



Document Name: Policy  
Function: Complaints and Compliments  
Subject: COMPLAINTS RELATING TO SERVICE

Revision No.: 2  
Approval Date: March 2009

**PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

The purpose of this policy is:

- To enable any person to submit a complaint about any aspect of service at DASSI
- To enable any person to submit a complaint about the way that DASSI has managed a complaint about a service.
- To ensure that a person has access to a complaint process that safeguards their rights to make a complaint.
- To ensure that a person is informed of the appeals process at DASSI.
- To ensure that DASSI meets its legislative and regulatory requirements regarding complaints about it's services including the Disability Act 2006 and Disability Services Commissioner.
- This policy provides the principles that underpin the service complaints procedure.
- If a staff member has a complaint regarding another staff member or work related issue [not relating to the service provision], this is addressed in the staff grievance policy.

**POLICY**

1. DASSI acknowledges the importance of continuous improvement and recognizes that a complaints process can lead to better services for clients at DASSI
2. When appropriate, DASSI encourages all of its clients, staff and other stakeholders to raise a complaint relating to any aspect of the service.
3. DASSI recognizes the benefits to raising a complaint and identifying solutions as soon as possible.
4. DASSI values its people and any negative feedback received will be used as an opportunity to improve services for clients and families who are associated with the service.
5. Any complaint will be responded to in a fair, confidential, respectful and timely manner.
6. All complaints will be acted upon and will have outcomes sought within 28 days of receiving a complaint.
7. Any person who makes a complaint about DASSI will receive feedback about the complaint process and the progress of their complaint within the 28 days.
8. Complaints directed at individuals will be viewed as potential system errors, rather than as individual errors. These type of complaints will however, be documented and conveyed to the relevant staff member, who will be given an opportunity to respond.
9. DASSI is committed to prompt resolution of all service complaints, and acknowledges that there may be times when an appeals process needs to be followed.
10. DASSI differentiates between the meaning of a complaint, suggestion and feedback.
11. DASSI recognizes that there may be times when a complaint may consist of a serious dispute, and this will be acted upon with priority.

**KEY RESULT AREAS**

- DASSI values its people

- Planning processes are transparent and regularly reviewed
- All external legislative and statutory accreditation requirements are satisfied
- Organisational risks are avoided or their likelihood of occurrence reduced

## DEFINITIONS

**Complaint** means an expression of dissatisfaction that arises out of the provision of a service or out of the complaints handling process itself. In this instance, the complainant chooses to make a complaint that will be documented and will be followed by the complaints procedure

**Serious Dispute** means a complaint that has the potential to lead to notification to and intervention by senior external funding delegates such as the Program and Support Advisor or Executive representative of the funding body. A complaint that has the potentiality to attract media attention or may lead to external investigation.

**Person** means client of DASSI, their families and carers, staff working at DASSI and any other person who comes into contact with DASSI and its services.

**Service** means any aspect or part of the service at DASSI from initial enquiry, intake and entry and through to exit.

**Suggestion** means the mentioning of an idea for consideration or possible action. A suggestion does not constitute a complaint unless the nature of the suggestion falls under the definition of complaint.

**Feedback** means provision of feedback with the intention of expressing a statement or suggestion relating to any aspect of the service. Feedback does not constitute a complaint unless the nature of the feedback falls under the definition of complaint.

**Appeals process** means that the complaints process followed at DASSI has not been satisfactorily resolved, and the complainant is provided with information about how to appeal the outcome.

**Legislative and regulatory requirements** mean any statutory Acts of Parliament or funding body standards that require a complaints management system in place relating to provision of services.

## RELATED DOCUMENTS

Discrimination, Harassment and EEO policy	POL107
Discrimination, Harassment and EEO procedure	PRO112
Service Complaints procedure	PRO016
DASSI complaints report form	FOR135
Incident Management - Client	PRO072
Staff grievance policy	POL012
Human Rights and Freedom from Abuse procedure	PRO079
Service management procedure	PRO081
Disability Services Commissioner	<a href="http://www.odsc.vic.gov.au">www.odsc.vic.gov.au</a>
Staff and Client Complaints register	REG002
Disability Act 2006	<a href="http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/disability/improving_supports/disability_act_2006">www.dhs.vic.gov.au/disability/improving_supports/disability_act_2006</a>

## RESPONSIBILITY

<b>Implementation:</b>	<b>Client Services Manager</b>
<b>Review:</b>	<b>General Manager Services</b>
<b>Approval:</b>	<b>Quality Sub-Committee</b>

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