

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 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.

Department of Justice and Community Safety Victoria (DJCSV)

This factsheet introduces the Department of Justice and Community Safety Victoria ('**DJCSV**').

The DJCSV is responsible for delivering justice and community safety services across Victoria. It oversees key areas such as emergency services, youth justice, justice health, victims of crime support, gambling and liquor regulation, and the Koori justice system.

The department also has a role in handling complaints made by the public about its services, programs, or the conduct of people working within its areas of responsibility.

Legislation and Key Terms

Relevant Legislation:

The Department of Justice and Community Safety Victoria (**DJCSV**), like all departments, was established under an [Order in Council](#) made under section 10 of the [Public Administration Act 2004](#).

The DJCSV and its Secretary are responsible to ministers who cover a number of portfolios within the Victorian Parliament. A detailed list of the legislation which the DJCSV and its Secretary administer is [available here](#).

Key Terms: Below are key terms that appear throughout this factsheet and their meaning.

DJCSV means the Department of Justice and Community Safety Victoria, also the Department.

Complainant: someone who makes a complaint.

Complaint: a report about a service or process being unsatisfactory and seeking a resolution.

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

<p>Complaints can be made about any of DJCSV’s business units and services (e.g., Corrections Victoria, Youth Justice, Fines Victoria functions, Adoption Victoria, Honorary Justices administration). Many justice-sector bodies are separate agencies with their own complaint processes (e.g., courts, Victoria Police, OVIC, VEOHRC).. The DJCSV focuses on complaints about, but not limited to:</p>	
<p>Personal Information and Privacy</p>	
Sub-category	Example
<p>Privacy Complaint</p>	<p>You should make a complaint if your personal information held by a Victorian government department or agency (for example, DJCS) has been misused, improperly disclosed, or not handled according to privacy laws. Under the law, an individual can complain if an organisation’s act or practice interferes with their privacy. This covers situations like a breach of confidentiality, insecure record-keeping, or unlawful sharing of your personal details.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mina, a community volunteer, discovered that the Department published her home address and phone number online without her permission.</i> • <i>Ryan, a young job seeker, found out that a government worker accessed his personal case file without any valid reason.</i>
<p>Freedom of Information (FOI) Complaint</p>	<p>You should make a complaint (or seek a review) if a government agency is not properly handling your request for documents under the Freedom of Information Act. This includes excessive delays or actions that you believe are contrary to the FOI law, for example, if the agency fails to respond, refuses access without a good reason, or claims records don’t exist when you think they do.</p> <p>If you are not satisfied with how your FOI request was handled, there are external FOI review and FOI complaint pathways through OVIC.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sophie, a journalist, requested departmental reports on a public infrastructure project, but the agency missed the legal deadline and continued to delay without providing updates.</i> • <i>Liam, a university student, asked for his youth justice records, but was told they couldn’t be found and wasn’t given any explanation of what search had been carried out.</i>
<p>Exclusions</p>	<p>DJCSV cannot handle:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaints about privacy issues outside DJCS: DJCS can only handle privacy complaints about DJCS services and staff. Privacy complaints about other organisations are handled by the relevant

privacy regulator (for Victorian government organisations, this is OVIC).

- **Complaints about privacy issues outside DJCS:** DJCS cannot investigate privacy complaints about other organisations.

If the organisation is a Victorian government organisation, you can complain to the organisation first and, if you are not satisfied with the response, you can complain to the Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner (OVIC).

If the organisation is an Australian Government agency (and many private organisations), you may need to complain to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC).

- **Freedom of Information (FOI) issues about other departments or agencies:** DJCS can only respond to FOI issues relating to DJCS requests and decisions. For FOI handling problems or review requests involving any Victorian public sector agency, you can apply to OVIC for an FOI complaint or FOI review (after any required internal steps with the agency).
- **Access to health information:** Health information access and privacy complaints are handled under separate health information laws and processes. If your complaint is about health information or healthcare (including healthcare received in prison), you may need to complain through the relevant health complaints pathway rather than DJCS.

