

SERVICE USERS COMPLAINTS

If you are not satisfied with our service, you can make a complaint. We understand that it can be difficult to make a complaint and we will always try to deal with your concerns seriously, promptly and confidentially.

COMPLAINTS

You have a right to make a complaint about the services provided by Hunter Community Legal Centre staff or volunteers, how you were treated or other matters.

All complaints will be dealt with:

- seriously
- promptly
- respectfully
- in a way that protects privacy and confidentiality
- following natural justice principles.

If you need help making a complaint you can use your own advocate or support person. You can also speak to us about how we may assist.

HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

It may be appropriate to **informally** raise your concern directly with the worker involved.

Verbal Complaint

- Verbal complaints may be made by asking to speak with the Managing Solicitor or Coordinator.
- If you are not satisfied with action taken, you may send a written complaint to the Chairperson of the Board of Management.

Written Complaints

Written complaints should be addressed and marked “Private and Confidential” to the:

Managing Solicitor
Hunter Community Legal Centre
PO Box 84
Newcastle NSW 2300

If the complaint is regarding the Managing Solicitor then the complaint should be addressed to the Chairperson

HOW WE DEAL WITH COMPLAINTS

Verbal complaints will be followed up by the relevant person.

The Managing Solicitor or Chairperson follows up on written complaints.

The person making a written complaint (the complainant) will be contacted within 14 days of receipt of the complaint. Information about the process and the timeframe for addressing the complaint will be provided.

We may ask for further details.

As far as possible, complaints will be investigated and an outcome determined within 2 months of the complaint received. If this timeframe cannot be met, and where appropriate, the complainant will be informed of the reasons why and of the anticipated timeframe for the determination.

We will advise you, when the investigation of a complaint has been completed. If it is appropriate, we may advise you of the outcome or decision. We will also advise you of options for further action if required – such as review of the matter by the

Board of Management or making a complaint to external bodies.

The Coordinator keeps records of all client complaints. We use this information to review and improve our services.

We welcome feedback regarding the service.

EXTERNAL COMPLAINT BODIES

Complaints about lawyers may be made to the:

Legal Services Commissioner
GPO Box 4460
Sydney NSW 2001
Ph: (02) 9377 1800
Fax: (02) 9377 1888
Freecall: 1800 242 958
TTY: (02) 9377 1855
Email: olsc@agd.nsw.gov.au

Complaints may also be made to (depending on the reason for the complaint):
Anti Discrimination Board NSW
PO 67
Wollongong East 2520
Tel 02 4224 9960

Human Rights & Equal Opportunity Commission
GPO Box 5218
Sydney 2001
Tel 1300 369 711