



## **Management of Supplier Complaints and Feedback Procedure**

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### **Context**

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This procedure ensures that feedback received from suppliers (past, current and potential) is managed effectively.

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### **Definitions**

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#### **Complaint**

Any expression of dissatisfaction made by the complainant in relation to their experience with the DHSV Logistics Department

#### **Complainant**

A supplier who makes a complaint or an expression of concern regarding any aspect of their interaction with respect to the DHSV Logistics Department. A complainant can be a past, current or potential supplier of goods or services or their representative.

#### **Procurement Complaint**

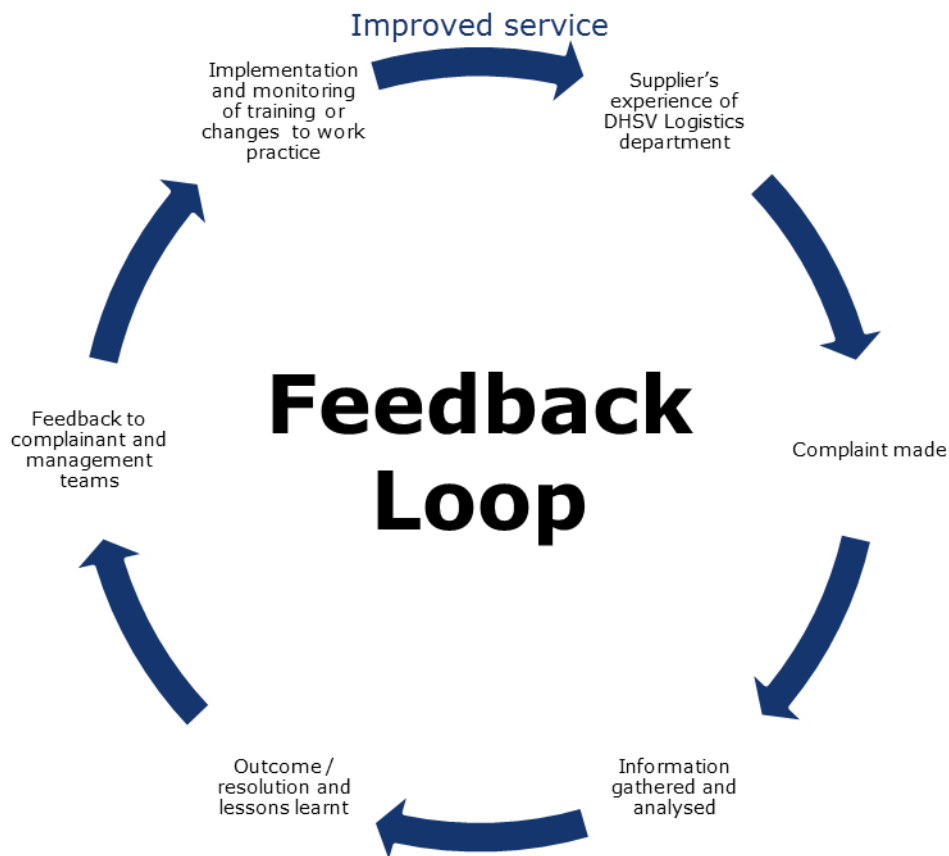
An issue or concern expressed by a supplier in relation to the process and probity applied by DHSV when carrying out a procurement activity. The procurement complaint should be a letter, email or fax lodged with DHSV's Chief Procurement Officer (CPO).

#### **Feedback**

Any expression of satisfaction or dissatisfaction made by complainant in relation to their experience with the DHSV Logistics Department. Feedback includes a Procurement Complaint. The information received can be used as a basis for service improvement.



Creating a system where feedback is encouraged allows for suppliers to make positive comments as well as complaints.





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## **Purpose**

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It is the intent of this procedure to provide a clear process with regard to the management of supplier feedback in relation to the DHSV Logistics department.

This document outlines:

- The process for managing and documenting feedback received in relation to the DHSV Logistics department.
- The role and responsibilities of all staff when managing either verbal or written feedback
- The internal reporting requirements
- Suppliers' rights to have a procurement complaint treated as genuine and for the complaint to be properly investigated.
- The intent of the DHSV Logistics department to increase the level of satisfaction with service delivery.
- Staff rights throughout the feedback process.

### **Purpose of the Management of Feedback**

The DHSV Logistics department is committed to improving responsiveness to the issues and concerns of suppliers.

Feedback is a unique source of information as suppliers have a distinctive expertise in relation to their perspective on how service is provided.

Feedback is information given by a supplier that can be used as a basis for improvement in the relevant area.

