

General Warning

The purpose of this fact sheet is to give general introductory information about the complaints process. It does not contain legal advice.

WARNING: Alternative legal action should be considered before making a complaint. What is included in a complaint may be relevant to any current or future legal proceedings. If you are involved in legal action you should immediately see a lawyer and not proceed with a complaint.

If you (or the complainant, if you are complaining on their behalf) want financial compensation, support or money you should see a lawyer before making a complaint.

General complaint information

Complaints are rarely about just one thing. When you have a problem, it may be that a number of things have gone wrong. Below are some of the common areas where issues may arise that could lead to a complaint.

Discrimination	Disability and NDIS services	Policing, Custody and Detention
Seniors and Aged Care supports and services	Consumer and Business disputes	Phone and Internet services
Banking, Insurance and Superannuation	Energy and Water services	Housing and Real Estate
Health Care services	Employment issues	Education and Training providers
Government Agencies and Departments	Child Safety and Protection	State Fines and Debts
Corruption	Privacy and Access to Information	Media and Publications

There are different complaint bodies to handle different types of complaints. You should consider the different pathways available to decide the most appropriate pathway for your circumstances. One event could lead to multiple complaints. That means you may need to lodge more than one complaint to have all of your concerns addressed.

[The online triage tool on this website can help you to identify the different complaint bodies that may be able to assist you.]

It is usually quickest and easiest to try to resolve a complaint directly with the person or body you are having a problem with. Many complaint handling bodies will not act on a complaint unless you to have tried to resolve your complaint directly. If you do not feel it is safe or appropriate to complain directly, you should contact the relevant complaint body to discuss your situation.

Complaints involving discrimination

There are state and federal complaints bodies that handle complaints that about discrimination. If your situation involves discrimination, you should consider making a discrimination complaint in

addition to any other complaints. Discrimination may occur when someone is treated less favourably on the basis of: race; sex; gender; disability; age; sexuality; relationship status; pregnancy; caring responsibilities; or having or being thought to have an infectious disease.

WARNING: The state and federal bodies that handle discrimination complaints have different rules, including time limits. You can make a complaint to both the state and federal complaint bodies, but they may decide not to address your concerns if you have already complained elsewhere. For example, if you have already lodged a discrimination complaint to anti-discrimination NSW, it is likely that Australian Human Rights Commission will decide not to act on your complaint. Please carefully review the discrimination factsheets for information about your options before making a discrimination complaint.

Corrections Victoria

In this fact sheet, we introduce Corrections Victoria. We outline how complaints can be made by the public and prisoners to Corrections Victoria.

Corrections Victoria is responsible for managing Victoria's adult prison system and post-sentence supervision. This includes running public prisons, overseeing private prisons, and managing programs like parole and reintegration.

It handles complaints from people in prison, including when someone is unhappy with a response from their prison. Complaints can relate to treatment in custody, prison conditions, rehabilitation programs, or decisions made under post-sentence supervision.

Legislation and Key Terms

Relevant Legislation:

- [Corrections Act 1986](#)

Key terms:

Community Corrections Officer or Parole Officer: a person who is employed by Corrections Victoria and whose role includes supervising a prisoner on parole (e.g. by conducting visits and interviews, arranging assessments of the prisoner for treatments, programs and training and giving directions in respect of unpaid work).

Complaint: An expression of dissatisfaction where a response or resolution is wanted, expected or required.

Complainant: A person who has made a complaint.

Prisoner: a person who is serving a sentence of imprisonment in a prison in Victoria

Prison officer: a person who is employed to work in a prison and granted powers in connection with their employment under the *Corrections Act 1986*.

Victim: a person who (a) has had a criminal act of violence committed against him or her; or (b) a family member of a person who has died as a direct result of a criminal act of violence committed against that person; or (c) a family member of a person under 18 who has had a criminal act of violence committed against him or her; or (d) a current or former spouse or

domestic partner of a prisoner or of an offender who is or was subject to a supervision order, a detention order or an emergency detention order, or an application for a supervision order, a detention order or an emergency detention order, and who is protected under a family violence intervention order.¹

¹ *Corrections Act 1986* s 30A.

Step 1: What type of Complaints can be made to this body?

<p>Victorian law gives every person in prison the right to complain about how they are treated and how prisons are managed. Corrections Victoria (CV) can receive and act on a wide range of complaints from people in custody, offenders serving community-based orders, recently released individuals, as well as their family members, legal advocates, and the general public.</p>	
<p>Prison Conditions and Living Environment</p>	
Sub-category	Example
<p>Overcrowding and Lack of Space</p>	<p>You should complain if a prison is overfilled with inmates to the point that living areas are unreasonably cramped, unsafe, or degrading. Overcrowding can lead to stress, violence, and inadequate access to facilities.</p> <p><i>Example: A prisoner finds himself in a cell built for one person but housing three, leaving one person to sleep on a mattress on the floor next to the toilet. In such a case, he should complain that the crowded condition is unhygienic and unsafe, as it fails to meet basic standards of dignity and welfare.</i></p>
<p>Unsanitary or Poor Living Conditions</p>	<p>You should complain when cleanliness and hygiene in the prison are grossly inadequate. This includes issues like infestations of rats or insects, dirty toilets and showers, accumulation of trash, or lack of clean water. Prison authorities have a duty to provide a clean environment.</p> <p><i>Example: An inmate with asthma notices mould growing on the cell walls and poor ventilation causing constant dampness. She can file a complaint about unsanitary conditions after repeated requests to clean the mould are ignored, since prisoners are entitled to live in conditions that do not threaten their health.</i></p>
<p>Inadequate Food or Nutrition</p> <p><i>Corrections Act 1986 s47(1)(b)</i></p>	<p>You should complain if the food provided is insufficient or nutritionally poor, or if special dietary needs are ignored. Prisons must supply food adequate for health.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A prisoner who is not receiving enough food (regularly going hungry or losing significant weight) should complain about insufficient meals.</i> • <i>If a diabetic inmate is given sugary foods against medical advice, they can complain that the diet is not meeting medical requirements, which endangers their health.</i>
<p>Denied Special Diet for Health or Belief</p>	<p>You should complain if medical, religious, or cultural dietary needs are not provided for. By law, prisoners have the right to</p>

<p><i>Corrections Act 1986</i> s47(1)(b)</p>	<p>special diets for medical reasons or religious beliefs (or vegetarian ethics).</p> <p><i>Example: A Muslim prisoner consistently receives non-halal meals or a prisoner with celiac disease is given gluten meals causing illness. They should complain that their required diet is not being respected, since prisons must accommodate legitimate dietary requirements for health and religion.</i></p>
<p>Inadequate Clothing or Bedding</p> <p><i>Corrections Act 1986</i> s47(1)(d)</p>	<p>You should complain if prisoners are not given proper clothing or bedding suitable for the climate and their work. This includes not having season-appropriate clothing, shoes, or sufficient blankets.</p> <p><i>Example: An older inmate finds that in winter the prison issues only a light shirt and one blanket, leaving him shivering at night. He can complain about inadequate clothing and bedding, as everyone in custody should have garments and blankets that keep them reasonably warm and healthy.</i></p>
<p>Extreme Cell Temperatures or Poor Ventilation</p>	<p>You should complain if the cell or unit is unreasonably hot, cold, or poorly ventilated, causing discomfort or health risks. Prisons must take reasonable steps to maintain liveable temperatures.</p> <p><i>Example: During a summer heatwave, a prisoner in an old unit with no fans or airflow feels like his cell is sweltering like an oven for days on end. If prison staff do nothing after complaints, he should file an official complaint that the extreme heat and lack of ventilation are endangering prisoners – especially those with health issues.</i></p>
<p>Insufficient Exercise or Time Outdoors</p> <p><i>Corrections Act 1986</i> s47(1)(a)</p>	<p>You should complain if you are denied regular exercise or fresh air without good reason. By law, prisoners who don't work outdoors have the right to at least one hour in the open air daily (weather permitting).</p> <p><i>Example: A remand prisoner finds that due to staff shortages, the prison often keeps everyone locked in their cells all day, so he sometimes goes several days with no outside yard time. He should complain about excessive confinement and lack of exercise, since he's entitled to daily outdoor time for his well-being.</i></p>
<p>Safety and Protection</p>	
<p>Failure to Protect from Violence or Bullying</p>	<p>You should complain if staff do not keep you safe from assault, threats or bullying by other prisoners. Corrections staff must maintain a safe environment and intervene if someone is in danger.</p> <p><i>Example: A quiet inmate is repeatedly threatened and beaten by a group of other prisoners because of his ethnicity. If officers know about the situation but shrug it off or fail to separate him from his attackers, he (or his family) should complain that the prison failed</i></p>

