

# Commonwealth Ombudsman

## Information for Commonwealth service providers

This fact sheet contains information about the Commonwealth Ombudsman relevant to Commonwealth service providers. For more information please see our brochure *Making a complaint to the Ombudsman* or visit our website.

### WHO CAN MAKE A COMPLAINT?

Anyone can make a complaint. The Ombudsman can investigate complaints made by a person, group, company, organisation or government contractor.

### WHAT THE OMBUDSMAN CAN INVESTIGATE

The Ombudsman investigates complaints about:

- **Australian Government agencies** responsible for services, such as income support, pension and child support payments, immigration matters, and postal industry services, for example, Centrelink, the Child Support Agency, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, Department of Immigration, and Australia Post
- **Services delivered by contractors for or on behalf of the Australian Government**, such as Job Network Members, Job Capacity Assessors, Disability Employment Networks and Financial Case Managers
- **Freedom of Information (FOI)**, including delays in processing FOI requests and complaints about FOI charges.

### WHAT THE OMBUDSMAN DOES NOT INVESTIGATE

The Ombudsman **cannot investigate** complaints about the actions of government ministers or politicians; private individuals; state or local governments (refer to your **State or Territory Ombudsman**); some government business enterprises; private businesses (except where they are Australian Government contractors); and decisions of courts or tribunals.

The Ombudsman **may decide not** to investigate where: the complainant has not gone to the agency first; the agency is already considering the complaint; there is a right to review by a court or tribunal; the action complained about is more than 12 months old; or the complaint is frivolous, vexatious or not in good faith.

### HOW YOU CAN MAKE A COMPLAINT

You will need to make your complaint to the agency or contractor first. If you are not happy with the outcome of that process, you can then complain to the Ombudsman by telephone, fax or email, in person or in writing, or by using the online complaint form on our website. The Ombudsman's services are free.

### HOW YOUR COMPLAINT WILL BE HANDLED

We will contact the agency or contractor to find out what they have to say about your complaint. Many complaints can be resolved at this stage. If the cause of the problem is not clear or a solution is not found, we may investigate further by asking more questions and reviewing the policies and procedures of the agency or contractor. We may also require documents to be provided and questions answered in a formal process.

We will keep you informed of how your complaint is proceeding. If we find that an agency or contractor has made a mistake or acted wrongly, the Ombudsman can recommend that the agency provide a remedy, for example paying compensation or apologising.

Our Service Charter sets out the standards of service you can expect from us, and what you can do if those standards are not met. Copies of the Charter are available at [www.ombudsman.gov.au](http://www.ombudsman.gov.au).

local call charge **COMPLAINTS 1300 362 072**

email [ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au](mailto:ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au) | web [www.ombudsman.gov.au](http://www.ombudsman.gov.au)