



Complaints, compliments and feedback policy

Consumer and Business Services

1. Introduction

Consumer and Business Services

Consumer and Business Services (CBS) is a division of the South Australian Government's Attorney-General's Department. CBS is comprised of the former Office of Consumer and Business Affairs (OCBA) and the Office of the Liquor and Gambling Commissioner (OLGC).

CBS ensures that laws affecting consumers, traders and businesses in South Australia are fairly and effectively administered. CBS provides a diverse range of services to support the everyday activities of South Australian citizens including consumers, traders or businesses.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to document CBS' position in relation to complaints, compliments and feedback received about our services. The intended audience of this document is CBS customers, external stakeholders and other interested parties. CBS staff should also be aware of the principles outlined within this policy.

The policy outlines:

- Why customer feedback is important and valued by CBS
- The scope of the policy
- The guiding principles which shape this policy
- Management of customer feedback
- Pathways available for reviewing or escalating your feedback.

2. Why customer feedback is important

CBS is committed to providing the best service it can in every interaction, without discrimination. This is outlined in more detail in our CBS [Customer Service Charter](#).

CBS encourages and welcomes complaints, compliments and general feedback about our services. By maintaining a culture whereby the feedback provided by customers is listened to and valued, CBS remains in a position to continually grow and develop as an agency.

Complaints provide an opportunity to resolve an issue identified with our services and provide learning opportunities to assist CBS in improving its processes. Compliments allow CBS to recognise what is working well. This knowledge can then be reapplied to other areas within CBS to create further improvements and refinements to the service that we provide. As such, CBS is dedicated to actively incorporating feedback, whether it is positive, negative or neutral, into its processes to improve customer service performance and efficiency. Without feedback, CBS would lose an opportunity for self-assessment and growth.

Our guiding principles, outlined below, describe CBS' commitment to remaining open, responsive and respectful of all customer feedback received.

3. Scope

Who needs to comply with this policy?

This policy applies to all members of CBS staff. This policy does not apply to statutory officers or authorities.¹

¹ A statutory authority is a state government body with its own enabling legislation. Statutory officers are appointed to a position that is established by legislation and granted with various powers and functions under the law.

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What is covered by this policy?

This policy relates solely to feedback received about CBS from its customers and external stakeholders. Customer feedback collectively includes complaints, compliments and general feedback.

Definitions

Complaint:	An expression of dissatisfaction made to CBS relating to its products, services, staff or the handling of a complaint, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.
Compliment:	Positive feedback about CBS relating to its products, services, staff or the handling of a complaint. It may recognise a skill, behaviour or activity of CBS as a whole, a particular Business Unit, or an individual staff member.
General Feedback	Opinions, suggestions, or expressions of concern made about CBS, its services, staff or its handling of a complaint, where there is no explicitly or implicitly expected response or resolution.

What is not covered by this policy?

This policy does not apply to enquiries or requests for service such as:

- Any enquiry seeking information or explanations on CBS' policies or procedures;
- Any request for service or action which forms the core business of CBS' services;
- Action in relation to complaints against businesses and traders in Australia;
- Internal reviews over decisions to take, or not take action;

This policy does not apply to disagreements or grievances regarding:

- Government policy
- Any formal decision which has a prescribed avenue of appeal
- Judicial decisions
- Internal complaints from CBS staff or a panel selection process.

Misconduct and corrupt practices

Matters concerning the conduct and practice of public officers and public authorities in South Australian public administration, specifically corruption, misconduct and maladministration should be reported to the Office for Public Integrity at: <https://www.publicintegrity.sa.gov.au/about/contact-us>.

4. Guiding Principles

CBS is committed to the following key principles:

Visibility – CBS will provide information about the ‘how and where’ to provide customer feedback. This policy will be provided online to the public and staff.

Accessibility – Customers can easily submit feedback through a variety of methods which offer flexibility and convenience (see section 6). Persons with language barriers and persons with hearing or speech impediments will be accommodated through assistive technology / services.

Responsiveness – All customer feedback will receive timely acknowledgement including confirmation that CBS has received the feedback. CBS will provide a response within the required 10 working day response target.

Objectivity and fairness – CBS will respond to customer feedback in an equitable, objective and unbiased manner with a view to resolution where applicable.

Customer focused – A customer-focused approach will be adopted and the rights of customers to disagree with us will be respected and supported by promoting an open, responsive, non-confrontational and friendly process.

Ensure no detriment – No fees will be charged to submit customer feedback. CBS will not discriminate against a customer or treat them adversely because of particular feedback provided which may challenge CBS to review its existing processes.