	<p><i>to protect him from violence. Everyone has the right to feel safe in custody, and authorities must act if a prisoner is being harmed.</i></p>
<p>Unsafe or Hazardous Conditions</p>	<p>You should complain if prison facilities or practices create preventable dangers. This could include unsafe equipment, environmental hazards, or negligent security that leads to harm.</p> <p><i>Example: In a workshop program, inmates are given heavy machinery to operate without proper safety gear or training, leading to frequent accidents. A prisoner who is injured or sees injuries waiting to happen can raise a complaint about unsafe conditions and negligence. Likewise, if an exterior gate is often left unlocked creating risk of escapes or harm, staff or the public might report this safety breach.</i></p>
<p>Sexual Assault or Harassment by Other Prisoners</p>	<p>You should complain if you are sexually assaulted, abused, or continually harassed by another inmate and staff do not address it. Prisons must respond to and prevent sexual victimisation.</p> <p><i>Example: A transgender prisoner is groped and taunted by cellmates. If officers dismiss her reports, she should complain formally about sexual abuse and the prison's failure to respond. Such serious allegations demand action, including protection for the victim, and ignoring them is unacceptable.</i></p>
<p>Staff Conduct and Misconduct</p>	
<p>Excessive Use of Force or Assault by Staff</p> <p><i>Corrections Act 1986 s20</i></p>	<p>You should complain if an officer uses unwarranted or excessive physical force on a prisoner. While staff can use reasonable force to maintain order, they cannot assault or punish inmates physically.</p> <p><i>Example: A prisoner who was already complying gets pepper-sprayed and hit by officers without justification. This prisoner (or a witness, even a staff member or visitor) should report and complain about staff assault/excessive force.</i></p>
<p>Verbal Abuse, Harassment or Disrespect by Staff</p>	<p>You should complain if staff members swear at, humiliate, or consistently harass you or others. All staff should behave professionally; they should not demean prisoners with insults, belittling comments, or threats.</p> <p><i>Example: A correctional officer repeatedly calls an inmate slurs and makes derogatory comments about the inmate's ethnicity and sexuality. The inmate should file a complaint about staff harassment and abuse, as such behaviour violates the respectful treatment everyone deserves. Family members or legal advocates who overhear staff verbally abusing prisoners (for instance, during visits or phone calls) can also complain on their behalf.</i></p>

<p>Discrimination or Bias by Staff</p> <p><i>Corrections Act 1986 s47(1)(j)</i></p>	<p>You should complain if staff treat you unfairly or differently because of personal characteristics like race, religion, sex, or age. This includes staff showing obvious favouritism or unfairly targeting certain prisoners.</p> <p><i>Example: An Aboriginal prisoner notices that a particular officer frequently performs intrusive searches on Indigenous inmates but not others, or makes racist remarks. This prisoner should complain about racial discrimination by staff. Discriminatory conduct by public officers is against the law and can also be taken up with the Human Rights Commissioner.</i></p>
<p>Sexual Misconduct by Staff</p>	<p>You should complain if any staff member engages in sexual harassment or abuse towards you. This covers a range of misconduct from inappropriate comments of a sexual nature to outright sexual assault or exploitation.</p> <p><i>Example: A female prisoner reports that an officer has been making lewd comments about her body and once touched her inappropriately during a pat-down search. She (with the help of an advocate, if needed) should complain about sexual misconduct by that officer. Such allegations are extremely serious and will trigger investigation and possible criminal action.</i></p>
<p>Corruption or Improper Conduct by Staff</p>	<p>You should complain if staff are engaging in corrupt behaviour or abusing their authority in ways that affect you or the prison’s integrity. This might include officers smuggling in drugs or phones, extorting inmates, or showing gross favouritism in exchange for bribes.</p> <p><i>Example: An inmate learns that a staff member is supplying drugs to a few prisoners for payment, which endangers others. Even if the inmate isn’t directly involved, he can submit a confidential complaint about this corrupt behaviour. Corrections Victoria can investigate internally, and matters involving corruption or serious misconduct may be referred to the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC). Prisoners also have the right to send confidential letters to IBAC and other oversight bodies without staff opening them</i></p>
<p>Neglect of Duties or Unprofessional Behaviour</p>	<p>You should complain if staff fail to carry out their duties or behave unprofessionally in ways that affect prisoner welfare. This includes not responding to requests for help, ignoring medical emergencies, or failing to follow prison rules and procedures.</p> <p><i>Example: A prisoner presses the emergency call button in his cell because he’s feeling severe chest pain, and an officer dismisses it as “faking” and doesn’t get medical help for hours. The prisoner (or another who witnessed it) should complain about staff negligence in responding to an emergency.</i></p>

Healthcare and Medical Treatment

<p>Inadequate or Delayed Medical Care</p> <p><i>Corrections Act 1986 s47(1)(f)</i></p>	<p>You should complain if you are not given proper medical attention when needed or if there are unreasonable delays in seeing healthcare providers. Every prisoner has the right to access necessary medical care and treatment.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>An inmate suffers from a painful infection, but despite putting in multiple requests, he waits weeks to see a doctor and his condition worsens. He should lodge a healthcare complaint about delayed and inadequate medical treatment.</i> • <i>If a prisoner’s prescription medications are stopped without explanation, or a chronic condition (like diabetes or epilepsy) isn’t managed appropriately. These are grounds to complain that medical needs are being neglected.</i>
<p>Lack of Access to Dental or Other Health Services</p> <p><i>Corrections Act 1986 s47(1)(g)</i></p>	<p>You should complain if essential health services like dental care, optometry, or physiotherapy are denied or unreasonably delayed. Prisoners have the right to reasonable dental treatment and other basic health services.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A prisoner has a toothache for months, affecting his ability to eat, but no dentist visit is arranged. He should file a complaint about lack of dental care, since timely treatment is part of basic healthcare.</i> • <i>If someone with poor eyesight isn’t allowed an eye exam or glasses, or a person needing physiotherapy for an injury can’t get any therapy, they should complain that necessary health services are not being provided.</i>
<p>Neglect of Mental Health Needs</p> <p><i>Corrections Act 1986 s47(1)(f)</i></p>	<p>You should complain if mental health problems are ignored, or adequate psychiatric care and support are not provided. Many prisoners have the right to access special care if they have mental illness, and all should receive humane mental health support.</p> <p><i>Example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>An inmate with diagnosed severe depression hasn’t seen a counsellor or psychologist for months, and his requests for mental health support are ignored. He should complain about lack of mental health care.</i> • <i>If a prisoner shows signs of self-harm or suicide risk and the prison fails to respond (no observation or treatment), other prisoners or family should urgently complain that critical mental health concerns are being neglected. Mental wellbeing is as important as physical health, and prisons should respond to these needs with appropriate services (counselling, psychiatric medication, etc.).</i>

<p>Inadequate Women’s Health Care</p>	<p>You should complain if female prisoners do not receive appropriate health care specific to women’s needs. This can include prenatal care, postnatal care, menstrual hygiene, or screenings (like cervical screening).</p> <p><i>Example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A pregnant inmate notices she is not getting proper prenatal check-ups or vitamins, putting her and her baby at risk. She should complain about inadequate prenatal care in prison.</i> • <i>If women are not provided with sufficient sanitary products or privacy for personal hygiene, a complaint should be made that basic women’s health needs are not being met.</i>
---------------------------------------	--

Disability and Accessibility

<p>Physical Disability Not Accommodated</p>	<p>You should complain if a prisoner with a physical disability or mobility issue is not given proper accommodations or assistance. Corrections Victoria should ensure equitable access to facilities and programs for people with disabilities.</p> <p><i>Example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A prisoner who uses a wheelchair finds that the prison shower is not wheelchair-accessible, and no adjustments or help are provided, leaving him unable to bathe for days. He should complain about lack of accessibility for his disability.</i> • <i>An inmate who is deaf might not be provided with a sign language interpreter for important consultations or announcements, a clear reason to complain that communication needs for a disability are being ignored. Such failures can amount to discrimination if the person is effectively prevented from accessing services due to their disability.</i>
---	---

<p>Intellectual or Cognitive Disability Needs Ignored</p>	<p>You should complain if prison staff fail to account for an inmate’s intellectual disability, learning difficulty, or brain injury, resulting in misunderstanding or unfair treatment. Prisoners with intellectual disabilities may need information explained in simple terms or routines adapted.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A prisoner with an intellectual disability doesn’t understand a complex prison rule and accidentally breaks it, receiving a punishment. If staff knew of his condition but didn’t take steps to help him understand the rules, this is grounds for a complaint that his special needs were not accommodated.</i> • <i>A neurodivergent offender on a community order might need extra support to comply (like reminders or structured</i>
---	--

schedules); if the supervising officer provides none and then threatens breach for failures, a complaint about neglecting the person’s cognitive support needs is appropriate. The law expects prisons and community corrections to take reasonable steps to assist offenders with disabilities, rather than setting them up to fail.

