



2.10 RESOLVING COMPLAINTS - CLIENTS			
Policy number	2.10	Changes Made	Yes () No ()
Drafted by	D Verdon 2/04/2022	Adopted	May 9, 2022
Responsible persons	Executive Officer	Review date	May 2024

POLICY

GdA upholds the right of every client to raise and have resolved fairly and promptly any complaints they may have regarding the agency, its staff, or its services. If an issue does arise it is worked through in a timely manner and in a spirit of co-operation and negotiation.

GdA believes in listening closely to the complaint and acknowledging it has been received within five working days. It is the aim of the organisation to resolve complaints within one calendar month.

GdA believes that complaints provide valuable input and feedback on how to provide a better service and avoid any similar issues arising in the future.

GdA can minimise complaints by being open and accessible to all people, involving its clients in the decision-making process and inviting feedback from past and present clients about how the agency may be improved.

The agency's complaints procedure is designed to be user friendly and conciliatory. Each affected person is encouraged and assisted to raise any concerns about the agency without fear of retribution.

Throughout the process the complainant is treated with honesty, courtesy, and respect. Personal circumstances are kept strictly confidential.

GdA recognises the right of any person with a disability to be supported by a family member, friend, carer, or alternative advocate throughout the complaints process.

Clients are informed by the advocate they are working with about the complaints procedure at intake. The information is included in the Advocacy Information booklet handed to clients.

GdA utilises the Office of the Disability Services Commissioner's complaints registry to log any complaints received by the organisation (www.orima.com.au/acr).

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

GdA's policy is to resolve complaints/disputes in the least traumatic and divisive way by the following means:

1. Informal Procedure

Initial attempts to resolve complaints/disputes may take the form of a private conversation between the parties involved, e.g. the client and their advocate.

GdA staff are required to be receptive to the content of all complaints from their clients and to do their utmost within the limits of their position/authority to resolve issues. (Should this prove inappropriate or unsuccessful, the more formal procedure is available.) Someone with a complaint can talk about it directly with their advocate or, if they prefer, contact the Executive Officer of GdA by phoning 1800 552 272 or emailing admin@grampiansadvocacy.org.au

If the complaint is about the EO then the client should move directly to the formal resolution procedure.

2. Formal Procedure

Wherever possible complaints/disputes should be detailed in writing and forwarded to the Chairperson of the GdA Performance and Review Committee (PARC), PO Box 112, Ararat 3377 or by electronic means to admin@grampiansadvocacy.org.au. The initial submission and all following documents will be treated confidentially and will be securely filed in a limited access file available only to the PARC Chairperson or other mutually designated party.

All parties to the complaint will attempt to resolve the issue with the GdA PARC Chairperson within a calendar month of lodgement of the complaint. If/when the full Board is notified of the complaint is at the discretion of the PARC Chair. Utmost respect for the complainant's privacy will be exercised throughout the complaints process.

3. External Procedure

If the complaint remains unresolved either party may seek an independent conciliator to facilitate a resolution, e.g. the Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria <https://www.disputes.vic.gov.au/>

At any point of the procedure clients may choose to take their complaint directly to the Complaints Resolution and Referral Service (CRRS) or the Disability Services Commissioner. These are services that help people with a disability sort out complaints about disability advocacy services funded by the Commonwealth Department of Social Services or the Victorian Department of Families, Fairness and Housing.

GdA will cooperate fully with any enquiries made by CRRS or the Disability Services Commissioner as the result of a complaint made by a client.

At the conclusion of the complaints process all relevant parties will be informed of the outcome, whilst respecting the privacy of the complainant as far as is practicable.

Complaints Resolution and Referral Service
FREE CALL NUMBER
NATIONAL RELAY SERVICE
TRANSLATING AND INTERPRETING SERVICE

1800 880 052
1800 555 677
13 14 50

email: crs@workfocus.com
website: www.crrs.net.au

Disability Services Commissioner
Level 30, 570 Bourke Street,
Melbourne, Victoria, 3000 Australia
Call for enquiries or complaints - 1800 677 342
Email for enquiries or complaints - complaints@odsc.vic.gov.au
Website: <https://www.odsc.vic.gov.au/>

Client Complaint Resolution Flow Chart

