

Complaints Investigation

What is a Complaint Investigation?

For an investigation to be conducted, the department has to be satisfied, on the basis of the evidence or information you have provided, that there are concerns that we are able to investigate.

An investigation cannot achieve the following:

- Pay compensation for the alleged actions of departmental officers.
- Terminate the employment of departmental officers or officers of a funded non-government service provider.
- Amend or delete departmental records.
- Overturn a court's decision.

What will the scope of the investigation be?

The department may not investigate every matter you raise within your complaint, as complaints that are investigated need to be about a decision made or a service provided by the department or a funded agency.

If you can show that special circumstances apply, the department may investigate a matter that you have known about for more than 12 months.

The Complaints and Investigations Unit cannot investigate the following:

- Matters currently or previously dealt with by a court of tribunal.
- Administrative decisions of the department regarding a funded service e.g. decisions made regarding granting contracts or licenses.

How long does an investigation take?

If a complaints investigation is to occur, the matter will be classified as High complexity (please refer to Making a Complaint factsheet for more information on complexity), with a maximum timeframe of 6 months for completion.

This timeframe allows the department to complete a thorough investigation, and ensure that all parties are provided with a right of reply (including yourself).

With respect to the investigation of complaints about services provided to a person with disability where a high risk to the health and wellbeing of the person is identified, priority will be given to immediate risk mitigation to ensure the person with disability is safe.

How will I know what's happening?

The contact details for your complaints officer will be provided to you at the commencement of the investigation. Your complaints officer will provide you with regular updates, including any delays that may impact on timeframes.

How often you are updated and how you will receive this update will be negotiated with you at the commencement of the complaint investigation.

What actions will the department take?

At the conclusion of an investigation, if the department have identified systemic or practice issues, system improvement

recommendations will be made to the relevant area for appropriate action.

What is expected of me in the conduct of an investigation?

You can expect that the department will be prompt, fair and professional in its management of your complaint.

The department expects that you will provide us with necessary assistance and cooperation in the conduct of its investigation. This includes making yourself available and or contactable where appropriate for the complaints officer undertaking the investigation; and providing necessary information when it is requested of you.

The department also expects that you will engage with the complaints officer in a courteous and respectful manner throughout the conduct of the investigation.

What can I do if I am dissatisfied at the conclusion of the investigation?

If you remain dissatisfied at the conclusion of the investigation, you have the right to seek an Internal Review by the department.

An Internal Review is a systemic way of looking back on how a complaint investigation process was undertaken. The Complaints and Investigation Unit is responsible for the conduct of the Internal Review.

A request for an Internal Review must be made within 12 months after you have been provided with an outcome of the investigation. You can contact the Complaints and Investigations Unit to request an Internal Review by email to feedback@communities.qld.gov.au or by phone on 1800 080 464.

If you remain dissatisfied at the conclusion of the Internal Review, you have the right to seek external review of your complaint management or decision-making process with the Queensland Ombudsman by contacting them on 3005 7000 or by email to ombudsman@ombudsman.qld.gov.au.

Do you need more information?

For more information about how the department manages complaints, you can contact the department's Complaints and Investigations Unit on:

- Email: feedback@communities.qld.gov.au
- Phone: 1800 080 464
- Online feedback form: <https://www.qld.gov.au/contact-us/complaints/>
- Post: Complaints and Investigations Unit, Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors, GPO Box 806, Brisbane Q 4001

Please also see other fact sheets available: Making a complaint; Internal Review; Alternative Response.

Other resources include: Complaints Management Policy; Complaints Management Procedure.