All feedback will be recorded in a database. The aim of collecting data is to monitor feedback and the progress of complaints, the outcomes achieved and to provide reports to relevant stakeholders.



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## Procedure

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### Complaints System (Complaint & Procurement Complaint)

<i>Received</i>	Verbally, in writing or online via email/website.
<i>Registered and acknowledged</i>	Entered into the database. Complainant informed.
<i>Assessed</i>	Severity of complaint assessed by the Manager Logistics.
<i>Investigated</i>	Relevant internal and/or external authorities investigate complaint.
<i>Analysed and reviewed</i>	Identification of an appropriate course of action.
<i>Response</i>	Recommendations (improvements) as a result of the investigation are acted upon and reported via the database.
<i>Resolved</i>	If a valid complaint, formal acknowledgement to the complainant and all documentation finalised.

### Processing of complaints

The following process is to be followed when receiving feedback.

#### **Written and Verbal Feedback**

- Complaints are to be addressed at the time they are raised.
- The staff member initially dealing with the complaint should first clarify the issue of concern and confirm it is a complaint and not an inquiry.
- If it is a complaint, the staff member is to try and resolve the complaint immediately and then enter the details of the complaint and resolution onto the database.
- If the staff member cannot resolve the complaint they are to contact the Manager Logistics and, together, attempt to resolve it immediately. If the Manager Logistics is unavailable, the staff member is to contact the CFO, provide the details and ask for support to resolve the complaint.
- Register the details into the database as soon as possible.
- The complainant should receive acknowledgment of the complaint within five working days.
- Unresolved complaints must have a response provided within 28 days.
- If the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution, the complaint is to be escalated to the CFO.

#### **Enquiries and Complaints from Parliamentary Sources**

- The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Dental Unit manages all enquiries and complaints received by the Office of the Health Minister.
- Complaints received directly by DHSV from local members of parliament on behalf of their constituents, will be managed as formal complaints and will receive written responses.

- The DHSV Communication's Team will be informed of any enquiries or complaints from a parliamentary source and will provide the necessary advice to ensure DHSV responds appropriately.

### **Formal Complaints including Health Services Commissioner and Ministerial Enquiries**

Some complaints, either written or verbal, of a more serious nature are considered formal. They may necessitate urgent action and the involvement of higher-level management such as the CEO, the relevant Executive Management Representative, or the Manager Governance, Audit, Risk and Compliance. These include:

- Complaints forwarded from the Health Services Commissioner
- Complaints where legal action is likely or imminent
- Complaints alleging serious negative outcomes
- Complaints alleging serious inappropriate behaviour by a DHSV staff member.

### **Procurement Complaints**

#### *Process*

A procurement complaint will initially be managed in a similar way as any other feedback, by ensuring that the steps set down in the complaints system are followed.

Noting this, prior to considering the detail of the procurement complaint, staff are to review the contract register or the executed contract to ascertain if there are express clauses that deal with complaints management for that specific supplier. The signed contract terms will take precedent over this policy.

#### *Documentation*

In order that a procurement complaint can be considered in an efficient and timely manner the written complaint is required to include the following:

- Specific details in relation to the nature of the procurement complaint
- Copies of relevant correspondence supporting the details of the complaint
- An indication of the outcome sought.

#### *Addressed to CPO*

In order that procurement complaints can be addressed in a timely manner, they need to be sent to the attention of the CPO:

Email: CPO@dhsv.org.au  
In writing: CPO  
Dental Health Services Victoria  
GPO Box 1273L  
Melbourne Vic 3001  
Fax: Attention to CPO  
03 9341 1234

#### *Communication Protocol*

Procurement complaints will be acknowledged on the day they are received.

DHSV commits to investigating the same and providing a written update within two business days of receipt.

Where required, we will contact the complainant by phone to clarify any details. DHSV will endeavour to resolve all procurement complaints within 5 business days of receipt and will endeavour to provide a written response in that timeframe.

In circumstances where the outcome of the dispute is not to the satisfaction of the complainant or the matter takes longer than five business days to resolve, the procurement complaint will be referred to HPV Board for resolution.

#### *Outcome*

DHSV will work with the complainant to achieve a satisfactory outcome for both parties. We will work to improve our systems and processes based on the feedback received with the view to improving business operations and relationships.

#### *Referral to HPV Board*

If unsatisfied with the outcome, a complainant can refer a procurement complaint to the HPV Board for review. The referral to the HPV Board could be related to the management of the complaint or the application of the Health Purchasing Policies.

