

AHL Complaints Policy 2010

The purpose of this booklet is to provide AHL clients and staff with information about AHL's Complaint Policy, 2010.

1 OVERVIEW

AHL is committed to providing an excellent and responsive service for our customers. The *AHL Complaints Policy 2010* is designed to ensure that any complaints about AHL's services, decisions and/or policies are taken seriously and dealt with promptly.

AHL treats all complaints and concerns as a priority and works with complainants to achieve a satisfactory resolution. The *AHL Customer Service Charter* outlines what clients can expect from AHL and encourages feedback on AHL services.

Any person or organisation can register a complaint or concern with AHL.

1.1 AHL Complaints System

The AHL Complaints System captures all the information required to enable AHL to meet obligations to its clients, the community, and the Commonwealth concerning the handling and reporting of complaints. It also provides information on complaint trends, analysis and resolution with the aim of providing better customer services.

Please note that complaints can only be received only by the following staff:

- Hostel Managers;
- Regional Managers;
- AHL staff at Level EL1 (and above);
- or the AHL Complaints Officer in Central Office.

2 COMPLAINTS

2.1 What is a Complaint?

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction concerning a product or service offered or provided (or that should be offered or provided) by AHL

Complaints or concerns can be about:

- Services provided by AHL
- Decisions made by AHL
- Policies of AHL
- Actions, policies or decisions of an organisation funded by AHL

Complaints may be made by:

- A person affected;
- A third party on behalf of a person affected eg relative, carer, friend, advocate;
- A member of staff about service delivery; and
- An identified person or an anonymous complainant.

Anonymous complaints will also be accepted and investigated, noting it will not be possible to inform the complainant about the investigation.

2.2 What is not a complaint

AHL does not regard the following as complaints to AHL

- Correspondence to or from a Minister;
- Requests made under the Freedom of Information Act requests;
- Disputes or disagreements between staff or between staff and supervisors

2.3 Complaint Process

Complainants should attempt, as a first step, to resolve the matter with the **senior person in the facility** that is the subject of the complaint. If the complainant does not wish to talk to that person or is not satisfied with the action taken by that person, they can:

- complain in writing to the AHL Complaints Officer at PO Box 30, WODEN, ACT, 2606 or
- ring the AHL Complaints Officer on (freecall) 1800 640 836; or
- send an email to complaintsofficer@ahl.gov.org.au

When a complaint is received AHL requires:

- Name and contact details (unless the complainant wishes to remain anonymous);
- Details of the complaint; and
- Details of any attempts made to resolve the matter.

Every complaint received by the AHL Complaints Officer is recorded on the AHL Complaint Register.

It is AHL policy to resolve simple complaints within 10 days of notification, and more complex complaints within 30 days.

Oversight of the AHL Complaints System sits with the Manager Internal Audit, who reports directly to the Chief Executive Officer and independently to an Audit sub-committee of the Board of Directors. If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision or actions taken they may raise this direct with that officer. If they remain unsatisfied they may contact the Chief Executive Officer on 02 6212 2011.

2.3 Role of the Complaints Officer

The AHL Complaints Officer is located in the Accommodation Services Division in Central Office Canberra. This officer's role is to:

- Register every complaint received on the AHL Complaints Register;
- Provide an acknowledgement by email or mail to the complainant (where contact details are provided);
- If necessary, discuss the concern with the complainant to ensure a full understanding;
- Provide advice about the process that will be followed in dealing with the complaint;
- Refer the complaint to the relevant Regional Manager/officer for action;
- Record any decisions or actions taken
- Advise the complainant of decisions and actions taken

3 COMMONWEALTH OMBUDSMAN

If a complainant is not satisfied with the decision, he or she has the right to contact the Commonwealth Ombudsman, who will make representation on their behalf, by letter or phoning **1300 362 072**.

4. CONFIDENTIALITY

The complainant's personal information required for processing is protected under the provisions of the *Privacy Act 1988*. This information cannot be released to any person or organisation unless required by law or the complainant provides consent. The complainant has the right to withdraw personal information from the AHL Complaints and Appeals system at any time. If this occurs their personal information is immediately deleted from all AHL records.