

DRAFT – for consultation

Complaint and Feedback Management Guideline



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle

We acknowledge and respect Aboriginal people as the state's first people and Nations,
and recognise Aboriginal people as the traditional custodians of
South Australian land and waters.

We recognise that Aboriginal children and young people have the right to grow up
in a safe and nurturing environment where their connections to family, community, language,
culture and country are supported, respected and celebrated.

Complaint and Feedback Management Guideline

This guideline is:

- To help you give feedback or make a complaint.
- For anyone who deals with the Department for Child Protection (DCP): Families, children and young people, carers, and community members.

This guideline will:

- Help you give feedback or make a complaint and explain what to do if you are not happy with the answer.

This Guideline will not help you with:

- Reviews of:
 - contact decisions: Visit childprotection.sa.gov.au/research-and-publications/freedom-information/policy-documents/linked/contact-arrangements-review-panel-procedure.pdf
 - decisions for internal review under the law (section 157 of the *Child and Young People (Safety) Act 2017* (CYPs Act): Visit childprotection.sa.gov.au/contact-us/complaints-reviews-and-feedback/internal-reviews
 - decisions made under the law about documents and information held by DCP for care leavers (section 153 of the CYPs Act): Visit childprotection.sa.gov.au/research-and-publications/freedom-information/provision-information-care-leavers
- Freedom of Information requests. Visit childprotection.sa.gov.au/research-and-publications/freedom-information/accessing-information-and-foi
- Complaints for children in care from a child or young person, or their parent or guardian. Visit childprotection.sa.gov.au/contact-us/complaints-reviews-and-feedback/making-a-complaint/making-a-complaint-in-residential-care
- Court cases (including adoption cases)
- Cases that are under review by the South Australian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (SACAT) or under investigation by the Ombudsman SA

If you are not sure:

Call the DCP Complaints and Feedback Management Unit on 1800 003 305 or email dcpcomplaintsandfeedback@sa.gov.au

If your issue is not covered by this Guideline, we will let you know and help you contact the right place

DCP will listen and respond to any concerns or complaints you may have

When you make a complaint or give feedback, you can have someone support you. This could be a friend, advocate, community Elder, interpreter, or another person you trust.

We will make sure you are not treated negatively for making a complaint.

We will handle your complaint in a fair and open way. We will listen to you without taking sides. You can share your information and explain your situation. We will make sure you have a chance to be heard before any decisions are made.

We will follow our key operating principle to consider the cultural impact in every decision we make. This means we will work alongside Aboriginal people, with the child at the centre of decision making.



How do I make a complaint?

Level 1 Try local first

DCP local offices

Level 1: Try local first

Speak to your caseworker.

Try local manager

If talking to your caseworker is difficult, speak to a Supervisor or Senior Manager at your office.

Find the DCP offices

childprotection.sa.gov.au/contact-us/office-locations

Level 2 Central

Complaints and Feedback
Management Unit

Level 2: Central

If you can't try Level 1 or you have tried and it is still not resolved, you can contact the Complaints and Feedback Management Unit (CFMU). The CFMU is a central team, separate from DCP offices.

Visit **sa.gov.au/topics/about-sa/government/contact-government/complaints** to put in a complaint. Choose 'Child Protection' from the 'My complaint or feedback is about' menu.

Or you can call the CFMU on 1800 003 305
(Mon to Fri 9.00am to 5.00pm)

Or you can write to the CFMU at:
Complaints and Feedback Management Unit
Department for Child Protection
GPO Box 1072 Adelaide SA 5001

Level 3 Outside of DCP

Level 3: Outside of DCP

If your complaint is still not resolved or you are not happy after dealing with the CFMU, you can take it to someone outside of DCP:

Ombudsman SA

Phone: 08 7322 7020 or regional 1800 182 150

Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.sa.gov.au

Website: ombudsman.sa.gov.au

Office for Public Integrity

Phone: 8463 5173 (general enquiries) or 1300 782 489 (complaints)

Website: publicintegrity.sa.gov.au



If you do not want to give your name: You don't have to give your name, but a full response may not be able to be given to you, if you cannot be contacted for more information.