Adult Corrections	
Sub-category	Example
Prisoner Complaint	<p>You should make a complaint if you are in prison (or have a loved one in prison) and something about the prison’s management or your treatment is seriously wrong. Prisoners in Victoria have the right to raise concerns about prison management. This could include complaining about unsafe or inhumane conditions, inadequate medical care, denial of visits or communication, cultural or religious needs not being met, or abuse or mistreatment by prison staff.</p> <p>Complaints can be made within the prison system (for example, to prison management or the prison’s General Manager). You can also make a complaint to Corrections Victoria (DJCS) about prisons and corrections services. If you are not satisfied after using the prison/corrections complaint process, you can complain to the Victorian Ombudsman (an independent oversight body, not part of DJCS).</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Thomas, a First Nations prisoner, was refused access to cultural items for ceremony and wasn’t allowed to meet with an Elder.</i> • <i>Daryl, a middle-aged inmate with a chronic illness, regularly missed out on medication because it wasn’t delivered on time.</i> • <i>Carla, a mother, noticed that her son in prison had become withdrawn after saying a staff member was threatening him.</i>
Community Corrections or Parole Complaint	<p>You should make a complaint if you are serving a community-based sentence (like a Community Correction Order) or are on parole and encounter problems with how you’re being supervised or treated. While in the community, you are still under DJCS supervision, and you have a right to fair and safe management. This means if a Community Corrections officer or program is behaving in an unprofessional or unfair way, if your work or community service placement is unsafe, or if the terms of your order are being misapplied, you can raise a complaint. It’s important that even outside of prison, individuals are treated lawfully and respectfully as they work through their order.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Jordan, a young person doing community service, was assigned to a site where he was asked to handle chemicals without protective gear.</i> • <i>Mike, who was recently released on parole, kept being told to attend parole meetings during work hours even though after-hours appointments had been agreed on.</i> • <i>Helen, a volunteer mentor, witnessed a program supervisor yelling at and humiliating participants during a community reintegration session.</i>
Exclusions	DJCSV cannot handle:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allegations of criminal behaviour by prison or community corrections staff: These must be reported to Victoria Police or IBAC. • Matters already decided through formal prison disciplinary hearings or parole board decisions: These are final unless appealed through legal processes. • Complaints about private prison providers: Start with the prison/provider’s complaints process and relevant Corrections Victoria (DJCS) complaint channels. If you are not satisfied after using the prison/corrections complaint process, you can complain to the Victorian Ombudsman (an independent oversight body, not part of DJCS). • Legal challenges to imprisonment or sentence: These must be dealt with through the courts, not DJCS.
Youth Justice	
Sub-category	Example
Youth Justice Complaint	<p>You should make a complaint if you are a young person in a youth justice facility or program (or their parent or guardian) and you have concerns about how you’re being treated or the conditions in custody. Children and teenagers in the justice system must be treated in a manner that is appropriate for their age and needs. Complaints might relate to safety (e.g. violence or bullying in a youth justice centre), care and wellbeing (inadequate education, health or welfare services), cultural or religious respect, or staff misconduct.</p> <p>There are processes to complain either directly to the centre or to Youth Justice management within DJCS. There are also independent oversight pathways that sit outside DJCS.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Jayden, a 16-year-old in a youth justice centre, experienced repeated use of force by staff that left him feeling unsafe.</i> • <i>Rosa, the mother of a 14-year-old on a youth supervision order, found out her son wasn’t being given access to any schooling.</i> • <i>Tahlia, an Aboriginal teenager in detention, asked to speak with a cultural mentor but was told no one was available and never received follow-up.</i>
Exclusions	<p>DJCSV cannot handle:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allegations of child abuse or mistreatment by non-DJCS service providers: These must be directed to the Commission for Children and Young People or the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing. • Criminal allegations involving youth justice staff: These must be reported to police or IBAC. • Disputes over court orders or sentencing: These are matters for the courts, not DJCS.

