



# Directions

Disability Support Services  
— for individuals & families —

## Complaints and Feedback Policy

### 1. Policy Connections

National Standards for Disability Services Standard 4 Feedback and Complaints. Disability Services Act 1986 (Commonwealth), Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Commonwealth), National Privacy Principles.

### 2. Policy Statement

The systematic collection and analysis of feedback helps Directions to assess the effectiveness, appropriateness and efficiency of the services provided. Directions encourages the people we support and their families to provide feedback as a source of identifying ways to improve the way we deliver our services.

Directions is committed to facilitating people's right to make a complaint or provide feedback about our service and to appeal a decision we have made that directly concerns them, and to ensure that their complaint or appeal is fairly assessed and responded to promptly.

Directions has a culture that promotes open communication between the people that we support, their families, workers and management. This is a culture in which all parties are free to raise any complaint, concern or grievance that they may have relating to the association. Once the matter has been raised, it will be investigated fairly and in a non-threatening fashion and resolved as quickly as possible. A culture in which people feel safe to discuss their concerns and complaints is one which supports the continuing improvement of our service.

### 3. Strategies to Assist the People we Support to Provide Feedback

The people we support and their families are encouraged to raise matters of concern to them in a variety of ways including:

- People that we support are informed verbally, in writing and on our website, of their right to make a complaint, lodge a grievance or express a concern at any time, and they are assured that people who make a complaint will continue to have access to the services that Directions provides;
- Workers receive training to look out for possible areas where there may be misunderstandings or events that may develop into situations of dispute or concern if not addressed early;
- Workers encourage the people that we support to be actively involved in the service they are receiving and raise awareness that constructive comments are welcomed.

At the initial interview, Coordinators verbally advise the people we support and their families of the following:

- Directions welcomes complaints and comments because it helps us provide a better service;

- They have a right to complain if they are unhappy about any part of our service;
- The procedure about making a complaint or giving feedback;
- That assistance will be provided if someone needs help in making their complaint, either by Directions personnel or from someone external to the service;
- Directions will investigate the complaint as quickly as possible and respond to them within 2 weeks;
- Directions will try to fix the problem quickly and advise the person who has made a complaint as to how this has been done;
- If for any reason someone does not want to complain to Directions directly, alternative avenues for complaint will be presented such as People With Disability WA, or the Health and Disability Services Complaints Office.

The people we support can express their feedback, suggestions, or complaints in a number of ways:

- Informally to their Support Worker or Coordinator;
- To any member of the Directions team or CEO;
- Verbally or in any format they wish;
- Via the website and social media;
- Using an external agency, advocate or support person.

Directions may consult specialist resources when managing complaints from Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders, or people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Any person making a complaint to Directions has the right to involve an advocate to assist them. Where the complaint is of a complex or controversial nature, Directions will remind the complainant of their right to this support, and make all efforts to assist in identifying an appropriate advocate if requested.

When a child or young person makes a complaint, Directions will identify a support person to assist the complainant during the complaint handling process.

Directions will seek a complainant's consent before referring them for assistance to an interpreter or advocate.

#### **4. Complaints and Feedback Register**

Directions maintains a register of complaints and feedback which is located in a secured file on the hard drive. This register is maintained separately from the support files. By recording instances of complaint separately, the person concerned is protected from potential future disadvantage or bias based on case notes. In this way Directions can ensure that all complaints are received and responded to in a similar fashion based on principle of fairness.

The Board are updated on the status of the complaints register on a monthly basis.

<b>Complaints and Feedback Policy Endorsement</b>			
<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Ratified</b>	<b>Next Review</b>
2 yearly	Board	April 2018	April 2020