Failure to Provide Aids or Equipment

You should complain if necessary assistive devices (wheelchairs, hearing aids, prosthetics, etc.) are taken away or not provided.

Examples:

- An elderly inmate with a walking frame has it confiscated during a transfer and isn’t given a replacement, causing him to be effectively housebound in his cell. A family member could complain on his behalf about denial of mobility aids.*
- If someone who is vision-impaired isn’t given large-print materials or other assistive tools they need, a complaint should be made. Corrections Victoria has a duty to provide or allow reasonable aids so that people with disabilities can function in the prison or program.*

Discrimination and Equal Treatment

It is against the law for Corrections Victoria or its staff to discriminate based on characteristics like race, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, or other protected attributes. If you believe that you or your loved one in the corrections system are experiencing any form of unequal or prejudicial treatment, you should complain. Here are common types of discrimination complaints:

Racial or Ethnic Discrimination

You should complain if you are treated worse, harassed, or denied equal access because of your race, skin colour, or ethnic background. This includes racial slurs, disparate punishments, or ignoring cultural needs (for example, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners).

Examples:

- A prisoner from the Pacific Islands notices that he and others of similar background are always assigned the hardest cleaning duties, while others are given easier jobs, and an officer makes racist jokes about them. He should complain about racial discrimination.*
- An Aboriginal inmate requests access to an Indigenous liaison officer or cultural program and is brushed off, while other inmates get support for their programs - this could be cultural discrimination. Such treatment not only violates equal opportunity laws but also undermines rehabilitation, so it must be addressed.*

<p>Religious Discrimination or Vilification</p>	<p>You should complain if you are harassed or penalised because of your religion or beliefs, as opposed to simply not being accommodated (which is covered under Religious Rights below). This could mean derogatory comments about your faith or being singled out due to religious attire.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A Muslim prisoner fasting during Ramadan is mocked by a prison officer and not given a late meal to break his fast, unlike previous years when it was allowed. If the officer’s behaviour is because of bias against his religion, that is religious discrimination and he should lodge a complaint.</i> • <i>A prisoner is ridiculed by staff for practicing Buddhism – he can complain that staff are vilifying his religion. Everyone has the right to their beliefs, and disparaging or punishing someone for their faith is not acceptable in the correctional system.</i>
<p>Gender or Sexual Orientation Discrimination</p>	<p>You should complain if you face unequal treatment or harassment due to your sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation. This includes sexism (treating men and women differently without justification) and homophobia/transphobia.</p> <p><i>Example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A transgender woman in a male prison is consistently referred to by the wrong name/pronouns by staff and denied women’s clothing or products, purely out of disdain. She should complain about gender identity discrimination.</i> • <i>A gay male prisoner reports that an officer deliberately places him in situations with inmates who bully him for being gay, or the officer himself calls him homophobic slurs - this is sexual orientation discrimination, and a complaint should be made. Likewise, if female offenders in a community program are given fewer rehabilitation opportunities than male offenders, that could be sex discrimination. Any such bias in treatment is unlawful and should be challenged through a complaint.</i>
<p>Age or Other Forms of Discrimination</p>	<p>You should complain if age, nationality, or other personal characteristics lead to unfair treatment. While less common, an older prisoner might be ignored for certain programs (“he’s too old to benefit”) or a very young adult prisoner might be targeted as an easy mark.</p> <p><i>Example: A 65-year-old prisoner finds he’s not being offered the same work or education programs that younger inmates routinely get, even though he is able and willing - potentially age discrimination if it’s based solely on age. He can raise a complaint so that opportunities are based on individual capacity, not stereotypes. Generally, any unjustified unequal treatment that falls</i></p>

outside the categories above can be complained about, and CV has the power to investigate and correct discriminatory practices.

Religious and Cultural Rights

Denial of Religious Practice or Worship
Corrections Act 1986 s47(1)(i)

You should complain if you are not allowed to practice your religion or observe required rituals without a valid reason. Prisoners have the right to practice a religion of their choice and, where security allows, to do so in fellowship with others and possess necessary religious items.

Example:

- *A Christian prisoner is prevented from attending church services in the prison or owning a Bible, even though other prisoners are normally allowed to do so, he should complain about unjust denial of religious worship.*
- *If a Muslim prisoner is not permitted time and space to pray, or a Jewish prisoner is not allowed a yarmulke or kosher meals, these are violations of religious rights to be addressed. A complaint can lead the prison to correct these issues by providing access to chaplains, prayer spaces, or religious materials.*

Lack of Access to Religious Leaders or Services

You should complain if you cannot consult with religious or spiritual advisors (like chaplains, imams, priests, elders) when these services should be available. Prisons usually have chaplains and visiting faith representatives.

Example: An inmate who follows Islam requests a meeting with an Imam for spiritual guidance during a personal crisis, but the prison delays or ignores the request entirely. He or his advocate should complain about denial of access to religious counsel. Likewise, if a Buddhist prisoner asks for meditation gatherings or literature and is arbitrarily denied, a complaint is warranted. The goal is to ensure inmates can maintain their faith practice, which is important for emotional well-being.

Cultural Needs Ignored (Including Indigenous Cultural Rights)

You should complain if prison authorities disregard important cultural practices or fail to provide cultural support, especially for First Nations prisoners or those from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Examples:

- *An Aboriginal prisoner wants to participate in NAIDOC Week or to see an Aboriginal Liaison Officer, but the prison does not facilitate any Indigenous cultural activities or meetings with Elders. This prisoner (or an Indigenous advocacy group on his behalf) should complain about lack of cultural support.*
- *A prisoner from a non-English speaking background isn't provided translation help for important information,*

meaning they can't understand prison rules or programs, a complaint about failure to accommodate language needs can be made as a cultural rights issue. Meeting cultural needs can include dietary considerations (like providing Halal or Kosher meals, or vegetarian options for those whose culture or belief requires it, as noted above), recognising cultural holidays, or allowing culturally significant items (within security limits). Ignoring these needs when they could be reasonably met can violate the person's rights and should be addressed through a complaint.

Communication, Visits, and Family Contact

Unfair Restrictions on Visits
Corrections Act 1986 s47(1)(k)

You should complain if you or your family face unreasonable barriers or cutbacks on prison visits beyond the normal security protocols. By law, prisoners have the right to receive at least one half-hour visit per week, and visits shouldn't be denied without cause (such as security or disciplinary reasons).

Examples:

- A man in custody has his wife and children travel to see him, but the visit is denied at the last minute with no explanation, or visits are frequently cancelled except in emergencies. The family can complain on his behalf (and their own) about unfair denial of visitation rights.*
- A visitor who followed all rules is treated very poorly by staff, say, a mother is yelled at and turned away due to a minor paperwork issue even though she poses no security risk. She should file a complaint about inappropriate refusal of a visit and staff behaviour. Corrections Victoria can investigate why visits are being limited and ensure that the prisoner's minimum visitation entitlements are honoured, and that visitors are treated with respect.*

Visiting Facilities or Procedures Causing Hardship

You should complain if the way visits are conducted makes it overly hard for families, for example, unreasonable wait times, lack of disability access in visiting rooms, or rules that go beyond security needs (like unnecessarily limiting physical contact in a minimum-security setting).