What happens when I make a complaint?



Level 1 – Local

DCP staff at the local office will try to solve your issue.

If your complaint is about a practice issue, it will be taken higher to the Supervisor or Senior Manager.

Some things that may happen at this point:

- You receive an acknowledgement of your complaint.
- Someone might talk with you, making sure everyone has a chance to speak openly.
- The information you provided will be reviewed.
- Staff might talk with the DCP cultural and linguistically diverse (CALD) team, Principal Aboriginal Consultants (PAC), Supervisors and/or Senior Managers to help resolve your complaint.

Actions that might happen after your complaint has been looked at:

- You could be told that no changes will be made to the first decision given to you.
- Or you might be given a new decision.
- You may receive an apology.
- You may be passed onto someone else to help you, like a support service, outside of DCP.



Level 2 – Central

If your complaint cannot be solved at the local level, it may go to Level 2. Level 2 is the Complaints and Feedback Management Unit (the CFMU). This Unit is a central team, separate from DCP offices.

What happens when your complaint comes to Level 2:

Step 1: Receive and acknowledge

- Your complaint will be registered.
- Your complaint will be passed on to the right place, if it does not fit with the CFMU.

Step 2: Assess

- Someone will talk to you to properly understand your complaint.
- The CFMU might talk with the DCP cultural and linguistically diverse (CALD) team and Principal Aboriginal Consultants (PACs) to help understand and solve your complaint.

Step 3: Plan

- The CFMU will plan how your complaint will be solved within 30 days.
- If it is going to take longer than 30 days, the CFMU will tell you where your complaint is up to.

Step 4: Review information

- The CFMU will have a look at all of the information. This can include looking at DCP files, records that you have given, and laws, policies and procedures.
- The CFMU might talk to DCP staff to work out what has happened. Or the CFMU might talk with other people that you think might have helpful information.

Step 5: Response and Resolution

- The CFMU will clearly tell you the outcomes and decisions in writing, within 30 days.
- The CFMU will tell you if your response letter will be later than 30 days.

Step 6: Other options

- The CFMU will tell you about other options outside of DCP that may be able to help you further, if you need.

Step 7: Quality Assurance

- After working with you on your complaint, the CFMU might give advice to the right areas in DCP on ways to improve.

Level 2 continued

What the CFMU might do after looking at your complaint:

- Make suggestions to the right areas to make services better.
- Help with different outcome/s with the local office.
- Offer you an apology.
- You may be passed onto someone else to help you, like a support service, outside of DCP.
- The CFMU might tell senior staff about your complaint and how it was solved.



Level 3 – Outside of DCP

If your complaint is still not solved or you are not happy after levels 1 or 2, your complaint can be taken to someone outside of DCP. This is the Ombudsman or the Office for Public Integrity

What will happen:

- The outside body will decide if your complaint is something they can deal with.
- If it is, your complaint will be looked at and DCP may be asked to provide further information to help solve your complaint.

The actions that the external authority may take in response to the complaint:

- Give recommendations to DCP about ways to improve.

Procedural Fairness

You are entitled to receive procedural fairness in the way your complaint is dealt with.

Procedural fairness (sometimes called natural justice) means making decisions in a fair and balanced way.

It is an important part of how DCP handles complaints and feedback.

DCP must make sure that matters are received, reviewed and decided fairly, openly and without taking sides.

This means that you can expect:

- **To be heard:** You can provide information to help your complaint.
- **Fair decision-making:** DCP has a three-level process.
- **Evidence-based decisions:** Your complaint will be looked into in a proper way, along with records, facts, and DCP procedures.
- **Consistency:** Similar complaints can expect similar outcomes.
- **Inquiry into disputed matters:** If not solved, your complaint can be raised to people outside of DCP.



How Procedural Fairness will be given to you at each level

Level 1 – Local Complaint Resolution

- Your concerns are listened to. Staff at local offices will try and solve your complaint with you.
- Complaints about practice issues are taken higher to Supervisors or Senior Managers.
- If your complaint cannot be resolved straight away, it will be taken higher, including to Regional Directors.

