



Complaints Management Policy and Procedure

Purpose and Scope

To ensure all parties have knowledge of and access to Soul Services WA's complaints management and resolution processes and that any complaints and other feedback are welcomed, acknowledged, respected and managed appropriately.

This policy is for all Soul Services WA staff who may receive complaints or expressions of dissatisfaction from participants, their families and/or stakeholders. It is also for individuals and other stakeholders, who require information regarding Soul Services WA complaints process.

The process for complaints management is accessible and transparent for participants to provide feedback. Complaints are seen as a positive contribution to continual improvement processes, and there are no negative repercussions for raising a complaint.

Policy Statement

Soul Services WA is committed to ensuring all participants, their families and/or stakeholders are free to discuss their concerns and lodge complaints without prejudice. We strive to be open and honest, and to look for opportunities rather than seeing barriers.

The general principles guiding the NDIS Act, includes that:

- People with disability have the same right as other members of Australian society, to pursue any grievance.
- People with disabilities are respected for their worth and dignity and to live free from abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- People with disabilities are able to determine their own best interests including the right to exercise choice and control and to engage as equal partners in decisions that will affect their lives to the full extent of their capacity
- Have their privacy and dignity respected
- Have the role of families, carers and other significant persons in their lives acknowledged and respected.
- Innovation, quality, continuous improvement, contemporary best practice and effectiveness in the provision of supports to people with disability are to be promoted

These principles are adhered to by Soul Services WA, and this policy confirms the application of those principles. The NDIS Code of Conduct also underpins the service's response to complaints. There will be no negative repercussions for those making a complaint.

The Complaints process is available on the Soul Services WA website and provided to participants at commencement of services within the Welcome Pack. Information can be provided in alternative formats, including Easy Read English and languages other than English. The complaints process is not discriminatory and is accessible to people from a diverse range of backgrounds. Soul Services WA's staff are trained in handling complaints.

All complaints will address any conflict of interest prior to the process commencing. The complaints process is undertaken with consideration of procedural fairness.

The complainant will be supported to identify and access an advocate, if needed. A list of Western Australian advocates is available in the Service Agreement. Soul Services WA will work with all decision makers who support the participant.

Complaints will be handled with the highest of confidentiality, and only those directly involved in the resolution of the complaint will have access to records, unless disclosure is required by law.

Complaints will be resolved within the prescribed timeframe. Complainants will be informed at every stage of the complaint process. Complaints will be escalated as per the Complaints Procedure. Appropriate actions will be taken in the resolution of the complaint. Where a complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome, they will be supported to engage with external agencies, if requested.

Soul Services WA has a complaint register for recording and tracking complaints along with reasons for any decisions. The register allows for the analysis of any trends or areas of note arising from complaints for the purpose of implementing continuous improvement strategies.

Records relating to complaints are provided to the NDIS Commissioner when requested.

Who can make a Complaint?

At any stage, a complainant can address their grievance directly with the NDIS Commission. Any person can make a complaint about the provision of support and service by Soul Services WA. This includes participants, their families and/or stakeholders, or any other person who wishes to make a complaint.

Anonymous Complaint

If a complainant does not wish to provide their name, Soul Services WA will still investigate their complaint. The complainant will be asked how they would like to be advised of the outcome of the investigation.

Vexatious and Unreasonable Complaints

A vexatious complaint is one which is raised, regardless of its merits, to harass, annoy or subdue. Fair consideration must be given to the complaint.

Incident

- A complaint which is raised, involving a serious incident, includes:
- Death or serious injury
- Allegation of abuse
- A complaint that would result in legal action
- Impacting on reputation of Soul Services WA
- Breach of NDIS rules

If this is the case, the complaint will be handled in accordance with the Incident Management Policy and Procedure.

How Can a Complaint be Made?

A complaint can be made to Soul Services WA by:

- By completing a feedback form in your Welcome Pack
- By telephoning us on: 0484 285 304 or 0456 969 018
- By writing to us: [PO Box 7402 Secret Harbour WA 6173](#)
- By emailing us: info@soulserviceswa.com.au
- Speaking to us directly

Complaints to the NDIS Commissioner

Complaints can be raised directly with the NDIS Commissioner.

Phone: 1800 035 544 (free call from landlines) or TTY 133 677. Interpreters can be arranged.

National Relay Service and ask for 1800 035 544.

Complete a complaint contact form from: <https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/about/complaints>

Complaints to Other External Agencies

Complainants can complain to:

The Health and Disability Services Complaints Office (HaDSCO)

Phone: 08 6551 7600

Terminology

• Participant

A person being supported by and in the care of Soul Services WA.

• Staff

A person who carries out work in any capacity for a person conducting a business, including work as:

- an employee
- a contractor or sub-contractor
- an employee of a contractor or sub-contractor or
- a student, trainee, apprentice or volunteer.

• Complainant

The person who is raising a complaint

Complaints Procedure:

How a complaint can be made

Soul Services WA takes all complaints seriously. We maintain a complaint register for recording and tracking complaints including outcomes. Soul Services WA will review all complaints for purpose of implementing continuous improvement strategies. We are committed to managing complaints that support a positive outcome

Our Process

1. To encourage participants to bring up any concerns directly with Soul Services WA in the first instance. Speaking with the relevant team member can also be a first step to resolving any minor misunderstanding or concerns. This gives both parties time to understand the concern and agree on a solution.

2. If a participant feels uncomfortable taking this approach Soul Services WA may want to encourage the participant to put their concerns in writing.
3. Soul Services WA will contact the participant within 48 hours to seek to find a resolution to any concerns. If Soul Services WA needs more time to investigate, they will ensure to keep the participant updated.

Soul Services WA six-point complaint process

- We acknowledge: Within 2 business days of receiving your complaint we will acknowledge receipt of your complaint.
- We review: We undertake an initial review of your complaint and determine what if any additional information or documentation may be required to complete an investigation. We may need to contact you to clarify details or request additional information where necessary.
- We investigate: Within 10 business days of receiving your complaint we will investigate your complaint objectively and impartially, by considering the information you have provided us, our actions in relation to your dealings with us and any other information which may be available, that could assist us in investigating your complaint.
- We respond: Following our investigation we will notify you of our findings and any actions we may have taken in regard to your complaint.
- We take action: Where appropriate we amend our business practices or policies.
- We record: We will record your complaint for continuous improvement purposes. Your personal information will be recorded in accordance with relevant privacy legislation.

Our complaint escalation process

Where possible, we will attempt to resolve your complaint at the first point of contact. If we are unable to resolve your complaint at the first point of contact, we will undertake an investigation of your complaint and provide you with our findings. If you are not satisfied with how your complaint has been handled, or the resolution provided by us, you can escalate your complaint to:

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Related Documents

- Welcome Pack
- Services Agreement
- Exit Interview
- Support Coordination Handover Form
- Continuous Improvement Policy and Procedure
- Register – Complaints
- Register – Continuous Improvement