Conduct of Officials	
Sub-category	Example
Complaint about a Justice of the Peace or Bail Justice	<p>You should make a complaint if a Justice of the Peace (JP) or Bail Justice, who are honorary officials, has acted inappropriately, unprofessionally, or outside their authority when performing their duties. JPs and Bail Justices are expected to follow a code of conduct, and the Department of Justice and Community Safety can investigate complaints against them. For instance, you might complain if a JP is rude or discriminatory when certifying documents, if they disclose confidential information, or if a Bail Justice makes a decision in a grossly unfair manner or seeks a favour. There is a dedicated process (including a complaint form) to handle misconduct or concerns about honorary justices.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Greg, who needed a statutory declaration witnessed, was insulted by a Justice of the Peace who made inappropriate personal comments during the meeting.</i> • <i>Laila, a legal advocate, noticed that a bail justice routinely refused bail to young people without properly considering their circumstances.</i> • <i>Nancy, a community member, overheard a local JP discussing details from someone’s documents at a public gathering.</i>
Exclusions	<p>DJCSV cannot handle:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissatisfaction with a bail decision or statutory declaration refusal: DJCS cannot overturn, or review decisions made under legal authority. • Complaints about court staff or magistrates: These must be directed to the court itself or the Judicial Commission of Victoria.
Child Safety	
Sub-category	Example
Child Safety Concern or Complaint	<p>You should make a complaint or report a concern if you believe a child is not safe or has been harmed within any program, service or facility overseen by DJCS. All government agencies have a duty to protect children in their care. This means if you suspect a child has been abused, is being groomed, or is otherwise placed at risk by a staff member, volunteer or policy failing in a DJCS setting, you should speak up.</p> <p>The Department’s child safety policies encourage anyone to raise concerns or complaints about child safety through DJCS reporting pathways. Depending on the situation, there may also be external reporting or oversight pathways that sit outside DJCS.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Kevin, a youth worker, noticed a colleague making inappropriate and overly familiar comments toward a 15-year-old participant in a justice program.</i> • <i>Bree, a volunteer, realised that several adults involved in a DJCS-funded program had never completed Working with Children Checks.</i> • <i>Adam, the father of a teenager in detention, heard that a staff member had physically handled young people during lockdown drills.</i>
Exclusions	<p>DJCSV cannot handle:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports of abuse or neglect outside DJCS facilities: These should be made to Child Protection (DFFH) or the Commission for Children and Young People. • Complaints about schools or childcare centres: These fall under the Department of Education or other specific regulators.
Other Complaints and Reviews	
Sub-category	Example
Infringement or Fine Review	<p>You should request a review or make a complaint if you receive an infringement notice (fine) or penalty that you believe is incorrect, unfair, or issued in error. Victorian law provides the right to ask the issuing agency to internally review a fine in certain cases, for example, if you weren't the person responsible, if you had special circumstances (like homelessness or mental illness) that led to the offense, or if the fine was contrary to law. The Department of Justice and Community Safety oversees the fines system (Fines Victoria and the Sheriff), so it also handles complaints about how fines are enforced. This means you can also complain if you have problems with payment plans, community work in lieu of a fine, or the conduct of Sheriff's officers during enforcement. Essentially, if something goes wrong in the infringements process, you have avenues to challenge it or seek an internal review.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Jacob, a delivery driver, received a fine for speeding in a car he had already sold and had proof of transfer.</i> • <i>Natasha, a uni student, was fined for littering even though she hadn't been in the park at the time the offence was issued.</i> • <i>Chris, a motorist, received a speeding ticket from a camera he believed had incorrectly recorded his vehicle.</i> • <i>Samira, a single mother, had her licence suspended over an unpaid fine she never received due to a postal error.</i>
Working with Children Check Review	<p>You should seek a review if your Working with Children (WWC) Check is refused or revoked by DJCS and you believe this decision is unjust or based on incorrect information. The Department of Justice and Community Safety (through its screening unit) decides who passes or fails the WWC clearance. If you receive a Negative Notice (meaning you are barred from working with children), in many cases you have the right to appeal that decision at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal</p>