Examples:

- The grandparents of an inmate, who use wheelchairs, find that the prison visiting centre is up a flight of stairs with no elevator, effectively preventing them from visiting. A complaint about inaccessible visiting facilities would prompt CV to address this (they may need to arrange alternate accommodations for disabled visitors).*

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>If a prison arbitrarily reduces visit durations for certain prisoners without cause, those prisoners can complain that their visit time is being cut short without justification.</i>
<p>Problems with Phone Calls or Mail</p>	<p>You should complain if your phone communications or mail (letters) are interfered with improperly or access is denied. Prisoners generally can make phone calls and send/receive mail, subject to monitoring for security, but legal mail and certain official letters are confidential, and personal communications shouldn't be restricted beyond what the rules allow.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>An inmate notices that letters from his partner often never reach him, or his outgoing mail is not being sent. He should complain about mail not being delivered or withheld without explanation.</i> • <i>A prisoner's phone calls to family are constantly cut off after a couple of minutes even though he's following the rules, or staff refuse to add an approved phone number to his call list. He can complain about unreasonable phone restrictions. Likewise, if legal mail is opened or read by staff, a lawyer or prisoner should complain immediately (since letters to lawyers and certain officials are meant to be confidential by law).</i>
<p>Denial of Phone Access to Ombudsman/Oversight</p>	<p>You should complain if you are not allowed to contact external oversight bodies when you should be able to. For instance, prisons have a process for calling the Victorian Ombudsman or Health Complaints Commissioner (usually via a recorded PIN line that is private). If officers block you from using those lines or retaliate for doing so, you should complain internally (and ironically, possibly to the Ombudsman as well).</p> <p><i>Example: A prisoner wants to call the Ombudsman to report an unresolved issue, but a staff member keeps saying "the line is down" or intimidates him that it's pointless. The prisoner should file a complaint about being prevented from contacting the Ombudsman, because access to complaint avenues is itself a protected right.</i></p>
<p>Interference with Family Communication</p>	<p>You should complain if there's an unnecessary hindrance in communicating with family, beyond the expected monitoring. For example, if your letters or calls are censored inappropriately (prisons can censor some content for security, but not arbitrarily).</p> <p><i>Example: A woman on a community-based order has a condition to not contact a certain person, which is fine, but finds out her community officer also blocked her from contacting other family members which wasn't part of her order. She should complain about unfair limits on family contact. In custody, if a father in prison isn't allowed to send a birthday card to his child with no good</i></p>

reason, he can complain. Maintaining family ties is important, and CV should facilitate it within the rules.

Access to Legal Resources and Fair Process

Denied or Delayed Access to Legal Counsel
Corrections Act 1986 s47(1)(m)

You should complain if you cannot properly contact or consult your lawyer due to prison actions. Inmates must be allowed private communications with their lawyers. Letters to lawyers cannot be opened by staff, and visits or calls with lawyers should be facilitated in a reasonable time.

Examples:

- *A man on remand is trying to prepare for his court case, but the prison repeatedly delays approving his lawyer’s visit and also monitors his phone call with the lawyer (which should be private). He should complain about interference with legal access.*
- *If legal mail clearly marked from a law firm is found opened, the prisoner or the lawyer can file a complaint about breach of legal privilege.*
- *If a community-based offender’s supervising officer refuses to allow them time to attend a scheduled meeting with their lawyer regarding an appeal, that offender should complain that their right to legal assistance is being obstructed. Corrections Victoria needs to ensure that nothing it controls unfairly hinders someone’s access to justice.*

Lack of Interpreter or Language Help in Proceedings

You should complain if you are not provided language assistance during important disciplinary or legal meetings. If English isn’t your first language and you can’t understand what’s happening, the prison should arrange an interpreter or translated documents for critical communications.

Example: A Vietnamese-speaking inmate is brought before the prison disciplinary panel for an alleged rule breach, but no interpreter is provided and he can’t defend himself because he doesn’t fully grasp the accusations. This is grounds to complain about failure to provide an interpreter, which resulted in an unfair process. Every prisoner should comprehend proceedings that affect their rights.

Unfair Disciplinary Action or Process

You should complain if the prison punishes you without following proper procedures or gives an excessively harsh punishment that seems unjust. Prisons have internal disciplinary processes (for rule violations like disobedience, fights, etc.), and you should be given a chance to be heard and a proportionate penalty.

Examples:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>An inmate is put in isolation (solitary confinement) for two weeks as punishment for a minor infraction, without any hearing, far beyond what the rules allow for that offense. He should complain about unfair disciplinary punishment.</i> • <i>A prisoner is charged with a disciplinary offense and the hearing officer refuses to let him call a relevant witness or present evidence, then finds him guilty without proper consideration. He can complain that the disciplinary process was not fair or unbiased. Corrections Victoria can review such complaints and, if something was done improperly, they might overturn the punishment or redo the hearing correctly. This ensures prisoners are treated justly and in line with regulations (and the Charter’s requirement for humane treatment, as excessively cruel or arbitrary punishment could breach human rights).</i>
--	---

<p>Lack of Access to Legal Materials or Courts</p>	<p>You should complain if you are prevented from accessing legal materials (like law books, writing materials) or from attending court hearings when you have the right to.</p> <p><i>Example: A prisoner trying to file an appeal needs copies of certain legal cases or access to a computer to type documents (where facilities exist), but the prison denies all requests or does not forward his court documents on time. He should complain about obstruction in accessing legal materials or courts. Likewise, if someone on a community order has a court date and their officer doesn’t provide required reports or transportation causing them to miss it, a complaint is appropriate. Ensuring inmates can exercise their legal rights is part of CV’s duties.</i></p>
--	--

Privacy and Information Handling

<p>Personal Information Privacy Breach</p>	<p>You should complain if Corrections Victoria mishandles your personal information or records, such as sharing confidential details without permission or failing to protect your privacy. This could involve your case history, identifying information, or any data collected by prisons/community corrections.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A prisoner discovers that a staff member disclosed his HIV status and crime details to other inmates out of gossip, leading to bullying. He should complain about breach of privacy – his health and personal information should have been kept private.</i> • <i>A family member of a prisoner learns that their letters (which contained personal family information) were photocopied and circulated beyond what’s necessary for security – they can complain on privacy grounds. Information privacy complaints can be made if you’re not satisfied with how CV has handled personal info. There is</i>
--	---

	<p><i>an Information Privacy Unit in the Justice Department that can investigate these complaints.</i></p>
<p>Family Violence Information Sharing Complaint</p>	<p>You should complain if information related to a family violence case was shared or handled by Corrections Victoria in a way that you believe is wrong or unsafe. Under law (Part 5A of the Family Violence Protection Act 2008), certain information can be shared to protect victims of family violence, but there are strict rules. If CV is part of an information-sharing scheme (for example, sharing details about a prisoner who is also a family violence perpetrator or about a victim’s safety plan) and it mishandles that information, you can complain.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A victim of family violence provided confidential information about her imprisoned ex-partner’s threats, which should only be used to ensure her safety. Later she finds out this information was inadvertently revealed to the ex-partner or not properly safeguarded. She should complain about breach of family violence information confidentiality.</i> • <i>An offender on a community order discovers that details of his family situation (unrelated to offending) were shared without consent under the guise of “family violence info sharing.” He can complain if it appears to violate the guidelines. Corrections Victoria has a process for these specific complaints (often handled by a dedicated unit via email or mail), and they take them seriously because mishandling such information can put lives at risk.</i>
<p>Health Information Confidentiality Breach</p>	<p>You should complain if your health or medical information was not kept confidential as required. Health information is treated with extra care under privacy laws. If you think CV or its health service providers misused or wrongfully disclosed your health records, you can make a specific complaint.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A prisoner living with a mental health condition finds out that details from his therapy sessions (which should be private health information) were shared with non-medical staff without any need. He should complain about breach of health information privacy. According to policy, if CV’s response is unsatisfactory, such issues can be escalated to the Health Complaints Commissioner.</i> • <i>If an offender’s medical report was included in a public forum or visible to other offenders, that’s inappropriate and should be complained about. Essentially, your medical files, test results, or treatment details should not be exposed to others without permission, and if they are, CV needs to know and fix it.</i>

