



Complaints and Feedback Policy

Complaints and Feedback Policy

Introduction

The Wage Inspectorate Victoria (the Inspectorate) enforces state-based workplace laws in

- the *Child Employment Act 2003*;
- the *Long Service Leave Act 2018*; and the
- *Owner Drivers and Forestry Contractors Act 2005*.

These Acts generally aim to protect Victorian workers and improve conditions in Victorian workplaces.

The Inspectorate achieves these aims by providing advice through its information line and website, assessing child employment permit applications, resolving long service leave claims and undertaking a range of compliance functions including investigation and intelligence-led risk-based auditing.

We welcome feedback and value your comments on the service you receive. While we make every effort to deliver the highest value services to the public, we recognise that there may be occasions when people are not fully satisfied with the service they have received.

Feedback from the Victorian public and our stakeholders allows the Inspectorate to improve our understanding of community and stakeholder expectations, and aids the Inspectorate in continually improving service delivery.

This policy sets out:

- how members of the public can provide feedback or make a complaint to the Inspectorate
- how the Inspectorate handles complaints and feedback
- what members of the public can expect if you contact us to provide feedback or make a complaint

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Guiding principles

This policy is based on seven principles.

1. **Commitment**

We are committed to resolving complaints and have a culture that recognises an individual's right to complain. We value complaints and feedback, and recognise them as being part of our business of serving the community and improving service delivery.

2. **Accessibility**

People with a range of needs can easily provide feedback on our performance. Our staff will help them to navigate the complaints process.

3. **Transparency**

We make it clear how to complain and provide feedback, where to complain and provide feedback, and how the complaint or feedback will be handled. The steps taken to respond to a complaint are recorded and will be appropriately scrutinised.

4. **Objectivity and fairness**

Complaints are dealt with courteously, impartially and within established timeframes. They are assessed on merit.

5. **Privacy**

Complaint information is handled according to privacy laws and other relevant legislation. We will remove personal data or identifying details from complaint data if we publicly report on it.

6. **Accountability**

We are accountable internally and externally for our performance in making decisions and handling complaints. We provide explanations and reasons for decisions, and ensure that our decisions are subject to appropriate review processes.

7. **Continuous improvement**

Acting on, learning from and using complaint data helps us identify problems and improve services.

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Definitions

'Feedback' is unsolicited commentary from the public or stakeholders about the Inspectorate and/or its services.

A 'complaint' is an expression of dissatisfaction with the quality of an action taken, a decision made or a service provided.

A 'complainant' is a person, organisation or authorised representative who makes a complaint about the quality of an action taken, a decision made or a service provided.

Scope

This policy applies to all Inspectorate staff.

This policy does not extend to the review of:

- decisions made during investigations where that particular matter is before the Courts
- infringement notices issued under the *Owner Drivers and Forestry Contractors Act*. These have a separate mechanism for review

Our approach to handling complaints

The Inspectorate uses the Enable, Respond, Learn and Improve model to handle feedback and complaints from the public.

The principles of this model are to:

- enable members of the public to provide feedback or make a complaint
- respond by taking action to resolve the feedback or complaint
- learn and improve by analysing feedback and complaint data to improve services

This policy is read in conjunction with the [Wage Inspectorate's Compliance and Enforcement Policy](#) and the following Victorian Ombudsman publications:

- [Good Practice Guide to Handling Complaints](#)
- [Good Practice Guide to Dealing with Challenging Behaviour](#)

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How do I provide feedback or make a complaint?

If you have a complaint or are dissatisfied and you are already dealing with an Inspectorate officer, you should discuss your issues directly with that officer. Our staff will try to resolve your concerns as quickly and informally as possible.

Our frontline staff are empowered to respond and manage issues as they arise. This may include escalating matters to managers if appropriate.

If your complaint is not satisfactorily resolved, you can provide feedback or make a complaint by calling our information line on 1800 287 287, emailing us directly at irv.info@dpc.vic.gov.au or writing to us at PO Box 4912, Melbourne 3000.

You can use these channels to:

- provide general feedback on the service you have received
- make a complaint about the service you have received from us or the conduct of one of our officers
- seek a review of a decision made in respect of the outcome of a child employment permit application, long service leave complaint or any other decision made by us during or at the conclusion of an audit or investigation.

How do we handle general feedback?

In accordance with our Enable, Respond, Learn and Improve model, we catalogue all feedback and seek to use it to improve our services.

We will acknowledge feedback and, in some instances, seek more details to allow us to fully understand the feedback.

How do we handle complaints?

We take a tiered approach to handling complaints. This involves:

1. Raising issues as they arise with the officer who the complainant is dealing with. This is the most direct way for us to be able to resolve issues.
2. If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, they may formalise their complaint by contacting us through any channel and setting out why they are dissatisfied.
3. If the complainant remains aggrieved, we will inform them of their external review options.

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Our process for handling complaints

1. Acknowledge the complaint within 2 business days

We will contact the complainant within 2 business days to confirm we have received their complaint.

2. Assess the complaint

We will assess the complaint to determine the seriousness of the issues, whether there is a need for urgent action (for example, if there were safety concerns), whether the dispute concerns another agency and whether the complaint is subject to special statutory requirements, for example, a protected disclosure under the Protected Disclosure Act 2012.

3. Determine the most appropriate way to respond to the complaint

We use a tiered response for complaints depending on the type of complaint received. This is set out below:

	Type of complaint	Officer	Timeframe
Complaints that are dealt with by frontline staff	Complaints are typically those relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">the availability or quality of our online tools and resourcesservice received by our officers over the phone or in personthe timeliness and quality of our servicesthe outcome of an investigation or permit application	These types of issues are most appropriately raised with the officer you have been dealing with in the first instance.	We will acknowledge the feedback or complaint within 2 business days of receipt. Our frontline staff can respond and resolve issues as they arise. In some instances, we may decide it is appropriate to escalate matters to managers.
Unresolved complaints that may be escalated	Where the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint, they can contact us through one of our channels and set out the grounds on which they believe their	Where complaints are escalated, the complaint will be reviewed independently by a senior officer within the Inspectorate who was not involved in the original decision.	We may not always escalate the complaint. We will review the grounds set out in the complainant's response and decide whether these issues have been

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	Type of complaint	Officer	Timeframe
	complaint should be escalated.		fully dealt with in the initial review. Where a complaint is escalated, we will complete it and advise the complainant of the outcome within 21 days.
	If we have exhausted our internal complaint management process set out above and the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of their complaint, they may lodge a complaint with the Victorian Ombudsman.	We will advise the complainant of this avenue when we inform them of the outcome of their complaint.	The Victorian Ombudsman can be contacted from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday on (03) 9613 6222 or by using their online complaint form .

4. Communicate the outcome

We'll keep customers informed about the progress of their feedback or complaint and the outcome.

5. Share key learnings from the complaint to improve services

Complaints and feedback may offer opportunities to improve our services. We will determine whether the complaint has uncovered any system or procedural issues that need to be addressed to improve our services.

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Remedies

Where we investigate a complaint and find we have made an error or our level of service was not at a reasonable standard in the circumstances, we will take steps to fix the situation. Possible remedies include but are not limited to:

- issuing an apology
- reconsidering or reversing a decision
- providing additional information or assistance

Accessibility

Contact us if you are having problems with accessing this document. Please telephone 1800 287 287 or email us at irv.info@dpc.vic.gov.au.

Privacy

When gathering information to respond to a complaint, we will only:

- use it to deal with the complaint or to address systemic issues arising from a complaint
- disclose it in a de-identified format when disclosing data to the public
- share it with Inspectorate staff on a need-to-know basis