	<p>(VCAT). This is essentially a complaint against the department’s decision on your clearance. You might pursue this if you have rehabilitation evidence, if the criminal history considered is incorrect, or other circumstances that show you are not an unjustifiable risk to children. Even before VCAT, you can also contact the department if there has been a mistake (for example, identity confusion or paperwork errors) to see if it can be resolved administratively.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Andrew, a school volunteer, was issued a Negative Notice based on a past offence and had never been given a chance to provide updated character references.</i> • <i>Claire, a junior sports coach, found out she was linked to someone else’s criminal record due to an identity mix-up.</i> • <i>Jamal, a father, was denied clearance and wasn’t allowed to help on his daughter’s school camp despite never being charged with an offence.</i>
<p>Procurement Complaint</p>	<p>You should make a complaint if your business or organisation took part in a procurement or tender process run by DJCS and you believe the process was unethical, unfair or not in accordance with proper procedures. The department has a formal process to manage complaints from suppliers about procurement processes. This means if, for example, you suspect a tender evaluation was biased or that your confidential bid information was mishandled, you can lodge a procurement complaint. The aim is to ensure fairness and integrity in how the department awards contracts, by allowing participants to voice concerns if something went wrong in the selection process.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Priya, a small business owner, found out that another bidder in a DJCS tender process had access to internal evaluation documents.</i> • <i>Danika, a contractor who applied for a prison services contract, noticed that some of the criteria listed in the contract weren’t scored during the final assessment.</i>
<p>General Service Complaint</p>	<p>You should make a complaint if you experience poor customer service, unfair treatment, or a mistake in any other interaction with the Department of Justice and Community Safety, and it doesn’t fall into one of the specific complaint categories above. The department welcomes feedback about its services and staff and is committed to responding fairly and in a timely way. This general category covers any grievances about the department’s day-to-day services, for example, errors in paperwork, staff misconduct at a Justice Service Centre, delays or miscommunication in processing applications, or accessibility issues. Essentially, whenever “something goes wrong” in your dealings with DJCS and there isn’t a dedicated complaints process already in place, you should still speak up so the issue can be addressed.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Eleni, a new parent, received her baby’s birth certificate months late and found that the name was misspelled.</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mohammed, a visitor to a Justice Service Centre, was treated disrespectfully by a staff member who mocked his accent.</i> • <i>Joel, an NGO worker, struggled to access a DJCS online system that regularly crashed and displayed outdated information.</i>
<p>Disability Worker Exclusion Scheme (DWES) Complaint</p>	<p>You should make a complaint if you believe DJCS has unfairly or incorrectly placed you (or someone else) on the Disability Worker Exclusion List (DWEL), which bars certain people from working in disability residential services funded or regulated by the Victorian Government. You might raise concerns about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Factual errors in the decision • Being denied a chance to respond • Improper process in how the exclusion was handled <p>This scheme is administered by DJCS and complaints can be made directly to them.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Declan, a disability support worker, found out he had been placed on the Disability Worker Exclusion List after a past workplace incident was misunderstood.</i> • <i>Ava, a team leader at a residential care home, was never told why one of her staff members had been excluded and couldn't access any supporting details from the Department.</i>
<p>Adoption Services Complaint</p>	<p>You should make a complaint if you have concerns about how DJCS or one of its funded providers handled an adoption-related service, such as access to records, contact arrangements, counselling, or how your personal information or story was managed.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Melissa requested access to her original birth record through Adoption Services but was left waiting for months with no explanation or updates.</i> • <i>Damien, an adopted adult, felt disrespected by the tone and approach used during his first contact counselling session.</i> • <i>Aunty June, a Stolen Generations survivor, was discouraged from applying for access to records by a support worker who didn't understand cultural protocols.</i>
<p>Exclusions</p>	<p>DJCSV cannot handle:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infringements issued by local councils or other bodies: DJCS cannot review fines it did not issue. • Working with Children Checks issued in other states or territories: DJCS only manages checks for Victoria. • General procurement disputes about performance after contract award: These are managed through contract governance, not public complaints.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaints that do not identify a specific service issue: Feedback or general dissatisfaction without detail may not be treated as a formal complaint. • Complaints about exclusion schemes not administered by DJCS: For example, the NDIS Worker Screening Check is managed by a separate agency.
General Exclusions	
Sub-category	Example
Exclusions	<p>DJCSV will not handle complaints about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaints about independent statutory bodies: DJCS does not investigate or oversee complaints about entities like Consumer Affairs Victoria, the Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, or the Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner. • Allegations of corruption or police misconduct: These must be referred to IBAC (Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission), not DJCS. • Employment matters about DJCS staff: Internal staffing, performance management, recruitment decisions, or workplace conflict must be addressed through DJCS’s internal HR channels or escalated to the Victorian Public Sector Commission, not the public complaints process. • Complaints about government policy: DJCS cannot review or change government policy decisions, law reform proposals, or Ministerial priorities. These are matters for Parliament or public consultation. • Requests for legal advice” DJCS cannot provide legal interpretation or assistance in personal legal matters. • Complaints that have already been determined by a court or tribunal: DJCS cannot review or overturn decisions made by courts, VCAT, or other judicial bodies. • Claims for compensation: DJCS is not a compensation decision-maker for negligence or injury claims; these must be pursued through civil courts or appropriate schemes (e.g. VOCAT).