<p>Misuse of Personal Data (Including Photos or Recordings)</p>	<p>You should complain if your image or personal data is used in a way you didn't agree to (outside what the law permits).</p> <p><i>Example: A former prisoner finds that the prison kept using his photo in a brochure without consent, or a current prisoner learns that phone call recordings (supposedly for security) were shared for non-official reasons. These situations involve misuse of personal data and warrant a complaint. CV must adhere to privacy principles, and any non-authorized use of personal data should be corrected once brought to their attention.</i></p>
<p align="center">Sentence Management and Prisoner Progress</p>	
<p>Classification or Placement Grievances <i>Corrections Act 1986 s47(1)(l)</i></p>	<p>You should complain if you believe your security classification or prison placement is inappropriate or not handled according to the rules. Every sentenced prisoner has the right to be classified as soon as possible after sentencing and have that classification reviewed annually. Classification affects which prison you're in (e.g., high security vs low security) and your access to programs.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>A low-risk prisoner is kept in a maximum-security prison far from family, even after a year with good behaviour and a recommendation for transfer, and no one reviews his classification. He should complain about failure to review or adjust his classification.</i> <i>A prisoner who has enemy concerns in one location isn't moved, leading to dangerous tensions – he can complain about improper placement endangering him. Likewise, if a mistake in records places a remand (unsentenced) prisoner in a sentenced prisoners' unit with more restrictions, that's an error to complain about. CV's Sentence Management division oversees these decisions and can correct errors or re-assess cases when a justified complaint is made.</i>
<p>Sentence Calculation or Release Date Issues <i>Corrections Act 1986 s58E(1)</i></p>	<p>You should complain if there is an error or unfairness in calculating your sentence, release date, or parole eligibility. This might include not crediting time already served, misapplying concurrent vs consecutive sentences, or mistakes with emergency management days (credits that can reduce time for hardships like lockdowns).</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>A prisoner believes his release date should be a month earlier because the time he spent in pre-sentence custody wasn't counted properly. If the prison's records office doesn't fix it, he should complain about sentence calculation error.</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A prisoner on a fixed term hasn't heard anything about their upcoming release and suspects an administrative oversight in paperwork – a family member could complain to CV to ensure release arrangements are on track. Additionally, if there's a process like earning days off for good behaviour (in some circumstances), and the prisoner feels they qualify but weren't awarded those days, they can inquire and complain if necessary. Corrections Victoria can audit sentence calculations and involve the Sentence Management Unit to resolve such issues once they're flagged.</i>
<p>Access to Rehabilitation Programs or Education</p>	<p>You should complain if you are unfairly denied access to programs that could help your rehabilitation or are required for progression/parole. Prisons offer courses (education, vocational training) and treatment programs (like drug and alcohol programs, violence intervention, etc.), and while space can be limited, decisions about who gets in should be fair.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A prisoner who is nearing parole eligibility needs to complete a behaviour change program as a parole condition, but the prison has repeatedly skipped him and given spots to others with later release dates. He should complain about being denied access to required programs, as this could delay his release through no fault of his own.</i> • <i>An inmate keen on finishing high school courses finds that the education officer ignores his applications, possibly due to personal bias or an error – he can complain to ensure equal access to education opportunities. By complaining, you push CV to review why you weren't included and potentially open up a spot or find an alternative so you can make progress on your sentence plan.</i>
<p>Unfair Work Assignments or Pay Issues</p>	<p>You should complain if prison work assignments are managed unfairly or if there's an issue with the small wages prisoners earn. Many prisoners work in jobs (kitchen, laundry, etc.) and receive a stipend. If job assignments consistently overlook someone without good reason, or if pay is withheld or wrong, they can complain.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A prisoner who has behaved well is willing to work, but is never given any work while others who bribe a certain officer get the jobs – this suggests favouritism or corruption, and the prisoner can complain about unfair work allocation.</i> • <i>If an inmate's earnings are not being deposited correctly in his prison trust account (e.g. he worked all week but the account shows no credit), he should complain about</i>

	<p><i>improper handling of prisoner pay. These issues, though perhaps small in dollar terms, are important for fairness and can be rectified by prison management when brought up.</i></p>
<p>Delayed or Mishandled Parole Preparation</p>	<p>For prisoners approaching parole: You should complain if the prison or CV isn't doing its part in the parole process on time, such as not providing required reports, programs, or paperwork to the Parole Board.</p> <p><i>Example: A prisoner eligible for parole has a scheduled parole hearing, but the prison's case management team failed to submit his behaviour report and program completion certificates, causing the Parole Board to delay the hearing. The prisoner should complain about administrative delays in parole preparation. While the Adult Parole Board makes the parole decision, Corrections Victoria staff support the process; a justified complaint may prompt them to expedite or correct any oversight, so the prisoner gets a timely and fair parole consideration.</i></p>
<p align="center">Community-Based Order Complaints (Probation and Community Service)</p> <p align="center">Community-based orders (like Community Correction Orders, probation, or community service) are sentences served in the community under CV's Community Correctional Services (CCS). Offenders on these orders, as well as their family or community members, can raise complaints about how the order is managed:</p>	
<p>Unfair or Disrespectful Treatment by Community Corrections Staff</p>	<p>You should complain if your Community Corrections officer (or other CCS staff) treat you inappropriately or don't follow proper procedures. Even in the community, officers should act professionally and without bias.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>An offender on a community service order has an officer who frequently yells at him, uses derogatory language, or threatens to breach (violate) him for no good reason. The offender should complain about harassment or abuse by the CCS officer, similar to a prisoner complaining about staff misconduct.</i> <i>If a person feels they are being discriminated against by their officer, maybe the officer makes sexist or racist remarks, they should lodge a complaint for discrimination in community supervision. Community-based clients have the right to be treated fairly and with dignity while complying with their orders</i>
<p>Poor Communication or Lack of Support from CCS</p>	<p>You should complain if your supervising officer is not communicating important information or providing support that they should. For instance, conditions of orders, appointment times, or program referrals should be made clear.</p>

	<p><i>Example: A man on a community correction order has a condition to attend drug counselling, but the officer never gives him the referral details, then faults him for not attending. He should complain about lack of guidance from the officer, as this is setting him up to fail.</i></p>
<p>Community Service Work Issues</p>	<p>You should complain if the community work part of your order is conducted in unsafe or inappropriate conditions, or if there are problems with the work site. CV partners with community organisations for unpaid work placements, and they must be safe and suitable.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>An offender doing community service at a roadside clean-up crew is not given safety vests near traffic or is asked to use heavy equipment without training. They should complain about unsafe community work conditions.</i> • <i>A young offender is placed at a charity shop where a supervisor makes offensive comments about her background, she can complain through CV about harassment at a community service placement. CV can then intervene, either by addressing the issue with the placement provider or moving the person to a different work site.</i>
<p>Failure to Accommodate Legitimate Needs on Community Orders</p>	<p>You should complain if CCS doesn't consider reasonable issues that affect your ability to comply, such as medical conditions, disability, work or childcare schedules, etc. Officers should adjust reporting times or work locations within reason to avoid unnecessary hardship.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A single parent on a community order is required to report in person during her work hours, even though she could report at a different time, causing her to risk losing her job. If the officer refuses to adjust her reporting schedule without any good reason, she should complain about lack of flexibility or consideration for personal circumstances.</i> • <i>An offender with a mobility impairment is assigned community work that involves hiking and is far beyond his physical capability; he should complain so that his disability is taken into account in community service assignments. Community corrections staff have some discretion to manage orders humanely, and a complaint can prompt a review and reasonable adjustments.</i>

Parole and Post-Release Supervision Complaints

After a prisoner is released on parole (conditional release under the Adult Parole Board's terms) or other forms of supervised release, Corrections Victoria (through

<p>parole officers, who are part of Community Corrections) oversees their compliance. Both parolees and others affected can raise complaints:</p>	
<p>Inadequate Support or Unfair Treatment on Parole</p>	<p>You should complain if your parole officer isn't providing required support, or is treating you unreasonably while you're trying to comply. Parole officers should help connect parolees with services (housing, employment assistance, etc.) and monitor fairly.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A person on parole is supposed to get help finding a rehab program as a condition of parole, but his officer never follows up, then accuses him of not enrolling. He should complain about lack of support from the parole officer.</i> • <i>A parolee feels her officer is nit-picking minor issues and threatening to recommend cancellation without cause, for instance, berating her for being 5 minutes late once, despite an otherwise clean record. She can complain about overly harsh or unfair supervision. While parolees must follow conditions strictly, they still deserve fair and professional treatment. A complaint might result in a supervisory review or even assignment to a different officer if justified.</i>
<p>Parole Conditions Mismanagement</p>	<p>You should complain if there is confusion or error in how your parole conditions are communicated or enforced by CV. The Parole Board sets conditions (e.g., curfew, programs, no-contact orders), but CV officers implement them.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A parole condition states a curfew of 10pm, but the electronic monitoring staff incorrectly set it to 8pm and violate the parolee for "missing curfew." The parolee should immediately complain about administrative error in parole condition enforcement.</i> • <i>The parolee was told verbally one set of rules, but later the officer claims a different condition exists (miscommunication). Clarifying via a complaint can straighten out what the actual official conditions are and prevent unjust punishment.</i>
<p>Delayed or Poor Communication of Parole Decisions</p>	<p>You should complain if you (or your family) aren't informed about parole outcomes or changes in a timely manner by the authorities.</p> <p><i>Example: A prisoner expecting a parole decision finds out weeks later that it was granted but the delay in communication kept him incarcerated longer than needed. He or his lawyer should complain about delay in informing about parole grant.</i></p>

