

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 other 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.

DEFINITIONS

In this policy, the Complainant is the person/s who is making the complaint.

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 Co-CEOs 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.

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- 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.
- 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 Co-CEOs and the QPASTT Board.

PROCEDURE

If clients or other stakeholders are unhappy or dissatisfied with QPASTT or the service it provides, they are encouraged to start by talking directly to their QPASTT worker or another worker such as a Team Leader to try to resolve any issues or concerns. If they are not comfortable doing this, or they have tried to do this and it has not been helpful, they can make a formal complaint using the process set out below.

How to make a complaint

Parties wishing to make a complaint can do so by:

- Submitting their complaint via the QPASTT website at <https://qpastt.org.au/give-feedback/>
- Emailing their complaint to QPASTT at connect@qpastt.org.au.
- Contacting QPASTT Reception and requesting that a Complaint Form be sent to them.

QPASTT is able to assist parties with language support if needed in making the complaint.

- If none of the above ways suits, or if clients or stakeholders are dissatisfied with the response they have received, they can make a complaint directly to the QPASTT Co-CEOs. This can be arranged by calling QPASTT Reception and making an appointment to meet with one or both Co-CEOs.

Information to include in a complaint

- Complainants are asked to advise, where possible, what kind of result or outcome they are hoping for. Note that this may not necessarily dictate the remedy that might ultimately apply.
- Complainants are asked to provide their contact details when they make their complaint so QPASTT can contact them to confirm that we have received their complaint. QPASTT will do this within one week of receiving a complaint.
- Where necessary and if required, QPASTT may need to contact Complainants to request relevant supporting documentation or further details and clarification regarding, for example, the flow of events. All details provided will be kept confidential.

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- It may also be necessary for QPASTT to contact others in order to progress the investigation into the complaint. For example, where a complaint involves the conduct of a QPASTT worker, the matter will be raised with the worker concerned and QPASTT will seek their comments and input in resolving the complaint. QPASTT requires all workers who are part of the complaint to keep any details they receive confidential.

Who will respond to the complaint

- All complaints will be referred to the Co-CEOs who may deal with the complaint personally or refer the complaint to another appropriate person - for example, a QPASTT Senior Leader, the Privacy Officer or a member or members of the QPASTT Board.

Timeframe for QPASTT's response to the complaint

- QPASTT will carefully consider the complaint and try to make a decision based on all the information available within 28 working days. In situations where this is not possible, QPASTT will notify the Complainant and keep them informed of the progress of their complaint.

Record keeping

- Any decisions and actions taken will be recorded in the QPASTT Complaints Register by Senior Leader Capability & Governance.

POSSIBLE OUTCOMES

1. The complaint is substantiated

Complainants 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 Co-CEOs will ensure that the appropriate 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

If a Complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of their complaint, they can contact 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

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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 complaint.

The Complaints Register is reviewed half yearly for the purposes of service improvement. De-identified summaries and analysis of the complaints are provided to the board for its consideration of risk, safeguarding and planning.

Relevant questions in considering the complaints register may include:

- 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 QPASTT's decision, ask: how could we have done this better?

ANONYMOUS COMPLAINTS

QPASTT will accept anonymous complaints, however it is up to the discretion of the Co-CEOs 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.

POINTS OF CONTACT

Phone: (07) 3391 6677

Email: connect@qpastt.org.au

Website: www.qpastt.org

OTHER RELATED POLICIES

Code of Conduct

Client Feedback Policy

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