

Policy: Complaints Management

Policy Purpose

To provide a framework for the management of child protection and youth justice complaints received in relation to Territory Families policies, procedures and services, including services funded by the Agency, but excluding employee complaints and external reviews and appeals.

Policy Statement

Territory Families seeks to provide clients and members of the public with a professional and effective service, however there are times when complaints and concerns about our service arise. Territory Families takes all complaints seriously and is committed to managing complaints in an accountable, transparent, timely and meaningful way.

Complaints are a vital source of feedback that allows Territory Families to gain an understanding of our clients and stakeholders views of their experience with the Agency. This feedback allows us to understand what works well and what we need to improve.

When Territory Families receives a complaint or concern our aim is to resolve the issue as promptly and effectively as possible. Lessons learned from the complaint and resolution process can be used to improve practice and prevent future concerns from occurring.

All Territory Families staff are expected to inform clients about their right to raise concerns and make complaints about their experiences in dealing with Territory Families. Clients and members of the public may make a complaint directly to Territory Families' Regional or Local Offices, the Complaints Unit or to an external review body such as the Children's Commissioner.

Clients and members of the public can expect to:

- receive assistance in making a complaint or providing feedback;
- be dealt with courteously and professionally, without bias or prejudice;
- have their complaint assessed fairly, transparently and as quickly as possible;
- receive regular information about the status of the response to their complaint and have the matter resolved in a timely fashion;
- receive clear information about the outcome of the complaint; and
- be informed by Territory Families' staff that if they are not satisfied with our response they may escalate the complaint to the Office of the Children's Commissioner.

Territory Families staff are expected to:

- be open to the receipt of complaints, make best efforts to resolve concerns and complaints at the point of service, and to do so at the time they arise;
- record the details of all complaints they receive and provide them to the Territory Families Complaints Coordinator (TF.complaints@nt.gov.au)
- ensure that all complaints they receive (or are allocated) are responded to, managed and resolved in a fair and timely manner with minimum formality;
- communicate with the complainant to ensure they are kept informed about the handling and outcome of their complaint; and
- escalate any complaint that cannot be resolved by the Regional Office or Local Offices to the Complaints Unit. .

Staff are to provide any person wishing to make a complaint about Territory Families with the appropriate contact details.

- **Territory Families Regional and Local Offices**

Contact details for the Team Leader or Manager within the local office

Northern Regional Office Phone: 8922 7167

Southern Regional Office Phone: 8955 6006

- **Territory Families Complaints Unit**

Email: TF.complaints@nt.gov.au

Address: Territory Families
Attention: Practice Integrity

PO Box 40596
CASUARINA NT 0810

Phone: 1800 750 167

- **Office of the NT Children's Commissioner**

Email: childrenscommissioner@nt.gov.au

Phone: 1800 259 256

Recording

A central database of all complaints is maintained by the Complaints Unit. The purpose of the database is to enable the provision of regular performance data and to develop the evidence base that informs service delivery improvement. Complaints information is regularly examined to identify trends and consider strategies for continuous quality improvement. To support the focus on continuous improvement it is mandatory that all complaints details are recorded and provided to the Complaints Unit.

Employee Complaints

If you are an employee of Territory Families please refer to the Employee Internal Complaints Policy. Employees are able to lodge an internal complaint or grievance about any aspect of their treatment in employment, including treatment by other employees in the workplace, and actions and/or decisions of Territory Families

Legislative Basis and Related Documents

[Care and Protection of Children Act](#)

[Children Commissioner Act \(Part 4\)](#)

[Adoption of Children Act](#)

[Information Act](#)

[Public Sector Employment and Management Act](#)

[Financial Management Act](#)

[Youth Justice Act](#)

Standards

Territory Families standards that directly relate to complaint management are:

2.10 All children and clients involved with Territory Families understand their rights and are encouraged to raise concerns about the services they receive.

2.11 Territory Families responds to client complaints in a timely and professional way that does not prejudice future or current services.

Authorised by:

A/Executive Director Governance Division	14/06/2017	Active from:	15/06/2017
Version 1.0	Provides Territory Families staff with guidance to manage and record complaints about Territory Families policies, procedures and services.		

Current Version V 1

Active from:	6/02/2017	Authorised by:	Director, Policy
Update:	Amendments to structure, rebranding including changing DCF to Territory Families, updating email addresses, contact details, internal links reset, Caseworker to Case Manager		
Review due:	June 19	Maintenance:	Policy TF.Policy@nt.gov.au