Accountability – CBS will undertake regular monitoring of customer feedback and ensure Managers, Business Unit Heads and Senior Executives are made aware of data relating to customer feedback, including numbers, the nature of feedback and trends.

Confidentiality – CBS is bound by the State Government Information Privacy Principles. CBS will collect, use, disclose and store personal information in a manner that meets community expectations and reflects the current South Australian Government information

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privacy principles. A copy of the State Government Information Privacy Principles can be found on the State Records of South Australia website archives.sa.gov.au.

Continual Improvement – CBS will analyse customer feedback and, where appropriate, implement changes to help us grow and improve our standard of customer service and overall performance.

5. How customers may provide feedback

Methods available to provide CBS with feedback include:

1. Online cbs.sa.gov.au/contact-us
 - Please select 'Contact Us'
 - Select "I would like to: Compliment, complain or give feedback about a service provided by CBS"; and
 - select the appropriate type of feedback
2. Email CBsregservices@sa.gov.au
3. Post Please send your correspondence to the following address:
 Customer Feedback
 Consumer and Business
 Services Regulatory Services
 GPO Box 1719
 Adelaide SA 5001
4. Telephone 131 882
 Discuss your customer feedback with a member of our friendly CBS staff.
5. In person Customer Service Centre
 Ground Floor, 4-6 Chesser Street Adelaide SA 5000
 The CBS Customer Service Centre is the first point of contact for enquiries and customer feedback.

Accessibility and Assistance

For customers who do not have English as their first language or customers who are hearing impaired or mute, the Australian Government provides the following services:

- Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS): call 131 450
- National Relay Service (Speak and Listen): call 1300 555 727
- National Relay Service (TTY users): call 133 677
- Internet relay users can make an online call at: relayservice.gov.au

Customers using these services can request to be put through to CBS via telephone on **131 882** to provide customer feedback or to make an enquiry.

6. Management of customer feedback

How CBS handles Complaints

1. *Complaint received*

All complaints received by CBS are logged in an internal online system along with the details of the complaint (there is more information about this system in section 9). This creates a unique file and file number for referencing.

The complaint is then sent to a manager within the appropriate Business Unit for assessment.

2. *Complaint acknowledged*

For complaints received online through the website or via email, an acknowledgment email is sent automatically, within the hour.

For complaints received via letter, an acknowledgment letter is sent promptly within two business days of receipt by CBS.

3. *Complaint assessed*

The appropriate manager will review the complaint and firstly determine whether it relates to CBS or should be referred to another agency.

Assuming CBS is the appropriate agency, the manager will analyse the complaint and seek to address the issues personally or delegate to another senior staff member.

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4. Complaint resolved and closed

CBS aims for the resolution of a complaint to be outcome-focused. We will endeavour to find flexible or alternative solutions to meet our customers' expectations while using the available technologies to assist in a prompt resolution.

Outcome based actions may include a letter or phone call explaining and clarifying CBS processes, an explanation of why the issue occurred, an apology, an undertaking to update and improve processes or other appropriate resolutions.

Every complaint must have an outcome recorded which explains:

- how the issue was assessed
- what action was taken to address the issue
- what response was provided to the customer, and
- if applicable, what steps were taken to correct the problem and ensure it is not repeated.

5. Response provided

CBS will provide a response to the customer, either via email, letter or telephone, within 10 working days. CBS will aim to address the complaint within the 10 day period. At minimum, we will provide an update within 10 working days, advising that the complaint is still undergoing assessment and consideration.

6. Option for Review

A customer who makes a complaint will be given information about the process for having their complaint reviewed or escalated if they are not happy with the outcome or the handling of the matter. There is more information on this process in section 7.

How CBS handles Compliments

CBS welcomes compliments and values them as an important form of feedback. We send an acknowledgment letter to all customers who provide a compliment.

Compliments about individual staff members are passed on to the applicable staff member and their manager.

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If a compliment relates to a particular business unit, the manager may send out a group email congratulating the business unit as a whole or raise the compliment at a meeting.

If a compliment relates to CBS as a whole, the Senior Executive Group may wish to publish the compliment in the CBS internal newsletter update.

How CBS handles General Feedback

General Feedback or 'suggestions' are also recorded in CBS' internal recording system and given a file number, alongside complaints and compliments. All feedback is valued by CBS and will receive an acknowledgment letter.

If a customer submits feedback anonymously or does not wish to be contacted, CBS will not provide a formal response to the customer but will carefully consider the feedback provided.

Timeframes

Upon receipt of a letter, email or website submission, CBS will promptly send a written acknowledgement of feedback to the customer.

