

Complaints

How do I make a complaint about a government department or agency?

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Free legal help to navigate
the Royal Commission

Free advice line 1800 605 762 | Website knowmore.org.au

If you have not been treated fairly by a government department agency, then you may be able to make a complaint about it. There are lots of things people can complain about, but it is important to know the right person or body to go to that will be able to listen.

It can be tough to make a complaint on your own, so ask for some help if you need it (contact knowmore if you need some help).

Who can I make a complaint about?

Generally you can make a complaint about any government department or agency through a complaints body. You can complain about:

- Child protection and child welfare agencies (e.g. Community Services, Department of Human Services, Families SA);
- Police (see out factsheet on Police complaints);
- Health care providers (including hospitals);
- Services that receive government funding, such as disability service providers.
- The complaints bodies that exist in each State and Territory are different. See the heading 'Who do I complain to' to see where you can go.

knowmore has also produced factsheets on complaints about Police and the public prosecution agencies in each state. You can access them on our website at www.knowmore.org.au

What can I make a complaint about?

Each complaint body is different and can investigate different things. The types of things you might be able to make a complaint about include:

- The way you have been treated by an agency or an agency employee
- The agency's practices or processes
- The service you received
- The agency's delay or inaction, and
- The way a complaint you have made has been investigated or dealt with.

What do I say in my complaint?

Some complaints bodies like you to put a complaint in writing, while others like you to make a complaint over the phone.

When you make a complaint it is important to give the right details to make sure your complaint is able to be investigated. This can include:

- Details of the conduct, decision or behavior you want to complain about including details about individuals who you have spoken to;
- As far as you can remember, dates and times of when things happened;
- What outcome you want to resolve your complaint.

Who do I complain to?

Each state and territory has its own complaints body, and in most states and territories that is the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman is an independent office and is separate of government.

The contact details for each office is overleaf.

Complaints

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New South Wales

NSW Ombudsman

Phone: 1800 451 524

Can investigate complaints about most NSW Government agencies.

Queensland

Queensland Ombudsman

Phone: 1800 068 908 Can investigate complaints about most Queensland Government agencies.

Tasmania

Tasmanian Ombudsman

Phone: 1800 001 170 Can investigate complaints about most Tasmanian Government agencies.

Australian Capital Territory

ACT Ombudsman

Phone: 1300 362 072 Can investigate complaints about most Territory Government directorates.

South Australia

South Australia Ombudsman

Phone: 1800 182 150 Can investigate complaints about most South Australian Government agencies.

Western Australia

Western Australia Ombudsman

Phone: 1800 117 000 Can investigate complaints about most NSW Government agencies.

Northern Territory

Northern Territory Ombudsman

Phone: 1800 806 380 Can investigate complaints about most Territory Government agencies.

Victoria

Victorian Ombudsman

Phone: 1800 806 314 Can investigate complaints about most Victorian Government agencies.

Commonwealth Government

Commonwealth Ombudsman

Phone: 1300 362 072 Can investigate complaints about most Commonwealth agencies.

Contact Us

knowmore is an independent legal service giving free legal assistance to people who are considering telling their story or providing information to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

You can call us from anywhere in Australia:

Advice: 1800 605 762

Admin: 02 8267 7400

Email: info@knowmore.org.au

Website: www.knowmore.org.au

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PO Box 20319, World Square NSW 2002
t 02 8267 7400

Melbourne

Level 1, 180 Flinders St,
Melbourne 3000
PO Box 84, Flinders Lane VIC 8009
t 03 8663 7400

Perth

Level 9, 41 St Georges Terrace,
Perth WA 6000
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