

Abilities Enabled's complaint resolution process

1. Complaint received

A complaint is received in person, over the telephone, online, or by a third-party complaint hotline called Bheard.

2. Registered and acknowledged

As soon as a complaint is received it is registered using a secure software program. Abilities Enabled's Complaints Officer briefs the responsible Regional Manager on the issue. The Regional Manager sends an acknowledgement letter to the complainant as soon as possible after receiving the complaint.

People who require assistance with communication will be provided with support and aids to assist them in lodging and discussing their feedback or complaint.

3. Initial assessment is made

The responsible Regional Manager makes an initial assessment of the complaint. All comments and complaints are taken seriously. The initial assessment is focused on deciding how best to investigate, who will be involved, and what information is required.

Where any complaint raises immediate concerns about a person's health, safety or general wellbeing, the Regional Manager will take immediate action.

4. Issue is investigated

Some matters can be investigated and resolved simply through open discussion with people we support, family members, front-line staff, and files and records.

A more complex and serious issue may require a formal investigation. This would involve Abilities Enabled's Investigations Officer acting under the supervision of the Complaints Officer. Witnesses will be formally interviewed, evidence collected and relevant records accessed (with appropriate authority and safeguards in place).

Following consultation with the complainant, the Investigations Officer will recommend what action is required. The Officer will advise the Regional Manager and Complaints Officer of the outcome of the investigation and recommendations for resolution.

Any complaint that identifies a high risk to safety and wellbeing, sensitivity, and/or conflicts of interest may require Achieve to enlist the services of a third party independent investigator or Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) provider.

5. Resolution

At the end of the investigation stage, the person who complained or commented will be advised of the outcome of the investigation and the corrective actions that have been taken.

The responsible Regional Manager will write a letter to the complainant detailing the outcome of the investigation, action taken, reasons for decisions made, and where to seek an external review if desired. Any external review would be conducted by the NSW Ombudsman.

6. Reporting

In all cases, regardless of the seriousness of the complaint, outcomes will be reviewed by the Complaints Officer to assess their completeness, accuracy and fairness.

7. Corrective action and follow up

After action is completed, the outcome is formally recorded and closed in the secure software application used to manage this process. The Complaints Officer will also contact the complainant to seek their feedback on the process and outcome.

In order to manage the satisfaction of people we support, families and guardians, Abilities Enabled maintains records on all feedback and complaints.

The Complaints Officer provides the Director with regular reports on complaints and how they were managed.