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

Jurisdiction	Description
State	The DJCSV has powers to hear complaints under the law of Victoria.
Geographical Scope	The DJCSV has the power to act on complaints about any departments or services within the scope of the Department’s work.

<p>Time limitations</p>	<p>While DJCS does not impose a strict time limit for making a complaint, it generally expects complaints to be made within a reasonable time after the issue occurs.</p> <p>If a complaint is made long after the event, DJCS may decide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not to investigate, especially if evidence is missing or memories have faded, or • To investigate in a limited way, depending on the nature and seriousness of the issue. <p>There is no fixed number of days or months, but as a general rule: The sooner, the better, to make it easier to understand what happened and resolve the issue fairly.</p> <p>Delays must usually be explained. For example, if the person was unaware of the issue, was in custody, unwell, or had other reasons for waiting.</p>
<p>Exclusions</p>	<p>DJCSV cannot handle:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incidents or decisions that occurred outside Victoria: DJCS only has authority over matters that took place within Victoria or relate to Victorian government programs and services. • Complaints about matters under Commonwealth (federal) jurisdiction: This includes immigration detention, Centrelink, Medicare, and federal criminal offences, all of which fall outside DJCS authority. • Complaints about Working with Children Checks, exclusion schemes, or corrections programs in other states or territories: DJCS can only deal with complaints about Victorian systems. • Incidents that occurred before DJCS held legal or operational responsibility: DJCS cannot act on complaints about services or decisions made under a different authority or prior to a machinery-of-government change (unless there is a current legal obligation to do so). • Complaints made outside of reasonable timeframes without justification: While DJCS may accept older complaints in exceptional circumstances, it generally requires issues to be raised within a reasonable period after they occurred, especially where investigation depends on records, staff memory, or available evidence. • Complaints about future or hypothetical actions: DJCS can only respond to issues that have actually occurred or are currently happening, not anticipated or speculative concerns.
<p>Exercise of discretion</p>	<p>DJCS may choose to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accept a late complaint if there's a good reason and it can still be looked into fairly.

- Look into a complaint that’s partly outside its role if some parts still involve DJCS.
- Consider an anonymous complaint if the issue is serious and there’s enough information to act.
- Act on a complaint even if it’s not in writing or made through formal channels.
- Refer the complaint to another body if someone else is better placed to deal with it.
- Pass the issue on within DJCS if it shows a bigger problem with services or staff.
- Accept complaints from support people like carers, lawyers, or advocates.
- Prioritise urgent or serious complaints, especially if someone is at risk.
- Decide not to act on a complaint if it’s clearly unreasonable, abusive, or has already been dealt with.
- Sort out a complaint informally if it can be fixed quickly with a simple solution.
- Delay telling staff about the complaint if it would affect safety or the investigation.

Step 3: Who can you make a complaint against?

