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# VICTORIAN ASSESSMENT SERVICES PTY LTD

## COMPLAINTS POLICY

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## COMPLAINTS POLICY

(Reviewed 2/2/2018)

### V.A.S. EXTERNAL COMPLAINTS POLICY

Opportunities are available for all CEO/DET/ISV staff, parents and other clients to tell us, ‘How we are doing’ and we collect feedback periodically.

The advice below and on our website provides those using the assessment service with information on how to provide feedback, including how to make a complaint.

We have a complaints resolution process, which all directors and contractors can describe, and we also make the contact details for the state health complaints agencies readily available to clients if we are unable to resolve their concerns ourselves.

People using our service have a ‘right to complain’ and where possible they are encouraged to raise any concerns directly with the directors who are trained to make sure clients can be confident that any feedback or complaints will be handled appropriately.

We believe most complaints can be responded to and resolved at the time the complainant makes them known to us.

Under the *Health Services (Conciliation & Review) Act 1987* people with complaints should try to resolve them directly with the health service provider. If a satisfactory outcome is not achieved then the complaint can go directly to the Health Services Commissioner for action. The public may also call the Office of the Health Services Commissioner at any time concerning a query or to report a complaint.

Under national and state privacy laws: *Commonwealth Privacy Act Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000* and *Victorian Health Records Act 2001*, our organization must provide and adhere to a complaints process for privacy issues and those related to the National Privacy Principles (NPPs)/Health Privacy Principles (HPPs).



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All personnel should be prepared to address complaints as they arise. Depending on the nature of the complaint and advice received, complaints are recorded and acted upon, with a copy placed in a confidential file.

All practitioners are aware of their professional and legal obligations regarding the mandatory reporting of unprofessional conduct as contained in the professional's codes of ethics.

### **Procedure**

Clients have opportunities to register their complaints either verbally to directors, in writing (letter) or via our website. Clients should feel free to complain anonymously if desired.

All directors and contractors should be prepared to address complaints as they arise. When receiving complaints we keep in mind the following in order to minimize further anxiety and hostility:

- handle all complaints seriously, no matter how trivial they may seem.
- verbal complaints made in person should be addressed in a private where possible.
- use tactful language when responding to complaints.
- don't blame other personnel.
- address the client's expectations regarding how they want the matter resolved.
- assure the client that their complaint will be investigated and the matter not overlooked.
- offer the client the opportunity to complete a formal complaint in writing. (They may accept or decline).
- document or log all complaints and other relevant information and place this in the complaint folder so the designated director is informed of the complaint (even if you believe the matter has been resolved).
- alert the director(s) about disgruntled or hostile clients so they can diffuse the situation immediately.

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- always inform a director if you become aware of any significant statements made by the client or significant change in client attitude.

Directors will coordinate the investigation and resolution of complaints

- acknowledge the clients right to complain.
- respond to complaints in writing within 2 working days.
- telephone the client to let him/her know that you are working on the problem.
- respond to all complaints promptly in an open and constructive manner including an explanation and if appropriate an apology.
- work with the client to resolve the complaint and communicate the outcome with the client including any changes made as a result of the complaint.

If the matter cannot be resolved advise the client about how to contact the Health Complaints commissioner.

The National Privacy Commissioner is able to receive complaints concerning privacy issues. Complaints here will have a response within 28 days.

National Privacy Commissioner  
Privacy hotline 1300 363 992.  
GPO Box 5218  
Sydney NSW 2001  
<http://www.privacy.gov.au/complaints>

Members of the public may make a notification to Australian Health practitioner regulation agency (AHPRA) <http://www.ahpra.gov.au/> (AHPRA) about the conduct, health or performance of a practitioner or the health of a student. Practitioners, employers and education providers are all mandated by law to report notifiable conduct relating to a registered practitioner or student to AHPRA.



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## V.A.S. INTERNAL COMPLAINTS POLICY

- where a complaint is made against a director or contractor by V.A.S. personnel we provide them with an opportunity to discuss the details in a private setting.
- where appropriate we contact the practices insurer when there is a complaint about a member of the team in order to seek advice on resolving the complaint before any action is taken.
- we ensure the complaint does not adversely affect client care.
- we record the complaint, investigation, and actions, with a copy placed in the complaints file.
- we ensure where appropriate complaints are reviewed at staff meetings. We analyse trends and discuss the methods of resolution. Other types of client feedback - i.e. surveys, phone advice are also reviewed at staff meetings.
- we keep a record of improvement made in response to client feedback or complaints is maintained as evidence of quality assurance activity.
- where appropriate inform the client/s about practice improvements made as a result of their input.