



# Making a complaint about Government services

## Statement of principles

You are entitled to:

- complain when you are unsatisfied with a service or product provided by a Western Australian government agency;
- have your complaint taken seriously; and
- be treated with courtesy and respect.

A good complaints management system is useful because it provides valuable feedback that can help improve services. All state government agencies have a system in place to manage complaints.

## Fairness

The complaints process must be fair. This means that:

- both parties in a complaint are entitled to be listened to and have their views taken into account;
- the person being complained about must know all the claims that are made against them and have the opportunity to put their case;
- all information relevant to the case must be taken into account; and
- the decision-maker must be fair and unbiased.

## Assistance

Assistance is available if you need help to lodge a complaint. This could include help filling in a form or arranging for an accredited interpreter in the language you are most comfortable with.

## Timing

Agencies have time frames for dealing with a complaint. When you make a complaint, you should be told how long the process is likely to take.

## How to make a complaint

If you are dissatisfied with a service or product provided by a state government agency, contact the agency that you are unsatisfied with and make your complaint to them.

You can make your complaint in writing and send it using the post, fax or email. Make sure you keep a copy of any letter you send. Remember that a copy of your letter might be given to the person you are complaining about.

You can also make a complaint over the phone or in person. Make a note of the date and the name of the person you spoke to and what they agreed to do.

If you do not think your complaint has been handled well the first time, you can ask to have it looked at by a more senior officer or manager. If you are still not satisfied, you can take your complaint further and go to one of the review agencies.

### **When you make a complaint:**

- treat all staff with courtesy and respect;
- give a full and accurate explanation of events to do with your complaint;
- provide the agency with as much information about your complaint as possible, as quickly as possible;
- keep appointments and meetings about the complaint, and if it not possible, let the relevant person know;
- you may be asked to put your complaint in writing as well as making it over the phone or in person. Ask the agency if you need help to do this.

### **Taking a complaint further**

If you are not happy with how your complaint was handled by the government agency, there are organisations that can investigate your complaint further.

The investigation that these organisations might do about your complaint is separate from any review or appeal process that takes place inside the department you are complaining about.

Here are some of the review organisations you can go to if you want to take a complaint further:

#### **State Ombudsman**

9220 7555

Country callers: 1800 117 000

[www.obmudsman.wa.gov.au](http://www.obmudsman.wa.gov.au)

#### **Equal Opportunity Commission**

9216 3900

Country callers: 1800 198 149

[www.equalopportunity.wa.gov.au](http://www.equalopportunity.wa.gov.au)

#### **Office of Health Review**

93223 0600

Country callers: 1800 813 583

[www.healthreview.wa.gov.au](http://www.healthreview.wa.gov.au)