Complaints can be made about any of DJCSV’s services and staff.	
Respondent	Description
DJCSV staff and services	DJCS can receive complaints about the conduct of its employees, including those working in public prisons, community correctional services, victim support units, youth justice centres, and departmental programs.
Individuals	DJCS can receive complaints about its own staff, contractors, or volunteers where they have acted unfairly, unprofessionally, or contrary to departmental standards.
Adoption Services	Complaints can be made about the delivery of Adoption Services provided directly by DJCS or by organisations funded by DJCS to support adoption processes, including administrative conduct, fairness of service, and compliance with legal obligations. To provide feedback about Adoption Services or services funded by Adoption Services, you can email: AdoptionServices.Feedback@justice.vic.gov.au

Community correctional services officers and teams	DJCS can receive complaints about how community correction orders are supervised, including concerns about treatment by community corrections officers, access to programs, and conditions of service.
Corrections Victoria (including public prison staff)	Complaints can be made about prison conditions, treatment of prisoners, and staff behaviour in publicly operated prisons under DJCS control.
Contracted DJCS Service Providers	DJCS may accept complaints about external programs or services it funds or contracts (e.g. reintegration programs, family violence services, residential disability services under DWES), particularly where the issue relates to departmental oversight or policy obligations.
Justices of the Peace and Bail Justices	Complaints about conduct or behaviour of honorary justices appointed under DJCS are handled by Honorary Justice Services Support within DJCS.
DJCS-Funded Programs (e.g. Victim Support Services)	DJCS can receive complaints about programs it funds directly, such as the Victims Assistance Program or victims' helpline, particularly where these fall under the Victims' Charter.
Procurement Officers and Processes	Complaints may be made about the fairness or integrity of DJCS procurement processes (e.g. how contracts were awarded or assessed).
Child Safety-Related Staff or Program Areas	If the complaint involves a child safety concern in a DJCS-run or funded program, DJCS may accept the complaint through its Child Safety Officer or internal reporting systems.
Exclusions	<p>DJCSV cannot handle complaints involving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courts and Tribunals: DJCS cannot handle complaints about the conduct of courts or tribunal members (including magistrates, judges, tribunal members), or decisions made by any court or tribunal. These have their own complaints processes. • Victoria Police: Complaints about police behaviour, misconduct or investigation outcomes must be made to Victoria Police or IBAC. DJCS cannot investigate complaints about police conduct. • Private Prisons (staff or operations beyond DJCS contracts): While DJCS funds and oversees private prisons, it cannot investigate complaints that fall outside the scope of its

contract or legal authority. Such complaints may be referred to the prison provider or the Victorian Ombudsman.

- **Child Protection (DFFH):** DJCS does not handle complaints about child protection caseworkers or child protection decisions. These must be directed to the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH).
- **Other Government Departments or Agencies:** DJCS cannot handle complaints about other departments, including Consumer Affairs Victoria, the Office of Public Prosecutions, WorkSafe, or the Department of Education. These bodies have their own complaint processes.
- **Independent Oversight Bodies:** DJCS cannot investigate complaints about the Victorian Ombudsman, IBAC, VEOHRC, OVIC, or other statutory bodies. These agencies are independent and manage their own accountability.
- **Court or Tribunal Staff (registry, security, etc.):** Complaints about the administrative staff of courts and tribunals are not handled by DJCS and must be raised with the relevant court.

Step 4: Are you eligible to make a complaint?

Eligibility	Description
Who can make a complaint?	Anyone can make a complaint to the DJCSV.
Have you tried to resolve your complaint directly with the public authority?	Direct any feedback to the person you originally dealt with. If you do not feel comfortable talking to that person or they are unable to resolve your concern, you can formalise your feedback by selecting the most appropriate process with the agency.
Can a complaint be made on behalf of someone?	You can make a complaint on someone’s behalf about their own experiences or on behalf of another. Consent may be required depending on the nature of the complaint, please contact DJCSV to discuss.
Exclusions	<p>DJCS accepts complaints from most people, but there are a few limits. You may not be able to make a complaint if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You’re complaining on someone else’s behalf without permission, unless you’re their legal representative, carer, or have clear authority. • You’re complaining about someone else’s case, sentence or order. DJCS usually only accepts complaints from the person directly affected. • You’re from an organisation that’s not directly involved, unless there’s a serious public risk (like child safety). • You’re making the complaint just to harass or target someone. DJCS won’t deal with complaints made maliciously or in bad faith. • You’ve already complained and there’s nothing new. Repeated complaints with no new information may not be reviewed again. • You’re restricted from contacting DJCS staff or services - for example, if there’s a safety order in place. • You don’t give your name and more details are needed to act. Anonymous complaints are allowed, but DJCS might not be able to do anything without more information.
Additional information you need to know	The DJCSV’s services are free. You do not need a lawyer for the complaint process, but you can seek legal advice at any time.

