report June 2018 - Assessment of state agencies' complaints management

systems

Department of Treasury and Finance: Complaint management principles

Department of Treasury and Finance: Complaint management procedure



Tracey Scott

A/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ORGANISATION AND GOVERNANCE

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