



feedback and complaints policy

Document number	POL-1294	Approval date	30-Jan-2025
Approved by	Chief Executive Officer	Next review date	30-Jan-2028
Document owner	Head of Enterprise Risk and Compliance		
Applies to	yourtown		

purpose

This policy outlines the handling and management of feedback and complaints at **yourtown**. For further guidance and information regarding safeguarding feedback and complaints, refer to the Safeguarding in Practice Policy. Internal issues and grievances involving **yourtown** team members are handled in accordance with People and Culture Policies and Procedures.

scope

This policy applies to all **yourtown** team members.

using feedback and complaints to improve quality and service provision

Information received through our feedback and complaints processes are used to act on and resolve the issues and suggestions reported to us. **yourtown** also reviews the feedback and complaints we receive as part of monitoring and improving our services to best meet the needs of client groups and individual service users, and our supporters, and to assure compliance with legislative and contractual requirements. Aggregated data is used in our business planning and budgeting processes to ensure the quality and effectiveness of our operations.

Positive feedback is communicated to relevant team members as part of celebrating our successes and recognising the work performed by our team members. We may also use feedback from stakeholders in our publications or newsletters. This is always done in a way that protects the identity of the individual, or if this is not possible or appropriate, with express permission.

Personal information received via feedback and complaints is not used for any other purpose unless the use and/or disclosure of personal information is authorised or permitted by the Australian Privacy Principles or any other law, such as where an individual faces a serious threat of harm.

yourtown informs service users of how to provide feedback through channels such as the **yourtown** website, onboarding processes for select services, and QR codes that are displayed at service locations, that link directly to the **yourtown** feedback webpage. **yourtown** values constructive input and uses it to improve its services and enhance user experience.

receiving feedback and complaints

Feedback and complaints can be received in a variety of ways. An individual may:

- speak directly with any **yourtown** team member, who will enter the feedback into the quality improvement system.
- complete an online feedback form via the feedback link on the **yourtown** or Kids Helpline websites.
- write to: **yourtown**, GPO Box 2469, BRISBANE QLD 4001.
- participate in a client satisfaction survey or program evaluation facilitated by **yourtown**.

Feedback received by other mechanisms (e.g. social media and to Board Members) will be directed to a staff member and recorded in the quality improvement system for appropriate consideration.

An individual may provide feedback on behalf of themselves or somebody else. Subject to privacy considerations and any formal protocol in place, a **yourtown** service partner may provide us with information about feedback or complaints received from **yourtown** clients.

responding to anonymous feedback and the use of pseudonyms

Anyone providing feedback or making a complaint is entitled to remain anonymous or use a pseudonym. In such cases, **yourtown** will endeavour to act on the feedback or resolve the complaint but may be limited in what action can be taken in investigating and/or acting upon the matter given the circumstances.

providing assistance

If requested, **yourtown** will assist an individual to provide feedback or lodge a complaint by:

- guiding the individual to the feedback link on the **yourtown** website.
- entering their feedback or complaint into the quality improvement system on their behalf.
- providing on-going support throughout the feedback or complaint resolution process to the individual and relevant team members.
- coordinating an interpreter, if required.

An individual providing feedback or making a complaint may appoint an external party to advocate on their behalf.

responding to feedback and complaints

The **yourtown** privacy notice for feedback and complaints is provided to individuals who submit feedback or lodge complaints. The notice can be accessed on the **yourtown** website at www.yourtown.com.au/feedback-and-complaints-privacy-notice. If an individual cannot access the website, a **yourtown** team member may provide a printed copy of the notice or read the notice (e.g. over the phone).

yourtown treats all feedback seriously and investigates and responds to all feedback and complaints received. **yourtown** will treat any individual providing feedback or making a complaint with dignity and respect, and treats all information provided as confidential in accordance with our corporate values, Consumer Rights Position Statement, Privacy Policy, and Records Management Policy.

Only authorised team members can access and handle feedback, complaints, and related personal information.