<p>Public or Victim Concerns about Parole Supervision</p>	<p>You should complain (as a member of the public or a victim) if a parolee is not being properly supervised and is causing alarm, or if CV fails to respond to reports of parole breaches.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A victim has a condition that the offender on parole not contact them, but learns the offender has been seen near their home and the parole officer hasn't taken action. The victim can complain to CV about failure to enforce parole conditions. • A neighbour observes a parolee repeatedly coming home intoxicated despite an alcohol ban condition and reports it to the parole officer, but nothing changes. The neighbour can escalate a complaint that parole supervision is not effective, potentially prompting closer monitoring or intervention by CV.
---	--

Post-Sentence Supervision or Detention Complaints

In some cases, especially for serious offenders (like certain serious sex or violence offenders in Victoria), people can be subject to post-sentence orders after they complete their prison sentence. These orders, under schemes such as the Serious Offenders Act, might involve intensive supervision in the community or even detention in a secure facility (e.g., a residential centre) for public safety. Corrections Victoria is involved in managing these orders, and those under such orders (or their advocates/families) can make complaints about their management:

<p>Conditions in Post-Sentence Detention</p>	<p>You should complain if the living conditions or treatment in a secure post-sentence facility are poor or infringe on basic rights. Although these individuals are not serving a criminal sentence, they are detained for safety reasons, and they should be housed humanely.</p> <p><i>Example: An offender under a detention order at a secure facility finds the conditions are worse than prison was, perhaps very little outdoor access, substandard healthcare, or undue isolation without activities.</i></p>
--	---

<p>Unreasonable Restrictions or Lack of Support under Supervision Order</p>	<p>You should complain if you are under a post-sentence supervision order in the community and the supervision is handled in a way that seems unjust or overly restrictive beyond the court-ordered conditions. These orders come with many rules (like electronic monitoring, curfews, treatment programs). CV staff (like the Post Sentence Authority and Community Corrections) manage them, and they should stick to what the order requires and also help the person reintegrate.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A man under a supervision order is complying, but his supervising officer is imposing extra rules not in the order (for instance, forbidding him from going to certain public
---	---

	<p><i>places that weren't actually prohibited by the court). He should complain about supervision requirements exceeding the order.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A person on a supervision order needs housing assistance as part of their management, but isn't getting any support and is at risk of homelessness (which could lead to breach of order through no fault of their own). They or their advocate should complain that insufficient support is being provided under the order.</i>
<p>Violation of Rights for Supervised Individuals</p>	<p>You should complain if any basic rights are denied without justification under these regimes, similar to how prisoners would. Even on a strict supervision order, one retains rights like access to healthcare, freedom from abuse, and religious practice, etc., albeit within the limits of the order.</p> <p><i>Example: A supervised offender wants to practice his religion by attending a service, which could be allowed with an escort, but is flatly refused without consideration – he can complain about denial of reasonable religious access under supervision.</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Personal Property and Money</p>	
<p>Lost, Damaged, or Confiscated Property</p>	<p>You should complain if your personal belongings in prison are lost, damaged, or taken away without proper process or not returned. Prisoners' personal property (clothing, radio, photos, etc.) is logged and should be handled carefully during transfers or cell searches. If something goes missing or is broken due to staff actions, you can seek compensation or return.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>During a cell search, an officer accidentally destroys an inmate's family photographs or a radio, and then the prison refuses to do anything about it.</i> • <i>When being transferred between prisons, a prisoner's bag of personal items doesn't arrive at the new prison, and no one is helping locate it.</i>
<p>Issues with Prisoner Funds or Accounts</p>	<p>You should complain if there are errors or unfair practices with the money in your prisoner trust account (or other finances). Prisoners have accounts where money can be deposited (from family, or earnings from prison jobs) to buy canteen items. If money isn't handled right, it's a problem CV can fix.</p> <p><i>Example: A family member puts money in a prisoner's account to buy phone credit and toiletries, but the funds never show up in the account records. The prisoner or family member should complain about missing funds.</i></p>

Improper Confiscation of Allowed Items	<p>You should complain if staff take away something you're actually permitted to have under the rules and don't give it back.</p> <p><i>Example: An inmate has a pair of sneakers that are within the prison's allowed property list, but one officer confiscates them arbitrarily and they're never returned.</i></p>
--	---

Exclusions

Exclusions	<p>Corrections Victoria can't investigate everything. The following are outside their power or handled by another authority.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>• Complaints About Court Decisions or Sentences: Corrections Victoria does not have the power to change or review decisions made by a court, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The length or type of sentence imposed ○ Whether bail was granted or refused ○ Findings of guilt or innocence ○ Conditions set by a court (unless related to parole/community corrections enforcement) <p>• Complaints About Adult Parole Board Decisions: While Corrections Victoria helps administer parole, it cannot change or overturn decisions made by the Adult Parole Board. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Whether parole is granted or denied ○ The conditions set by the Board ○ The timing or cancellation of parole orders <p>• Complaints About Police or Police Investigations: Corrections Victoria is separate from Victoria Police. It cannot investigate complaints involving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Arrest procedures or police conduct before entering prison ○ Charges laid by police or ongoing police investigations ○ Police behaviour during transport or in police cells (prior to prison) <p>• Complaints About Youth Detention: Corrections Victoria manages the adult corrections system (18+). It does not deal with issues in youth detention centres or involving children and young people.</p> <p>• Complaints That Have Already Been Investigated Fully: If your complaint has already been properly investigated and responded to by Corrections Victoria, and no new information is available, they may decline to re-investigate.</p> <p>• Compensation or Civil Legal Claims: Corrections Victoria doesn't handle:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Formal compensation for injury or loss (e.g. medical negligence, assault)
------------	--

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Legal claims for damages ● Complaints Outside the Prison/Corrections Context: Corrections Victoria does not have jurisdiction over: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Centrelink, housing, or public transport fines ○ Complaints about general government services ○ Immigration detention or Commonwealth matters
--	--

Step 2: What is the Jurisdiction of the complaints body?

Jurisdiction	Description
State	Corrections Victoria may hear complaints made by any person, however can only address complaints which relate to its services (largely provided in Victoria).
Geographical Scope	<p>Depending on the nature of the complaint, Corrections Victoria may have greater power in a public prison in comparison to one of the three private prisons in Victoria.</p> <p>Services are primarily provided by Corrections Victoria within Victoria, however it also facilitates international and interstate transfers of people in prison.</p>
Time Limitations	<p>Corrections Victoria encourages complaints to be made as soon as possible after the issue occurs. While there’s no set time limit in law, complaints that are very old may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be harder to investigate properly (e.g. witnesses unavailable, documents lost) ● Be declined if they have already been fully investigated, or if no action can reasonably be taken <p>If you think your issue is serious but happened a long time ago, it’s still worth making a complaint. Provide as much detail as possible and explain why there was a delay.</p>
Exclusions	<p>They cannot handle complaints about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prisons in other states or territories ● Commonwealth-run or immigration detention centres ● Youth justice centres (handled by Youth Justice Victoria) ● Police cells or transport prior to entering prison (may fall under Victoria Police or IBAC)

Step 3: Who can you make a complaint against?

