

Management of Supplier or Customer Complaints and Feedback Procedure

Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to:

- provide a clear process with regard to the management of supplier or customer complaints in relation to the DHSV Logistics department; and
- ensure supplier complaints in relation to a DHSV procurement process are managed transparently and effectively.

This document outlines:

- The role and responsibilities of all staff when managing feedback including complaints;
- The process for managing and documenting feedback, including complaints received in relation to the DHSV Logistics department;
- Suppliers' rights to have a procurement complaint treated as genuine and for the complaint to be properly investigated;
- The internal reporting requirements; and
- Staff rights throughout the feedback process.

Scope

This procedure applies to all staff responsible for contract management on behalf of DHSV.

Definitions

Complaint	Any expression of dissatisfaction made by the complainant in relation to their experience with DHSV. A complaint can be received from a past, current or potential supplier or customer.
Complainant	A supplier or customer who makes a complaint or an expression of concern regarding any aspect of their interaction with the DHSV Logistics Department or in relation to a DHSV procurement process.
Feedback	Any expression of satisfaction or dissatisfaction, referred to as a complaint, made by a complainant in relation to their experience with the DHSV Logistics Department or in relation to a DHSV procurement process.
Logistics Complaint	A supplier or customer who makes a complaint or an expression of concern regarding any aspect of their interaction with respect to the DHSV Logistics Department.
Procurement Complaint	A procurement complaint is an issue or concern expressed by a supplier in relation to the process and probity applied by DHSV when carrying out a procurement activity. Managing complaints is essential for transparency and to make sure that both parties are operating in the right way.

Responsibilities

All **staff** have a responsibility to:

- Understand the complaints handling process. Refer attachment 1: Complaints Handling Strategies.
- Attempt resolution of complaints at the time they are received. If the complaint cannot be resolved follow this procedure.
- Use complaints to highlight opportunities for system improvement.
- Where the complaint is resolved furnish the Director of Procurement with details of the complaint.

The **Director of Procurement** is responsible for:

- Ensuring all attempts are made to resolve complaints at the local level.
- Managing and closing all unresolved complaints that are referred within 28 days.
- Consult with the Director Corporate Governance on any correspondence that is to be sent to the complainant.
- Refer complaints to the CPO within 5 business days of receiving a complaint deemed to be serious.
- Making sure all parties have access to relevant material and sufficient time to provide a response.
- Ensuring the complainant and staff are informed of the outcomes of the process and any system changes made due to the complaints.
- Maintain the Complaints Register.

The **Chief Procurement Officer** is responsible for:

- Managing any unresolved complaints that are forwarded.
- Ensuring all staff are trained in the complaints process and are supported throughout the complaints process.

The **Supplier** is responsible for:

- The basis for the complaint, specifying the issue(s) involved. The supplier should provide details in relation to the specific event or events that took place. Documented evidence of the matter should be provided where possible.
- How the subject of the complaint, and the specific issues, affects the person or organisation making the complaint.
- Any relevant background information.
- Provide details of the desired outcome.
- Where the issue relates to an operational matter or to a procurement process, probity or ethical behaviour of staff or alleged fraud, the matter should be in writing and to the attention of the Director of Procurement.

Types of Complaints

All **staff** have a responsibility to:

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 Director Corporate Governance. 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.

Procedure

Processing of complaints

The following process is to be followed when actioning complaints:

Complaints process

Received	Verbal (informal) or in writing via email or letter (formal).
Registered and acknowledged	Received by the Director of Procurement and Supply and recorded in the Complaints Register. Complainant informed.
Assessed	Severity of complaint assessed by the Procurement Director.
Investigated	Relevant internal and/or external authorities investigate the complaint.
Analysed and reviewed	Identification of an appropriate course of action.
Response	Recommendations (improvements) suggested in due course of the investigation are acted upon and reported to internal stakeholders.
Resolved	If a valid complaint, formal acknowledgement to the complainant and all documentation finalised.
Register	Maintain the Complaints Register.

Verbal and Written 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 advise the Director of Procurement in writing.

If the staff member cannot resolve the complaint, they are to contact the Director of Procurement and, together, attempt to resolve it immediately. If the Director of Procurement is unavailable, the staff member is to contact the Director Corporate Governance, provide the details and ask for support to resolve the complaint.

The complainant should receive acknowledgment of the complaint within 5 business days.

All complaints must be responded to within 28 business days ensuring a considered and informed response following the necessary due diligence.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution, the complaint is to be escalated to the Chief Procurement Officer.