If feedback or a complaint concerns a third-party, such as another service provider or agency, **yourtown** will assist the individual to provide feedback directly to that party.

feedback and complaints policy	DN:	POL-1294
COMPANY CONFIDENTIAL Correct when printed from the Document Portal. Printed documents are uncontrolled.		Page: 2 of 7

As applicable, **yourtown** complies with all response timeframes agreed to or required by funding bodies and service partners and works with such organisations to address and resolve complaints that are subject to these requirements.

managing complaints

In receiving a complaint, **yourtown**:

- enters the complaint into the quality improvement system (if not entered directly by the complainant).
- contacts the individual (if appropriate to do so and contact details have been provided) to confirm:
 - the details of the matter.
 - the individual's expectations, including information to be provided upon resolution of the matter.
 - the resolution process and any additional support available or required.
 - the name and contact details of a **yourtown** contact person.
- investigates the issue raised as quickly as possible to decide on any actions or improvements that may be required. This will usually be undertaken by the supervisor or the manager of the relevant program or service (or where appropriate, an alternate investigator appointed by the relevant Departmental Head or Chief Executive Officer).
- advises relevant government departments and/or external agencies where a specific reporting requirement exists.
- responds to the individual about the outcome of the investigation as quickly as possible and no later than fifteen (15) business days after lodgement. If the matter cannot be resolved within this time, where appropriate **yourtown** will advise the individual of the reasons for the delay and provide a revised timeframe.
- ensures appropriate records and case notes are maintained in accordance with **yourtown** policies and procedures, any applicable program or contractual requirements, and applicable Privacy legislation. If applicable, we may need to provide information about the complaint and/or its resolution to a service partner or funding body in accordance with a formal protocol.

In receiving other types of feedback (such as compliments), **yourtown** acknowledges the receipt of the feedback with an appropriate expression of appreciation.

providing services to those providing feedback and making complaints

We strive to maintain the highest level of service to all our clients and supporters, regardless of the circumstances. To this end, **yourtown** handles feedback and complaints from stakeholders in a fair and just manner.

No individual will be disadvantaged in any way if they provide feedback or make a complaint about **yourtown**. **yourtown** encourages anyone who feels they have been disadvantaged in this way to raise the matter directly with the manager of the relevant service or program.

appeals

Internal Appeal

If an individual is not satisfied with **yourtown**'s response to their feedback or complaint, they may write to the Chief Executive Officer at: **yourtown**, GPO Box 2469, BRISBANE QLD 4001.

The Chief Executive Officer will respond within fifteen (15) business days of receiving the written request.

feedback and complaints policy	DN:	POL-1294
COMPANY CONFIDENTIAL Correct when printed from the Document Portal. Printed documents are uncontrolled.		Page: 3 of 7

External Review

If the individual is still not satisfied with **yourtown**'s response:

- The individual may seek an external review by an alternative dispute resolution service. A list of independent mediators who may be able to assist with resolving a dispute has been included in appendix a of this document. **yourtown** may participate in an alternative dispute resolution process providing all parties agree to be bound by a confidentiality agreement.
- Where applicable, an individual may lodge a concern with the relevant government funding body.

responsibilities

Departmental Heads are responsible for ensuring feedback and complaints are investigated, actioned and closed in a timely and effective manner, and in accordance with any agreed or required timeframe.

All team members are responsible for:

- assisting an individual to lodge feedback or a complaint, whenever requested.
- participating in feedback or complaint processes, as requested or assigned.
- maintaining appropriate records relating to feedback and complaints.

training and awareness

yourtown ensures all team members with complaint management responsibilities are aware of and understand feedback and complaints resolution processes, and that all team members understand how they can support individuals to submit feedback and complaints.