Complaints submitted to the HPV Board must be lodged by letter, email or fax, within 10 working days of the receipt of the findings by the organisation to:

The Chair  
HPV Board  
Health Purchasing Victoria  
Level 34, 2 Lonsdale St  
Melbourne Vic 3000

When referring a complaint to the HPV Board, the complainant must provide the following material:

- Evidence that DHSV did not correctly apply the Health Purchasing Policies in relation to a procurement activity
- Evidence that DHSV's complaints management were not applied correctly
- A copy of all relevant correspondence between the complainant and DHSV in relation to the nature of the complaint
- Any additional material requested by the HPV Board to assist it in its findings.

In return, the HPV Board will inform DHSV and the complainant of its findings and any further action it intend to take in relation to the matter.

#### ***Responsibilities of staff in the complaints process***

- Staff have the responsibility to:
  - Understand the complaints handling process
  - Attempt resolution of complaints at the time they are received. If the complaint cannot be resolved it is to be taken to the manager for resolution
  - Enter complaint data into the database
  - Use complaints to highlight an area of required change to management.

#### ***Responsibilities of Manager Logistics in the complaints process***

- All attempts should be made to resolve complaints at the local level.
- The Manager Logistics is responsible for:
  - Managing and closing any unresolved complaints that are referred to them within 28 days
  - Consulting with the CFO on any correspondence that is to be sent to complainant
  - Entering resolution information onto the database
  - Referring all serious complaints to the CFO
  - Ensuring all staff are trained in the complaints process and supported throughout the complaints process

- Ensuring all staff are trained in using the database
- Utilising complaints to highlight areas of required change
- Ensuring that the complainant and staff are informed of the outcomes of the process and any system changes made due to complaints
- Making sure all parties will have access to relevant material and sufficient time to provide a response
- Reporting resolved and unresolved complaints to their relevant Executive on a monthly basis.

***Responsibilities of Executive Managers in the complaints process***

- Manage any unresolved complaints that are forwarded to them with 28 days
- Use complaints to highlight areas for improvement
- Ensure that the complainant and staff are informed of the outcomes of the process and any system changes made due to complaints.

***Responsibilities of suppliers in the complaints process***

- In communicating the issue or concern, the supplier is required to:
  - Provide details in relation to the specific event or events that took place  
Documented evidence of the matter should be provided where possible
  - Indicate the actual or potential impact experienced
  - Identify the desired outcome
  - Where the matter is operational or transactional, address the issue to the Manager Logistics
  - Where the issue relates to a matter of tender process, probity, ethical behaviour of staff or alleged fraud, the matter should be in writing and to the attention of the CPO.

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**Revision date**

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January 2019

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**Approved by**

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Chief Financial Officer

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**Procedure owner**

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Manager Logistics

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**Date approved**

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January 2016



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## **Related documents**

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**Attachment 1** – Complaint Handling Strategies



## **Attachment 1: Complaint Handling Strategies**

Complaints can be received over the phone or in person.

### **DEALING WITH DIFFICULT / UPSET PEOPLE**

- Be professional, polite and respectful
- Calm them down so you can get the facts
- Speak in a calm manner - do not raise your voice
- Provide them with privacy to discuss issues (remove from public area)

Remember the person wants or needs:

- To be heard
- To be understood
- To be treated courteously
- An explanation
- Resolution

If the complainant becomes verbally or physically abusive, terminate the discussion, inform them that their behaviour is unacceptable and you will not continue the discussion - call security if needed.

### **WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU RECEIVE A COMPLAINT**

Identify yourself, listen, record details and determine what the complainant wants.

Greet the person positively

- Make eye contact if appropriate
- Introduce yourself using your first name

Let them tell their story

- Listen carefully, give them your full attention- do not interrupt

Identification and Clarification of Issues

- Take down the details of their concerns
- Summarise the issues with the person to ensure that you have captured their concerns
- If complaint is of a serious nature and/or resolution of the issue is not within your control, contact your manager
- Record in the database

Clarification of expected outcome

- Ask what they would like from the complaints process
- Do not guarantee something you cannot deliver
- Identify the person's preferred options for further communication-"How would you like us to get back to you on this?"

Give an action plan

- Inform them of the process
- Give them a time frame
- Check whether the supplier is satisfied with the proposed action and, if not, advise alternative courses of action.
- Provide acknowledgement

- Follow as appropriate and monitor to ensure the supplier remains satisfied as well as receives feedback.
- Ensure they have your contact phone number

#### **WHAT NOT TO DO WHEN YOU RECEIVE A COMPLAINT**

- Blame others
- Be dismissive
- Assume that you know all there is about the situation
- Fight or argue
- Take it personally
- Get caught in details

*Adapted from Section 4.2: Australian Standard for Complaints Handling and Royal Children's Hospital – Complaint Guidelines*