

Of course, there may be good reasons why you would not wish to make this informal contact with the staff member concerned but prefer to commence immediately on a formal basis. It is entirely your choice!

Formally

You can make the complaint by letter, fax, email or by the phone to the Chief Operations Officer (COO) OR you can complete the Appeal or Complaint Form and lodge it with the Receptionist or post it to the COO (Note this form is inserted inside this brochure.)

The COO will coordinate action in MASP and ensure that your complaint is recorded and passed to the Manager of the Program area in which you have sought, or been receiving, service.

If someone else lodges the Form on your behalf, or claims that he/she is representing you, we will need your confirmation that he/she is authorised to do so.

Information you will need to provide

To help us investigate and resolve the problem as soon as possible you are asked to provide the following information:

Your Name, Contact address, Contact phone number, Clear description of your concern or complaint and Details of what you would like us to do to put the matter right.

If you are lodging the complaint of behalf of someone else we need their name and contact details so that we can confirm that they are happy for you to act on their behalf. All the above is set out in the Feedback form.

Handling Your Complaint Stage One

The Chief Operations Officer (COO) will make a full enquiry into the issues raised and respond to you **in writing** with a decision on your complaint or appeal within 15 working days, together with reasons for the decision. It may be necessary for this officer to meet with you to clarify matters.

If the matter remains unresolved and/or you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint, you may wish to take your complaint further within MASP.

Stage Two

If your complaint has not been resolved to your satisfaction despite the reasons given by the COO, you can Appeal to the Chief Executive Officer who will review the outcome and/or action (s) taken so far and consider whether the Chief Operations Officer has considered all of the facts.

You will need to fill in another **Complaints and Appeals Form** and indicate the grounds on which you wish to appeal

The CEO will respond to your appeal within 10 working days and this decision **will be final** in the agency.

Should you still be unhappy with the resolution and wish to pursue the matter further, you will be given names and contact details of other sources for external appeal and/or advocacy.

These will include:

- * Local Member(s) of parliament
- * Office of the Public Advocate (if appropriate)
- * Homelessness Advocacy Service (Ph 1800 066 257)
- * The Disability Services Commissioner (Ph 1800 677 342)
- * Other appropriate local advocacy services

These above avenues are available to you at any time in the MASP complaints cycle should you choose to use them. You can also use them instead of the MASP process if you wish.



Mallee Accommodation & Support Program
140 Langtree Avenue Mildura
Telephone 03 5021 6500
Email info@masp.org.au
www.masp.org.au



SUGGESTIONS COMPLAINTS
AND APPEALS
We want to hear from you

We want to hear from you!

At MASP, we are committed to providing a high standard of service or support to every customer, every time. We do recognise, however, that occasionally we will not live up to your expectations or requirements. Because of this MASP values and respects the rights of individuals groups or community members to feed back to us, their views or experiences of our service.

This feedback could be **positive** comments about your contact with us, a **suggestion** on how we could improve, or a **complaint** about any aspect of the service. A complaint could be about the way you were treated by staff or about a decision that you want to disagree with.

Your comments are **important to us** and any feedback you want to give, no matter how critical will be heard in an open and respectful manner and you will not be penalised in any way for giving it.

Your feedback not only allows us to improve our individual service to **you**, but also helps us to enhance our support programs and services **in general**, making life easier for everyone who uses them. So if you have reason to suggest how we could have worked better with you, please do let us know!

This Brochure sets out how you can give us this feedback and how we will handle it!

Types of Feedback

Compliments and/or Suggestions

Positive feedback is equally useful to us in improving and enhancing our services. Maybe you have a **suggestion** about the way the service could be improved or altered to give you a better experience. Please feel free to let us have your comments, compliments and suggestions!

An Appeal

An appeal is usually in relation to a decision we have made about your program or about your eligibility for a service. Its not strictly a "complaint" but it is about a decision we have made that you strongly want us to change!

You have every right to Appeal against any decisions we make if you think we have not considered all the facts or have made an error in relation to the eligibility criteria.

A Complaint

A complaint can be about an act, policy, procedure, behaviour, omission, situation or decision by MASP or by individual MASP staff that you believe is inappropriate or wrong, particularly if you feel it is a breach of your **Rights**, as outlined in our Brochure "Your Rights and Responsibilities".

You can make a complaint about any aspect of our service at any stage of your contact with us. In addition you can bring a friend, family member or advocate to meetings with us to support you.

Complaints may be about:

- * something we should **NOT** have done or something we failed to do
- * a staff member doing something wrong or behaving inappropriately
- * a staff member acting unfairly, unprofessionally or discourteously
- * a service not carried out to an agreed standard or time
- * infringements on your rights.

Who can make an appeal or a complaint?

Anyone who receives a service funded by MASP can make a complaint, suggestion or compliment about that service or appeal against a decision made. Also, anyone who has been refused a service can appeal about that refusal.

Your carer, friend or relative or any advocate of your choice can make the suggestion, complaint, suggestion or compliment on your behalf.

How can you make a comment, suggestion or appeal?

Compliments, Comments, Suggestions

This feedback can be made in whatever form you wish (letter, fax, email, phone) and can be addressed to your caseworker, any other MASP staff or the Receptionist at our main office (Langtree Ave) premises. There are suggestion boxes located in reception areas at all of our premises with forms you can use if you wish. You do not have to identify yourself.

Appeals

For an Appeal against a decision of a MASP staff member you must use the official **Complaint or Appeal** form, (available from Reception areas at MASP or inside this brochure). Lodge it with the Receptionist (and you will get a written acknowledgement immediately) or post it to the Chief Operations Officer for a written acknowledgement within 5 working days. You need to carefully note the grounds for your appeal on the form. Once received, senior MASP staff will consider the issues you have raised and make a decision.

How can you make a complaint?

There are two equally acceptable ways of bringing a complaint to the attention of MASP. These are:

Informally

Depending on the nature of the complaint, an informal approach to your caseworker may provide the quickest way of achieving the result you are seeking. To do this you need to speak directly to the worker you have been dealing with and explain the reasons for your disagreement, dissatisfaction or complaint. You can take a friend, relative or advocate with you if you like. The worker will listen to your position and may agree to take the action that you are seeking, or change decisions that have been made or otherwise come to a mutually acceptable agreement on the matter so that both of you are happy. If the worker will not take action you want you can still make the complaint **formal**.