

Resolving complaints and concerns

In this fact sheet

You have the right to request that we listen and respond to issues you raise about us. This fact sheet explains:

How your concerns will be heard	You can speak to staff at our office or put your concerns in writing
What we will do	The steps we take after we hear from you

How do you make a complaint?

If you have a concern about your contact with the Office of the Public Guardian, please give us a call so we can talk about it. If you then want to make a complaint, please follow the steps below.

Contact us, in writing if possible

You can make a formal complaint to the Office of the Public Guardian by:

- writing us a letter or email
- phoning or faxing us
- making an appointment to see us at our office in Darwin or Alice Springs
- filling in a form on our website.

It's best if your complaint is in writing. This helps us get an accurate summary of the issue. But if you can't write to us, our staff can help you.

Include all the information we need

Please include as much information as you can to help us process your complaint. Try to say:

- **What** happened?
- **When** and **where** did it happen?
- **Who** was involved?
- **What outcome** would you like?

If you are unhappy with a decision our office makes, you can request that the decision is reviewed. We explain this on the next page.

What will we do?

We will write to you within 10 working days of receiving your complaint to confirm that we have it, and to explain the process.

The letter will include contact details for the person handling your complaint.

Look at the issues

To consider your complaint, we will:

- identify and record the issues clearly
- decide what action to take.

Take action if needed

If further action is needed, we will:

1. gather and review documents or evidence
2. seek and record information from other people, such as by interviewing them
3. analyse the information we have.

We might contact you, the staff involved and other people to gain more information.

Tell you the outcome

We will decide if we will uphold, partially uphold or dismiss your complaint. We will tell you our decision and if there will be any follow-up action.

We aim to finish all investigations within 30 days. Complex cases might take longer, and we will let you know if this is likely.

If you are unhappy with the outcome of your complaint, you can speak to the Northern Territory Health and Community Services Complaints Commission on 1800 004 474.

Reviewing a Public Guardian decision

In this fact sheet

What to do if you don't agree with our decision

Request a 'Statement of Reasons' or review our decision

How we review a decision

The steps we take if you request a review

What can you do if you are unhappy with a decision?

If you don't agree with a decision the Office of the Public Guardian has made, you can ask for more information about that decision. This is different from making a complaint.

Ask for a 'Statement of Reasons'

The Statement of Reasons sets out what we considered when we made the decision, like:

- who we spoke to and their views
- the legal requirements of the *Guardianship of Adults Act 2016*
- the represented adult's best interests
- the least restrictive options.

We will send you the statement within 28 days of receiving your request.

Request a review of our decision

If the Statement of Reasons doesn't address your concerns, you can ask for a review of the decision. You must do this in writing, and say:

- why you think the decision is wrong or lacking
- what other important facts should be considered
- what outcome you want.

What happens in a review?

Confirming our review

A senior manager will consider your request and decide if a review will happen.

We will then write to you within 10 working days of receiving your request to tell you what is happening.

Telling you the outcome

A senior officer who has not been involved before will review the decision. They will write a report for the Public Guardian, who will then accept, change or reject the recommendations.

We will then tell you the outcome in writing. We aim to finish all reviews within 30 days. Complex cases might take longer, and we will let you know if we think this is likely.

Taking the matter further

If you are unhappy with the review's outcome, you can phone the Northern Territory Civil and Administrative Tribunal on 1800 604 622.

Office of the Public Guardian

 **1800 810 979** (8 am to 4 pm weekdays)

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