Step 5: What remedies are available at this body?

Power	Description
Warm or Direct referral	DJCS may refer you to a different organisation, agency, or complaints body if it believes another body is better placed to handle your concerns. DJCS will usually provide contact details and may check whether you've already raised the issue with that agency.
Internal Referral or Escalation	If your complaint relates to another team or business unit within DJCS, the department may pass your complaint on internally for a response, investigation, or improvement.
Service Explanation or Clarification	DJCS may provide an explanation about a decision, delay, or action. This includes explaining why something happened, what the rules or policies are, or how the process works.
Apology (verbal or written)	Where appropriate, DJCS may offer an apology. For example, if there was a delay, mistake, or poor service experience.
Informal Resolution	Some complaints can be resolved quickly through a phone call, email or discussion. For example, correcting a misunderstanding or fixing an administrative issue.
Practice or Service Improvement	DJCS may use your complaint to improve policies, systems or staff training, especially where a pattern of complaints suggests a wider issue.
Investigation or Review (of process or staff conduct)	In some cases, DJCS may conduct an internal review into how something was handled, such as whether policies were followed, staff acted fairly, or a process was properly applied. (This is usually administrative, not disciplinary.)
Feedback Recorded and Monitored	Even if no further action is taken, your feedback may be recorded and monitored to help identify service issues or trends that require improvement over time.
Referral to the Victorian Ombudsman	If DJCS cannot resolve your complaint or believes it raises serious systemic or procedural issues, it may refer your matter to the Victorian Ombudsman for independent consideration.
Referral to a Specialist Oversight Body	Where appropriate, DJCS may refer or encourage you to contact other independent oversight bodies, such as IBAC, VEOHRC, OVIC, or the Commission for Children and Young People, depending on the subject matter.
No Action	DJCS may decide not to take any further action. This may happen if your complaint falls outside its responsibilities, is unreasonable or abusive, lacks enough detail, or has already been dealt with.
Exclusions	DJCS can't offer every type of outcome. Even if your complaint is accepted, it can't:

- **Pay you compensation:** DJCS doesn't give money or financial remedies.
- **Change court or tribunal decisions:** only a court can review its own rulings.
- **Discipline staff just because of a complaint:** staff issues follow separate processes.
- **Direct police, judges or prosecutors:** DJCS doesn't control other justice agencies.
- **Give legal advice:** you'll need to speak to a lawyer for legal help.
- **Enforce laws or punish people:** DJCS isn't a court or enforcement body.
- **Act on very old complaints with no evidence:** there has to be enough info to follow up.
- **Guarantee a particular outcome:** like someone being sacked or a policy being changed.

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

Requirement	Description
Format	<p>Direct complaints to the DJCSV</p> <p>Direct complaints can be lodged directly to DJCSV in writing or verbally as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By phone: 03 8684 0000 or 1300 365 111 for regional callers • Post: Department of Justice and Community Safety, GPO Box 4356, Melbourne VIC 3001. <p>There is no specific complaint form for complaints lodged directly to the DJCSV. The DJCSV recommends lodging your complaint with the relevant business area or agency.</p> <p>Complaints to other business areas and agencies</p> <p>All business areas and agencies overseen or established by the DJCSV have differing complaint processes. However, generally speaking, a complaint will need to be in writing.</p> <p>If you're not sure whether the DJCSV can help, if you'd like to speak with the DJCSV about your concerns or if you need help completing the complaint form, then please don't hesitate to contact the DJCSV.</p> <p>If you would like the assistance of an interpreter or translator this can be arranged by the DJCSV free of charge.</p>
Personal Details	<p>Generally speaking, to make a complaint, you should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First and last name • Contact number • Email or postal address <p>You only need to provide your contact details if you would like a response.</p>
Respondent's Details	<p>You should provide the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • name of the business area / agency / organisation; • if relevant, name of the worker or volunteer and any former names or aliases of the worker or volunteer (if known) about who you are making the complaint.
Relevant Facts	<p>You should provide details of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of the complainant (including first name, last name, date of birth, the victim's gender, if the victim is from a culturally diverse community or identifies as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, if the alleged victim a person with disability). • Date of alleged conduct. • Summary of allegation(s)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has this matter been reported to police? <p>You should provide as much detail as possible to help DJCSV understand your complaint and which business area / agency / organisation may be best positioned to assist.</p> <p>If you have any documents to support your complaint they should be provided, including any correspondence you had with the organisation about your complaint.</p>
<p>What NOT to include</p>	<p>Do not make false or misleading statements.</p>
<p>Additional information you need to know</p>	<p>DJCSV’s complaint handling is limited</p> <p>Generally speaking, the DJCSV will require you to lodge your complaint with the specific agency or service provider.</p> <p>The DJCSV may refer you on to that entity if you make a complaint directly to the DJCSV.</p> <p>More information regarding the complaints process is available here.</p>