CBS aims to provide a response within 10 working days either via email, letter or telephone. However, if feedback is of significant complexity, it may take longer to receive a response. At minimum, we will provide an update within 10 working days, advising that the feedback is still undergoing assessment and consideration.

7. Review Process

Our review process for escalating customer feedback

If a customer has submitted a complaint, or received a response from CBS and is still dissatisfied with the issue or the way the complaint was handled, a customer may request for the complaint to be reviewed. This request can only be made formally via letter or email.

Please note that there is no right to a review within CBS. The review process is discretionary. However, CBS will endeavour to honour all reasonable requests for review.

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The review process involves the following steps:

1. In the first instance, the matter will return to a manager in the Business Unit who will re-consider the issue and review the details provided.
2. If the issue remains unresolved, it may then be referred to the Manager Strategic Advice or Assistant Director, Regulatory Services. Both positions are in the Regulatory Services branch which is independent of the other service-based business units of CBS.
3. If the issue remains unresolved, it may be escalated to the Director of the relevant business unit for review or to the Commissioner, CBS, for final review.
4. If the issue still remains unresolved by CBS, customers will be advised that they may escalate their grievance to Ombudsman SA - an independent, free service available to both residential and business customers. The Ombudsman can assist with concerns regarding CBS' processes used to make decisions and determine if they are fair, reasonable and lawful. The contact details for the Ombudsman are available in Section 11.

8. Unreasonable Conduct

Managing unreasonable conduct

CBS is committed to being accessible and responsive to all persons who provide feedback. At the same time, our success depends on:

- our ability to do our work and perform our functions in the most effective and efficient way possible,
- the health, safety and security of our staff, and
- our ability to allocate our resources fairly across all feedback we receive.

If a person behaves unreasonably in their dealings with us, this conduct can significantly affect the progress and efficiency of our work.

CBS reserves the right to take proactive and decisive action to manage any conduct that negatively affects staff and CBS staff will be supported to do the same in accordance with this policy.

Vexatious, malicious or fraudulent complaints

CBS may elect not to review or provide a response to complaints which are considered to be vexatious, malicious or fraudulent. A complaint may fall into this category if it appears, on reasonable assessment, to be baseless, without merit or intended to cause harassment or undue expense to CBS.

9. Reporting

Records and Reporting

Complaints, Compliments and Feedback Reporting System

CBS utilises an online records keeping system known as the Complaints, Compliments and Feedback Register (CCF Register). It is a priority to record data as soon as possible and as accurately as possible. CBS records:

- customer details
- complaint, compliment or feedback details
- how the customer would like the issue resolved, and
- whether the issue relates to a previous issue or a group of previous issues.

All data is recorded in accordance with the State Government Information Privacy Principles.

Annual reporting requirements

CBS is required to report the number and type of complaints received each year, as per section 3.22 of *DPC Circular 13: Annual Reporting Requirements*.

Monthly reporting

Regular analysis of reports enables trends to be monitored, the quality of customer service to be measured and improvements to be made to our systems. The Regulatory Services branch of CBS provides a monthly monitoring report to the Commissioner and Senior Executive Group. The monthly report outlines:

- the number of complaints, compliments and feedback received
- any issues arising from complaints and feedback, especially complaint trends and systemic issues, and
- any formal requests received to have a complaint reviewed.

When reporting on feedback data, CBS will endeavour to make note of any internal or external factors that could have impacted the period under review. Potential factors could include changes to legislation or applicable policies, organisational structures or responsibilities, resources or systems.

10. Consumer and Business Services and other useful contacts

Consumer and Business Services

Website	cbs.sa.gov.au
Email	CBSRegServices@sa.gov.au
Mail	GPO Box 1719, Adelaide SA 5001
Phone	131 882
In person	Ground Floor, 4-6 Chesser Street, Adelaide, SA 5000 Monday to Friday – 9 am to 4.30 pm (except public holidays)

Ombudsman SA

Website	ombudsman.sa.gov.au
Email	CBSRegServices@sa.gov.au
Mail	PO Box 3651 Rundle Mall, Adelaide SA 5000
Phone	(08) 8226 8699 or 1800 182 150 (Toll Free)
In person	Level 8, 95 Grenfell Street, Adelaide SA 5000

The Office for Public Integrity

Website	opi.sa.gov.au
Email	admin@OPI.sa.gov.au
Mail	GPO Box 464, Adelaide, SA 5001
Phone	Complaints: 1300 782 489 Other enquiries: (08) 8463 5173
In person	Level 11, 10 Franklin Street, Adelaide SA 5000