Level 2 – Central

- The CFMU will register your complaint within 2 business days.
- Your complaint is looked at by staff that are separate from DCP offices.
- The CFMU will work with you to understand the outcome you are seeking. The relevant records and policies will be looked at. Decisions will be made in a clear and consistent way.

Level 3 – Outside of DCP

- If your complaint is still not resolved or you are not happy after Levels 1 or 2, your complaint can be taken to someone outside of DCP. This is the Ombudsman or the Office for Public Integrity.
- These bodies check things are fair. They do their own investigations and suggest ways to improve policies and systems.

What happens if I am not happy with the result?

If you are not happy with the outcome of your complaint you may take it to one of the following independent complaints bodies, outside of DCP:

Ombudsman SA

Phone: 08 7322 7020 or regional 1800 182 150

Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.sa.gov.au

Website: ombudsman.sa.gov.au

Office for Public Integrity

Phone: 8463 5173 (general enquiries)

or 1300 782 489 (complaints)

Website: publicintegrity.sa.gov.au

If you are not happy with a decision of one of the bodies outside of DCP, you will need to contact the Ombudsman or Office for Public Integrity directly for help with their review processes.

Other key oversight body contacts

Commissioner for Children and Young People

Phone: 8226 3355

Email: commissionerCYP@sa.gov.au

Visit ccyp.com.au/

Office of the Guardian for Children and Young People

Phone: 1800 275 664

Email: gcyp@gcyp.sa.gov.au

Visit gcyp.sa.gov.au/contact-us/

Office of the Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People

Phone: 8226 3353

Email: CommissionerACYP@sa.gov.au

Visit cacyp.com.au/contact-us/



How do I provide feedback about DCP?

We welcome all types of feedback: Comments, suggestions and compliments.

When you send us a comment or suggestion, we will ensure it reaches the right person and will tell you about any actions or decisions that are made.

When you share a compliment, we will pass it on to the staff member or team. We may also share it across the DCP to highlight and promote best practices in our work.

You can send your feedback by using our online form which is available at: **sa.gov.au/topics/about-sa/government/contact-government/complaints**. When using this form, choose 'Child Protection' from the 'My complaint or feedback is about' menu.

Or you may contact the Complaints and Feedback Management Unit directly:

Complaints and Feedback Management Unit
Department for Child Protection
GPO Box 1072
Adelaide SA 5001

Phone: 1800 003 305,
Monday to Friday 9.00am – 5.00pm

Email: dcpcomplaintsandfeedback@sa.gov.au



Translation Services

If English is not your preferred language, please contact the Telephone Interpreter Service (TIS) on 131 450 and ask the interpreter to phone the Department for Child Protection.

If you are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment, please contact us through the National Relay Service.

The Aboriginal Language Interpreting Service (ALIS) interpreters speak a range of Aboriginal languages and can be contacted on 1800 280 203.

Disclosing public interest information

The *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2018* (PID Act) commenced on July 1, 2019, replacing the *Whistleblowers Protection Act 1993*.

The **public interest disclosure procedure** sets out the process for disclosure of public interest information concerning a DCP employee or DCP.

To make a disclosure, email
DCPPublicInterestDisclosure@sa.gov.au.

Complaints and feedback related to disclosing public interest information should be directed to
DCPPublicInterestDisclosure@sa.gov.au.

Please **do not** make a report that a child is at risk to the public interest disclosure inbox. If you are concerned about a child or young person and have a reasonable suspicion they are, or may be, at risk of harm, call the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) on 13 14 78.

Additional Resources and further information

Please refer to the following documents that relate to the Complaints and Feedback Management Guideline which are available at childprotection.sa.gov.au/contact-us/complaints-reviews-and-feedback/making-a-complaint

- DCP Complaints Feedback Management Policy
- DCP Complaints Feedback Management Procedure
- Making a Complaint with DCP: Carer Factsheet

DRAFT for consultation,
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**Government
of South Australia**

Department for
Child Protection

**Complaints and Feedback Management Unit
Department for Child Protection**

GPO Box 1072
Adelaide SA 5001

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Monday to Friday 9.00am – 5.00pm

Email: dcpcomplaintsandfeedback@sa.gov.au