

Feedback and Complaint policy



The primary objective of Guide Dogs SA.NT is to provide the best possible range of quality services to people with a vision or hearing loss. Clients, stakeholders, volunteers, and staff have a right to provide feedback and to make a complaint when services are not of the agreed standard.

An important aspect of this partnership is feedback regarding service delivery, including complaints and grievances from clients and their families/advocates.

The following policy and procedures outline the commitment of Guide Dogs SA.NT to providing a partnership with stakeholders which ensures clients and families/advocates are able to provide both positive and negative feedback and have their grievances and complaints resolved quickly and fairly without fear of retribution.

Principles

Feedback and informal complaints:

- Guide Dogs SA.NT welcomes feedback from clients and considers this an important part of continually improving services.
- Clients may give this feedback in the manner and format with which they are most comfortable.
- Guide Dogs SA.NT recognises a client's right to appeal a service decision and understands that this is a request rather than a complaint. Every effort will be made to accommodate client preference in the context of availability of resources and eligibility criteria.
- Client Services and Guide Dogs Services will provide clients with a Client Feedback Form at the initial assessment, on an annual basis and upon cessation of services to encourage both positive and negative feedback.
- Team leaders/ staff members will register and monitor general feedback in the Feedback Register for Client Services.
- The general public can provide feedback of any kind to Guide Dogs SA.NT using the General Feedback form on the Guide Dogs SA.NT website or the form which can be obtained from front reception.
- Client Services and Guide Dogs staff are to use the Presentation Feedback form and record details of the presentation using the Register for Presentations.
- Informal complaints will be dealt with at a team level and will be recorded on to the Complaints Register.

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• GUIDE DOG SERVICES
• VISION SERVICES
• SENSORY DIRECTIONS
• HEARING SOLUTIONS

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Formal complaints:

- Clients have the right to receive a copy of the Guide Dogs SA.NT Complaints Policy. Clients will be made aware of the procedure for handling a complaint or concern on an annual basis in their preferred communication format and in writing.
- Clients will be provided with a document that outlines the agency's procedures for dealing with complaints.
- The client and his/her advocate will be fully informed throughout the resolution process.
- Managers and/or team leaders will register and monitor both informal and formal complaints using the Complaints Register as well as maintain a running sheet to record details of action that were taken to address the complaint.

Guide Dogs SA.NT will ensure that all formal complaints/grievances are recorded and action plans (including time lines) are developed and implemented to address the complaint/grievance. Complaints from Telemarketing will be kept separately and appropriate action will be carried out. The Corporate Services and Marketing Communications Managers will review these complaints quarterly.

Guide Dogs SA.NT will seek to ensure complaints are resolved quickly and fairly without fear of retribution. Please see individual procedures for further details.

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for ensuring complaints are responded to and addressed appropriately.

Written Response

Guide Dogs SA.NT will ensure that a written response will be sent to the person making the formal complaint/grievance within 21 days of receiving a complaint. All formal complaints will be reported to the Board of Management at the next scheduled Board Meeting.

Training

Guide Dogs SA.NT will provide initial and ongoing training and support to staff regarding their role and responsibilities in handling complaints and also how to interpret client behaviour that may indicate the person is unhappy about a particular situation.

This may include -

- Information at induction;
- Workshops;
- Regular discussion and examples at client meetings and forums;
- Individual training.

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Complaints About Other Agencies

Guide Dogs SA.NT will support clients, parents and advocates who wish to make a complaint about another agency, organisation or individual outside of Guide Dogs SA.NT by providing direct support, if required, and/or supporting individuals to contact an appropriate external agency.

EXTERNAL ADVOCACY AGENCIES

The following external agencies may be able to assist clients and their families/ advocates who have a grievance in South Australia and Northern Territory. A full list and details of advocacy agencies can be downloaded from the Guide Dogs SA.NT website.

South Australia:

**DACSSA – Disability
Advocacy and Complaints
Service of South Australia**

P: 8234 5699 or
1800 088 325
(TTY) 8234 2229
www.dacssa.org.au

Disability Action Inc

P: 8346 8288 or
1800 805 495
www.disabilityaction.asn.au

EEO Commission

Telephone: 8207 1977 or
(TTY) 8207 1911

**Independent Advocacy SA
Inc**

P: 8232.6200 or
1800 999 884

**Ombudsman
(Commonwealth)**

P: 8226 8616

Ombudsman (State)

P: 8226 8699

Parent Advocacy Inc

P: 8340 4450

**Office of the Public
Advocate**

P: 8269 7575

**MALSSA (Advocacy,
Disability,
Multiculturalism)**

P: 8244 7777

Northern Territory:

**Aged Care Advocacy
Service**

P: (08) 9582400
Freecall: 1800 354 550

**Disability Advocacy
Services Inc**

P: 8953 1422

**Ngaanyatjarra
Pitjantjatjara
Yankunytjatjara Women's
Council**

P: 8958 2345

Guide Dogs Association of SA and NT Inc | Full member of the International Guide Dog Federation

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Responsibilities

- All Guide Dogs SA.NT employees have a responsibility to ensure the Complaint Investigation procedure is followed
- All Guide Dogs SA.NT employees have a responsibility to ensure clients receive information about how to provide feedback or make a complaint.

Relevant Legislation	Disability Services Act 1993	
Associated Policies and Procedures	B27 Complaints Management Policy C1 Grievance Procedure C2 Grievance Process C8 Complaint Investigation Procedure C11 Dog Complaint Form C12 Complaint Form D20 Client Rights and Responsibilities Advocacy Policy and Procedure Client Feedback Form Presentation Feedback Form Feedback and Complaints Procedures	
Definitions	N/A	
Contacts for Assistance	Managers Guide Dogs SA.NT Consultative Committee Department for Families & Communities Group Managers/ Chief Executive Officer	
References	National Standards for Disability Services Home and Community Care National Standards	
Version No. 1	DRAFT	File Ref: s/policies and procedures

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