Respondent	Description
------------	-------------

<p>Community corrections</p>	<p>You can make a complaint to Corrections Victoria about community corrections services or community correctional services officers.</p> <p>If you have a complaint about community corrections (for example, you feel you are not being treated fairly), you should first discuss this with your community correctional services officer.</p> <p>If you feel that is not satisfactory, you may ask to speak with a Senior Officer.</p> <p>If you are still unsatisfied, you may put your concerns in writing to the Regional General Manager of the CCS location.</p>
<p>Individuals</p>	<p>You can complain about specific people who work in or are responsible for parts of the corrections system in Victoria. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prison staff, like corrections officers or unit managers • Community corrections staff, like parole officers or program supervisors <p>Medical and mental health workers if they are employed by public services contracted to work in prisons</p>
<p>Prison Staff and Officers</p>	<p>You can complain about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corrections officers in any adult Victorian prison • Behaviour such as misconduct, abuse of power, discrimination, or failure to uphold your rights • Issues with how prison staff enforce rules or treat you unfairly <p>Example facilities include: Barwon Prison, Dame Phyllis Frost Centre, Port Phillip Prison, Ravenhall, and more.</p>
<p>Community Correctional Services Staff</p>	<p>You can complain about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff supervising community-based orders, including parole officers and CCS program workers • Being treated unfairly, harshly, or without proper support while under a community corrections order
<p>Prison Management</p>	<p>You can complain about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How prison managers handle complaints, services, and daily operations • Failure to respond appropriately to safety concerns, cultural needs, or disciplinary processes
<p>Public Healthcare Providers in Prisons</p>	<p>You can complain about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical professionals working in prisons under public contracts • Negligent, delayed, or discriminatory healthcare <p>Includes providers like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Western Health • St Vincent’s Correctional Health Services

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forensicare • Dhelkaya Health
<p>Post-Sentence Services and Programs</p>	<p>You can complain about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff responsible for delivering programs like transition support, education, employment or rehabilitation services after release • Unfair withdrawal from programs, lack of access, or discrimination in how these are delivered
<p>Corrections Victoria (Organisation)</p>	<p>You can complain about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The way Corrections Victoria has managed your sentence, parole conditions, information sharing, or victim notifications • Delays, errors, or failures in communication, support services, or sentence administration
<p>Exclusions</p>	<p>You cannot complain to Corrections Victoria about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victoria Police: Corrections Victoria does not investigate complaints about police conduct. For example: arrests, use of force by police, or treatment in police cells. • Youth Justice Staff or Centres: Corrections Victoria only deals with adults (18+). It cannot take complaints about youth justice centres or young people in detention. • Private Healthcare Providers: You generally can't complain to Corrections Victoria about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Private healthcare companies contracted to prisons, such as: ○ Correct Care Australasia ○ GEO Healthcare • The Adult Parole Board: Corrections Victoria has no power over decisions made by the Adult Parole Board, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Whether parole is granted or refused ○ What conditions are imposed • Court Officers and Judicial Officers: This includes judges, magistrates, or court registry staff, as well as sentencing decisions, findings of guilt, or other court matters. • Immigration or Federal Detention Centres: Corrections Victoria is a Victorian body. It does not oversee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Immigration detention ○ Federal correctional facilities ○ Prisoners under Commonwealth law

Step 4: Are you eligible to make a complaint?

Eligibility	Description
-------------	-------------

<p>Who can make a complaint?</p>	<p>Anyone who has interacted with Corrections Victoria or an employee or organisation carrying out services on behalf of Corrections Victoria may make a complaint.</p> <p>For example, people who are held in a prison, subject to parole, or subject to a community corrections order.</p> <p>Complaints may also be made by members of the community.</p>
<p>Pre-requisite steps</p>	<p>While not a strict requirement, you should consider whether the complaint can be raised directly with the relevant person. If you have attempted to raise your complaint directly, it may be useful to include a reference or short summary of that complaint when you contact Corrections Victoria.</p>
<p>Can complaints be made on behalf of someone?</p>	<p>Yes. There is nothing to prevent a person raising a complaint on behalf of another, however, Corrections Victoria may wish to hear directly from the relevant person.</p>
<p>Exclusions</p>	<p>You cannot complain if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You have no connection to the correctional system: Corrections Victoria will generally not investigate complaints from someone who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Has no involvement or connection to the Victorian adult corrections system, and ○ Cannot show a direct impact or reasonable concern (e.g. safety risk, rights breach) • The complaint is made in bad faith or for improper reasons that may be excluded. This includes if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It is clearly vexatious, malicious, or repeated without new information ○ It includes threatening, abusive, or discriminatory language ○ It's being used to harass or target an individual staff member without a legitimate basis • Complaints made on behalf of someone else without consent may be limited: If you are not the person affected (e.g. you're a lawyer, family member, or support worker), you may need that person's consent to make a complaint on their behalf, especially if it involves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Personal health information ○ Private legal or disciplinary matters ○ Ongoing sentence or parole issues <p>That said, Corrections Victoria does allow third-party complaints, especially in sensitive or urgent matters — but they may not disclose outcomes without consent.</p> • Prisoners in Youth Detention (Under 18) cannot use this process, if the person affected is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Under 18, or

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In a Youth Justice Centre,
--	--

Step 5: What remedies are available at this body?

Power	Description
Change to Operational Procedures	<p>Corrections Victoria may change how a prison or community corrections centre operates, particularly if a complaint reveals a systemic issue or unfair policy.</p> <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adjusting procedures for yard time or outdoor access ● Improving access to religious items or dietary accommodation ● Changing the scheduling of visits or rehabilitation programs
Policy or Practice Review	<p>If your complaint highlights a gap in policy, Corrections Victoria may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review or amend internal policies and guidelines ● Update procedures to comply with law or best practice <p>This remedy is especially likely where the issue affects more than one person (e.g. access to healthcare or disability supports).</p>

<p>Staff Retraining or Education</p>	<p>Corrections Victoria may respond to staff-related complaints by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requiring staff to undergo further training • Providing refresher courses on human rights, cultural safety, or disability awareness <p>This can be a standalone response or accompany other remedies.</p>
<p>Sentence Recalculation</p>	<p>Corrections Victoria is responsible for administering sentence lengths and time served. They may correct:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative errors in sentence calculation • Time not credited (e.g. pre-sentence detention) • Misclassification affecting parole eligibility <p>Note: This does not mean CV can change a sentence ordered by a court.</p>
<p>Reallocation or Removal of Staff</p>	<p>Corrections Victoria can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reassign a staff member to a different role or facility • Remove them from direct contact with certain prisoners (e.g. after allegations of discrimination or misconduct) <p>This is used where misconduct is substantiated but does not meet the threshold for dismissal or prosecution.</p>
<p>Access to Services</p>	<p>Corrections Victoria may grant or reinstate access to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical, dental, or mental health care • Religious services or items • Education or vocational programs • Special dietary needs • Cultural support services
<p>Internal Apology or Acknowledgement</p>	<p>Corrections Victoria may issue:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A written or verbal apology • An acknowledgement that your treatment or experience was inappropriate <p>While not a legal remedy, this can be meaningful in restoring dignity or accountability.</p>
<p>Reversal or Change of a Staff Decision</p>	<p>If a staff member made a poor or unfair decision (e.g. denying visits, program access), Corrections Victoria can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reverse or vary that decision • Reinstate missed opportunities (e.g. transfer to another unit, access to parole meeting)
<p>Disciplinary Action</p>	<p>Where a staff member has breached Corrections Victoria policy, they may face:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal warnings • Suspension

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal disciplinary proceedings • Termination of employment (in serious cases) <p>Disciplinary action is usually confidential, so complainants may not be told the outcome in detail.</p>
Referral for Criminal Investigation	<p>If the conduct may involve a criminal offence (e.g. assault, corruption, abuse), Corrections Victoria can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer the matter to Victoria Police, IBAC, or another investigative authority • Support the investigation with internal records and witness information
Internal Investigation and Findings	<p>Even if no further action is taken, Corrections Victoria may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formally investigate your complaint • Document findings • Record any breach of policy or improper conduct <p>This is often the first step before other remedies are considered.</p>
Exclusions	<p>Corrections Victoria cannot:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Order or award compensation • Change or cancel a court sentence or parole board decision • Force an external organisation (e.g. private healthcare, Victoria Police) to act • Guarantee a disciplinary outcome will be shared with you

Step 6: Preparing your complaint. What should it include?

Requirement	Description
Format	Most complaints are to be made in writing or by telephone. For those outside prison, you may also send your complaint by email.
Personal Details	You should include as much detail as you are comfortable to include. Think about what information the person reading the complaint will need in order to understand it and provide the remedy you want. For example, where the remedy could be reassigning the community corrections officer assigned to you, you would need to include your name.
Respondent's Details	Include as much relevant information about the respondent (i.e. the person you are making the complaint about) as possible. For example, name, any identification number, office or prison and role are likely to be important details.
Relevant Facts	The relevant facts will depend on the nature of the problem. Try to include as much of the following information as you can: date; place; time;

	<p>witnesses (and/or cameras); impact the problem has caused; steps already taken to try to resolve the problem; the desired outcome.</p> <p>If you have any supporting documentation, you may include it. However, if you are sending mail in hard copy (e.g. from prison), we recommend sending copies of any supporting document, rather than originals, so that the documents are not lost.</p>
<p>What NOT to include</p>	<p>Do not include false or misleading statements.</p> <p>Do not include any strong language.</p>

Step 7: Lodging your complaint and next steps.

