



COMPLAINTS POLICY

PURPOSE

The right to lodge a complaint about a service, and have that complaint investigated objectively and without fear of retribution, is fundamental.

The purpose of this policy is to set out:

- how to make a complaint about QPASTT, and
- what happens when QPASTT receives a complaint.

SCOPE

This policy applies to QPASTT clients and stakeholders.

LEGISLATION

This policy is governed by the Privacy Act and Regulations 1988 (Cth), and the standards set out by the Office of the Health Ombudsman.

PRINCIPLES

- Complaints will be investigated in a fair and impartial manner. No prior judgments or assumptions will be made. No action will be taken until the investigation is complete.
- The agency recognises that complaints (and compliments) represent valuable feedback which facilitates improved service delivery.
- Complaints will remain confidential. The only people who will have access to information about the complaint will be the Complainant, and the CEO or designated QPASTT worker directly involved in investigating and resolving the complaint. Where the complaint is escalated, this may also include other employees of QPASTT who are required to provide information around the complaint.
- The Complainant will not be subjected to any prejudicial consequences as a result of making a complaint.
- There is an underlying assumption that complaints are made in good faith (and with good will), with an intention for resolution, and not made in a vexatious or malicious manner.

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- Where the complaint involves serious misconduct or a criminal offence, QPASTT has an obligation to deal with the matter urgently, and where appropriate will refer the matter to the Police or other agency for investigation e.g. WorkCover. Where the matter relates to a particular staff member and depending on the seriousness of the offence, immediate termination or leave without pay while the matter is investigated may be options considered. These decisions will be at the discretion of the CEO and the QPASTT Board.

PROCESS

- Where a Complainant is unhappy with any part of QPASTT's service, they are advised to first contact their QPASTT worker. This can be done face to face, over the phone, by email or letter. If the complaint is in regard to a privacy issue, the Complainant is advised to contact the QPASTT Privacy Officer in the first instance.
- In situations where identified concerns remain unresolved, the Complainant is advised to make a complaint to the CEO of QPASTT. This can be done in person, by phone, by letter, by email, by fax or by completing the Complaint Form on the QPASTT website, or by requesting a paper version of Complaint form to be sent to them. The Complainant is asked to advise, where possible, what kind of result or outcome it is hoped will be achieved, however this will not necessarily dictate the remedy that might ultimately apply.
- Where contact details have been provided, QPASTT will notify the Complainant on receiving the complaint. This will occur within one week.
- The CEO may deal with the complaint personally or refer the complaint to another appropriate person - for example, a QPASTT manager or a member or members of the QPASTT Board.
- Where necessary and if required, the Complainant may need to be contacted in order to receive relevant supporting documentation or further details and clarification regarding, for example, the chronological flow of events. All details provided will be kept confidential. It may also be necessary to contact others in order to progress the investigation into the complaint. For example, where a complaint involves the conduct of a QPASTT employee, the matter will be raised with the employee concerned and comment and input sought in the resolution of the complaint. QPASTT requires, however, that all employees privy to the details of a complaint will keep this information confidential.
- QPASTT will carefully consider the complaint and endeavour to make a determination based on all the information available within 28 working days. In situations where this is not possible, the Complainant will be kept informed of the progress of their complaint.
- The Complainant will be informed of the outcome of the investigation as soon as possible.

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- The determination and actions will then be recorded onto the Complaints Register by the person designated to handle the complaint.

POSSIBLE OUTCOMES

1. The complaint is substantiated

The Complainant will be informed of this result, and QPASTT will then take agreed steps to resolve the complaint, address concerns and prevent the problem from recurring. The following are among the possible outcomes:

- An agreement between the parties;
- A verbal or written apology;
- Change in process or action taken;

The CEO will ensure that the outcome is implemented and documented.

2. The complaint is unsubstantiated

Where this policy has been followed, but a complaint is found by QPASTT to be not substantiated, the Complainant will be informed of the decision.

3. The Complainant is not satisfied with QPASTT's determination

At the conclusion of the investigation into the complaint, if the Complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, they are invited to take the complaint to the Queensland Ombudsman.

<https://www.ombudsman.qld.gov.au/about-us/contact-us>.

If the complaint involves a privacy issue, the Complainant is advised to contact the Privacy Commissioner at the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC). The contact details for the OAIC are available from the OAIC's website at www.oaic.gov.au

Complaints may also be taken up with the Office of the Health Ombudsman.

<https://www.oho.qld.gov.au/>

THE QPASTT COMPLAINTS REGISTER

Details of any complaint are recorded in the QPASTT Complaints Register, which is an internal document. The process of recording the details of the complaint and any follow up action is coordinated by the Senior Leader, Capability and Governance, with the assistance of those taking part in the complaints process for each specific complaint.

The Complaints Register is reviewed half yearly by the Senior Leader, Capability & Governance for the purposes of service improvement. De-identified summaries and analysis of the complaints from the previous 6 months are provided to the board for its consideration of risk, safeguarding and planning.

Relevant questions in considering the complaints register may include:

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- Was each complaint handled appropriately?
- Are there any 'complaint patterns' emerging?
- Where do the complaints originate: clients, stakeholders, other?
- If a complainant has not been satisfied with our decision, ask could we have done this better? How?

ANONYMOUS COMPLAINTS

QPASTT will accept anonymous complaints, however it is up to the discretion of the CEO or Chair of the QPASTT Board to determine further action. In all cases, anonymous complaints and actions taken will be recorded on the Complaints Register.

FEEDBACK

QPASTT has an active process of collecting and recording feedback. This feedback may at times be negative and may be treated as a complaint. Please refer to the Client Feedback Policy.

CONTACT PERSON

CEO, QPASTT
28 Dibley Street, Woolloongabba, Q 4102
Email: connect@qpastt.org.au
Phone: 07 3391 6677

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