Where information received feedback and/or complaints is used for training purposes, any related personal information will be de-identified to protect the privacy of the individuals concerned.

referenced documents

- Safeguarding in Practice Policy
- Consumer Rights Position Statement
- Privacy Policy
- Records Management Policy
- Duty of Care Position Statement/Procedures/Guide
- Quality Improvement System (QIS) Administration Procedure and Guideline
- Feedback links and forms on the **yourtown** and Kids Helpline websites
- Privacy Notice – Feedback and Complaints

related documents

- Feedback and Continuous Improvement Position Statement
- Program-specific client information handbooks and equivalent documents.

external documents

- Australian Privacy Principles Guidelines: Privacy Act 1988 (OAIC, 2014)
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) and associated Australian Privacy Principles
- Relevant State/Territory Privacy Legislation – various

feedback and complaints policy	DN:	POL-1294
COMPANY CONFIDENTIAL Correct when printed from the Document Portal. Printed documents are uncontrolled.		Page: 4 of 7

document review details

Review Details	Reviewed On	Revision
Updated to new template. Included references to Safeguarding in Practice Policy	22-Jun-2023	V2
Added reference to Privacy Notice – Feedback and Complaints	30-Nov-2023	V3
Minor changes to language and contact details in Appendix A	15-Jan-2025	V4



Appendix A

Independent Mediators List

Mediator	Link	Cost	Contact Information
QLD			
QLD Training Ombudsman	http://trainingombudsman.qld.gov.au/contact/	Free.	P: 1800 773 048 E: info@trainingombudsman.qld.gov.au PO Box 15090, City East Qld 4002
Dispute Resolution Centre	https://www.qld.gov.au/law/legal-mediation-and-justice-of-the-peace/settling-disputes-out-of-court	In most cases it is free to take part in mediation. The DRB only charges a fee for facilitations and workplace mediations.	https://www.qld.gov.au/law/legal-mediation-and-justice-of-the-peace/settling-disputes-out-of-court/dispute-resolution-centres
NSW			
Community Justice Centres	http://www.cjc.justice.nsw.gov.au/	Free. Can provide alternative dispute resolution services tailored to help people solve conflicts.	P: 1800 990 777 E: cjc@justice.nsw.gov.au Community Justice Centres Locked Bag 5111 PARRAMATTA NSW 2124
VIC			
The Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria	https://www.disputes.vic.gov.au/	Free.	P: 1300 372 888 E: dscv@justice.vic.gov.au 4/456 Lonsdale St, Melbourne, Vic 3000 Contact information can be found here: https://www.disputes.vic.gov.au/about-us/contact-us
ACT			
Community Justice Centres	http://www.cjc.justice.nsw.gov.au/	Free.	P: 1800 990 777 E: cjc@justice.nsw.gov.au Community Justice Centres Locked Bag 5111 PARRAMATTA NSW 2124
Conflict Resolution Service	https://crs.org.au/	Fee list can be found here: https://crs.org.au/fees/ .	P: 02 6189 05 90 (main office) E: admin@crs.org.au

Mediator	Link	Cost	Contact Information
			1/32-38 Townshend Street Phillip, ACT 2606 https://crs.org.au/about-crs/contactus/
TAS			
LegalAid Tasmania (List of mediation services available)	https://www.legalaid.tas.gov.au	Free. Focus on economically and socially disadvantaged Tasmanians.	P: 1300 366 611 158 Liverpool St, Hobart TAS 7000
SA			
Office of the Training Advocate	http://trainingadvocate.sa.gov.au/	Free	P: 1800 006 488 E: trainingadvocate@sa.gov.au GPO BOX 1152 Adelaide, SA 5001
WA			
Citizens Advice Bureau	http://www.cabwa.com.au/mediation-service/community-mediation	A pre-mediation appointment costs \$75 per party. A mediation costs \$150 per party	http://www.cabwa.com.au/contact-us
Mediation Australia	https://mediationsaustralia.com.au/	The parties share the cost of mediation. Mediation will only commence after the parties have signed a letter appointing the Mediator.	https://mediationsaustralia.com.au/book-a-consultation/ Level 25 108 St Georges Terrace, Perth, 6000 Western Australia
NT			
Community Justice Centre	https://nt.gov.au/law/processes/resolving-disputes-without-going-to-court		2B1 CASCOM Centre 13 - 17 Scaturchio Street Casuarina NT 0810 PO Box 41964 Casuarina NT 0811 P: 1800 000 473