Step	Description
<p>Where to lodge your complaint – Community Corrections</p>	<p>First, raise the complaint with the community corrections officer.</p> <p>Then, ask to speak to a senior officer.</p> <p>Then, to the Regional General Manager of the community correctional services officer.</p>
<p>Where to lodge your complaint – Prison</p>	<p>First, raise the complaint with prison management.</p> <p>Then, direct the complaint in writing to the prison’s General Manager.</p> <p>Then, contact Corrections Victoria via the below:</p> <p>Email: corrections@justice.vic.gov.au</p> <p>Post:</p> <p>GPO Box 123 Melbourne VIC 3001</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Corrections Victoria</p> <p>Level 22, 121 Exhibition Street</p> <p>Melbourne, VIC 3000</p> <p>You may wish to address your complaint to one of the following people: Commissioner, Corrections Victoria OR Deputy Commissioner, Custodial Operations OR Assistant Commissioner, Sentence Management Division OR Assistant Commissioner, Custodial Operations.</p> <p>Telephone: 1300 191 835</p> <p>In person: (address and hours of operation)</p>
<p>Where to lodge your complaint – prisoner healthcare</p>	<p>The form for complaints regarding healthcare can be supplied by your (if you are a prisoner) health service or accommodation unit. Once the form is completed, you can speak to the person in charge of the health services at your prison and try to fix the problem, or if it cannot be fixed by speaking with the person in charge, you can complain to the Office of the Health</p>

	<p>Services Commissioner (you can call the Office of the Health Services Commissioner using the prison telephone system (enter prisoner ID then PIN *06)).</p> <p>The Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission can be contacted from prison using the telephone system (enter prisoner ID then PIN *03)</p>
<p>Where to lodge your complaint – family violence information</p>	<p>If you are not satisfied with the way that Corrections Victoria has handled information relating to family violence information sharing under Part 5A of the Family Violence Protection Act 2008:</p> <p>Email: cv.fviss@justice.vic.gov.au</p> <p>Email: corrections@justice.vic.gov.au</p> <p>Post:</p> <p>GPO Box 123 Melbourne VIC 3001</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Corrections Victoria</p> <p>Level 22, 121 Exhibition Street</p> <p>Melbourne, VIC 3000</p>
<p>Where to lodge your complaint – information privacy</p>	<p>First, talk to the Unit Supervisor at the prison or write to the prison’s General Manager.</p> <p>Contact the Department of Justice and Community Safety’s Information Privacy Unit.²</p>
<p>Receipt</p>	<p>You should receive an acknowledgement to the complaint within three business days, and a response within 20 business days.</p>
<p>Assessment/ investigation</p>	<p>The response and next steps following the submission of a complaint will depend on the nature of the complaint. It may involve further investigation by Corrections Victoria, or further questions being asked of you.</p> <p>Whether the complaint is investigated further is up to the discretion of Complaints Victoria.</p>
<p>Next step(s)</p>	<p>There may be further steps taken by Corrections Victoria, for example, a conciliation between you and the respondent.</p> <p>Does the complaint body support you to participate equitably in conciliation?</p> <p>Do you need a lawyer to participate in conciliation?</p>
<p>Additional information you need to know</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is a good idea to keep a copy of the complaint made and any documents sent in support of the complaint.

² <https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/contact-us/information-privacy-unit>: privacy@justice.vic.gov.au; 03 8684 0178; Level 24, 121 Exhibition Street, Melbourne, VIC 3000.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is a good idea to make a note of any meetings or telephone calls you have in relation to your complaint. • You should update the complaint body about any changes that impact on your complaint. • You should try to provide all relevant information at the outset. If you drip feed information over time, that can slow your complaint down. • Calls to the numbers mentioned above from inside a prison are limited to 12 minutes and are not monitored.
--	--

Step 8: Post-complaint – what if you are not happy with the outcome of your complaint?

Avenue	Description
Internal review opportunities	You may choose to escalate your complaint internally by contacting someone with more seniority (see step 7 above).
Victorian Ombudsman	<p>If you are not happy with the response to your complaint, or you do not receive a response you may raise your complaint with the Victorian Ombudsman.</p> <p>The Ombudsman can be called from prison by using the freecall line (prisoner ID then PIN *05). Calls and letters with the Ombudsman are not monitored.³</p>

Step 9: Other bodies that handle complaints about corrections related complaints

Complaint body	Description
Australian Human Rights Commission	<p>The Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) can handle complaints about discrimination that occurs in employment, education, the provision of goods and services, accommodation, sport or the administration of Commonwealth laws and services. If you have experienced discrimination, bullying or harassment on the basis of you ex, disability, race, age or sexual preference the AHRC may be able to help.</p> <p>The Victorian Equal Opportunity & Human Rights Commission can provide information related to Human Rights and copies of the Human Rights Charter but does not hear complaints. Complaints relating to Human Rights are</p>
Office of the Australian Information Commissioner	The Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) can handle complaints about the way personal information has been handled by Australian Government agencies and some private organisations. The

³ Corrections Act 1986 s 47 (m)(iv)

and/or Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner	<p>OAIC can also review freedom of information decisions that are made by Australian Government agencies and ministers.</p> <p>There are also State Government privacy and information complaint bodies who may also be able to assist. In Victoria this is the Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner (OVIC), GPO Box 5057, Melbourne 3001.</p>
National Anti-Corruption Commission	<p>The National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) handles complaints about serious or systemic corruption in the Australian Government public sector.</p>
Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission	<p>The Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC) aims to prevent and expose public sector corruption and police misconduct in Victoria. It is likely to be more relevant to complaints connected to Corrections Victoria than the National Anti-Corruption Commission, as Corrections Victoria is a Victorian (not Commonwealth) entity.</p>
Health Complaints Commission	<p>The Health Complaints Commission (HCC) can handle complaints about health service providers in Victoria, including unregistered health practitioners.</p>
Victorian Inspectorate	<p>The Victorian Inspectorate oversees 15 integrity bodies including, IBAC, the Victorian Ombudsman and OVIC. If you have interacted with any of these bodies and are not happy with the conduct of employees or the treatment you received, you may make a complaint to the Victorian Inspectorate.</p>
Mental Health and Wellbeing Commissioner	<p>The Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission deals with complaints about Victorian publicly funded mental health and wellbeing services.</p>
Additional information you need to know	<p>The <i>Corrections Act 1986</i> protects prisoners' rights to send and receive letters and parcels (without those being opened by prison staff) with the agencies listed above (except for the National Anti-Corruption Commission).</p>

Need help to preparing or pursuing your complaint?

Below are organisations that may be able to help you to make your complaint, provide support or advocacy during the complaint process or give you more information.

Organisation	Contact Details	How they can help
Translating and Interpreter Service	<p>Website: www.tisnational.gov.au</p> <p>Telephone: 131 450</p>	<p>Provide support to people if English is not their first language.</p>

Organisation	Contact Details	How they can help
National Relay Service	Website: www.accesshub.gov.au	Provides a range of services to support people who are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment to communicate.
Victorian Legal Aid (telephone service)	Telephone from certain prisons: Dial *#18 Monday to Friday, 9 am to 3 pm. Write to: Victoria Legal Aid GPO Box 4380 Melbourne VIC 3001 Website: https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/help-if-you-are-prison	Prisoners in the Metropolitan Remand Centre, Port Phillip Prison, Dame Phyllis Frost Centre, Loddon Prison, Middleton Annex, and Ravenhall Correctional Centre can make free 12-minute telephone calls to Victorian Legal Aid.
Anglicare Victoria Prison Chaplaincy	Website: https://www.anglicarevic.org.au/our-services/community-support-programs/prison-support/ Telephone: 1800 809 722	Anglicare provide chaplaincy services to support prisoners which can include assisting with advocacy and support in relation to prisoner treatment, and prison procedures, management or policy.
The Salvation Army Prison Chaplains	Website: https://www.salvationarmy.org.au/need-help/prison-support/ Telephone: 19 72 58	The Salvation Army's Prison Chaplains visit people in prison to provide emotional, spiritual and pastoral services.

Self-help tools and additional resources

Resource	How this helps
How to make a complaint	Guidance on how to make a complaint

<u>Call It Out</u>	Online register for racism/discrimination experienced or witnessed towards First Nations Australians. Not an official complaints body.
<u>Law Society: Know Your Rights</u>	Guidance for individuals who are uncertain about where to start when seeking legal advice.