Complaint in relation to the DHSV Logistics Department

Purpose of Managing Feedback

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

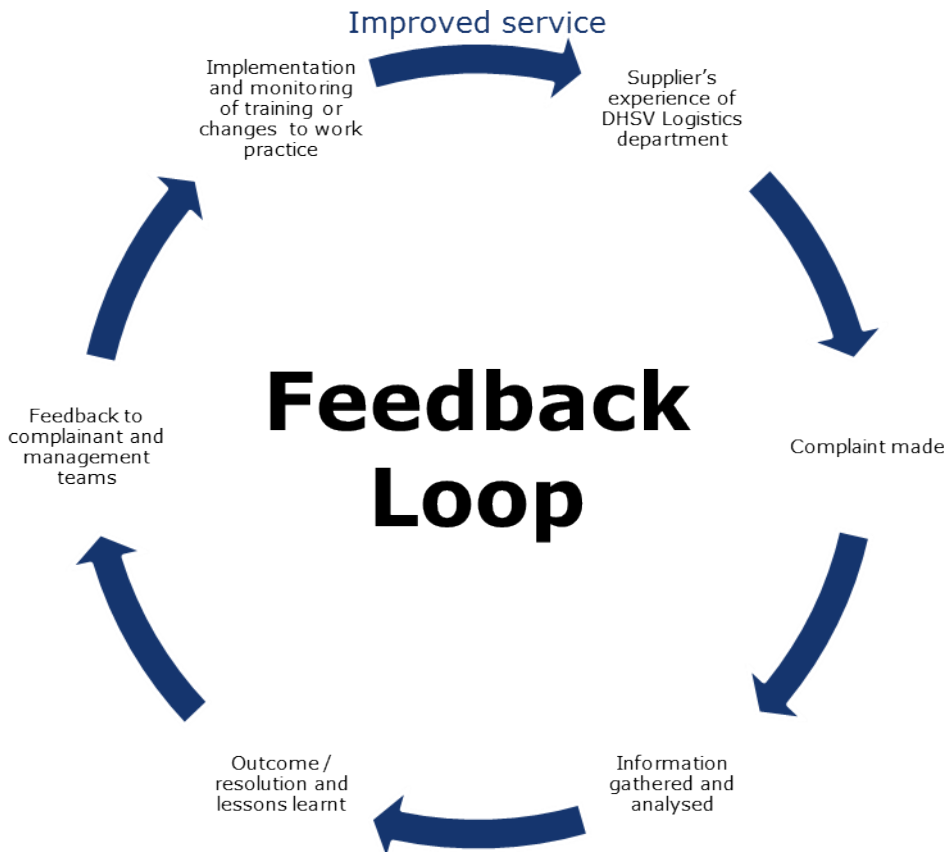
Feedback is a unique source of information as suppliers and customers have a distinctive expertise in relation to their perspective on how service should occur.

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

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

Feedback Loop

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



Procurement Complaints

Mitigation

In the first instance, DHSV through its structured procurement framework will take every opportunity to prevent complaints from occurring. Prevention saves DHSV and the supplier time and valuable resources. Measures DHSV will undertake to prevent complaints include:

- Ensuring DHSV staff members dealing with suppliers possess a high level of interpersonal skills, including verbal and written communication skills.
- Ensuring suppliers are treated in an ethical and impartial manner.
- Ensuring that clear specifications are developed.
- Ensuring that negotiations with suppliers are well planned and documented.
- Ensuring there is effective contract management.
- Making debriefing sessions available for suppliers who have been unsuccessful in tendering for DHSVs' procurement activities.
- Ensuring there is regular performance feedback to the supplier.
- Building effective relationships with suppliers and providing regular feedback on performance.

DHSV places a high level of importance on the way it conducts procurement processes and how it interacts with the market. Complaints will be handled in a consistent, fair, and transparent manner in accordance with the following process.

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 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.

Addressed to the Director of Procurement

In order to address the procurement complaints in a timely manner, they need to be sent to the attention of the Director of Procurement:

Email: Supply@dhsv.org.au

In writing: Director of Procurement and Supply
Dental Health Services Victoria
GPO Box 1273L
Melbourne VIC 3001

Communication Protocol

A Procurement complaint will be acknowledged on the day it is received.

DHSV commits to investigating the same and providing a written update within 5 business days of receipt.

Where required, DHSV will contact the complainant by phone to clarify any details. DHSV will endeavor to resolve all procurement complaints within 5 business days of receipt and will endeavor 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 28 days to resolve, the procurement complaint may be referred to the HSV Board for resolution. Where a complaint is not resolved to the satisfaction of both parties DHSV will inform the HSV Board within 5 working days of any issue identified as not resolved.

Outcome

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

Referral to HSV Board

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

Complaints submitted to the HSV Board must be lodged by letter or email within 10 working days of the receipt of the findings by the supplier to:

In writing: The Chair HSV Board
HealthShare Victoria
Level 34, 2 Lonsdale St
Melbourne VIC 3000

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

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

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

Complaints Register

DHSV will maintain a register and report annually to the Board the following information in relation to each complaint received:

1. procurement activity to which the complaint relates
2. status of the complaint confirming whether it:
 - a) was resolved
 - b) is still under investigation
 - c) could not be resolved

Aligned documents

Financial Management Policy

Procurement Framework

Related Internal Document

Conflicts of Interest Framework

Code of Conduct

Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Framework

Related External Documents

HealthShare Victoria Purchasing Policy 1

<https://healthsharevic.org.au/hsv-purchasing-policies/>

Supplier Code of Conduct

<https://www.buyingfor.vic.gov.au/how-implement-supplier-code-conduct-buyers>

Approved by

Chief Financial Officer

Date approved

26/09/2023

Document owner

Director Procurement and
Supply

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