Step 7: Lodging your complaint and next steps.

Step	Description
Where to lodge your complaint	<p>Direct complaints to the DJCSV</p> <p>Direct complaints can be lodged directly to DJCSV in writing or verbally as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By phone: 03 8684 0000 or 1300 365 111 for regional callers • Post: Department of Justice and Community Safety, GPO Box 4356, Melbourne VIC 3001. <p>There is no specific complaint form for complaints lodged directly to the DJCSV. The DJCSV recommends lodging your complaint with the relevant business area or agency.</p> <p>Complaints to other business areas and agencies</p> <p>All business areas and agencies overseen or established by the DJCSV have differing complaint processes. However, generally speaking, a complaint will need to be in writing.</p> <p>If you're not sure whether the DJCSV can help, if you'd like to speak with the DJCSV about your concerns or if you need help completing the complaint form, then please don't hesitate to contact the DJCSV.</p> <p>If you would like the assistance of an interpreter or translator this can be arranged by the DJCSV free of charge.</p>
Receipt	<p>Any written feedback directed to the Department will be acknowledged in writing within three business days.</p> <p>If you require a further response, we will phone or write to you within 20 business days.</p> <p>You only need to provide your contact details if you would like a response.</p> <p>Acknowledging or responding may take longer if your feedback is in a language other than English.</p>
Initial assessment	<p>When the DJCSV receive a complaint, the DJCSV first looks at whether the DJCSV or another organisation is best suited to deal with it. If the DJCSV assess that another organisation is better suited to dealing with some of your concerns, the DJCSV will provide you with contact information for them.</p> <p>The DJCSV may ask whether you have already tried speaking with the organisation as this may be an effective way to resolve your issue.</p>
Referral	<p>If the DJCSV identifies that another organisation or regulator is best suited to deal with the complaint, the DJCSV will make an assisted referral and ask that staff from the organisation or regulator to discuss your concerns.</p>

	<p>As part of the process, the DJCSV will contact the organisation or regulator to confirm the progress or the outcome of your complaint.</p> <p>If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you can contact the DJCSV to discuss your options.</p>
<p>Refer to Victorian Ombudsman</p>	<p>The DJCSV may refer your concerns to the Victorian Ombudsman for consideration if the DJCSV considers that such a response is warranted.</p>
<p>Additional information you need to know</p>	<p>DJCSV’s complaint handling is limited</p> <p>Generally speaking, the DJCSV will require you to lodge your complaint with the specific agency or service provider.</p> <p>The DJCSV may refer you on to that entity if you make a complaint directly to the DJCSV.</p> <p>More information regarding the complaints process is available here.</p>

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

Avenue	Description
Victorian Ombudsman	If you are not happy with the way your complaint has been handled, you can complain to the Victorian Ombudsman
Additional information	For more information about complaints about the DJCSV, visit here .

Step 9: Overlapping or Related Jurisdiction to the complaints body?

Jurisdiction	Description
Victorian Ombudsman	<p>The Victorian Ombudsman handles complaints about the general conduct of Victorian government organisations, local councils, statutory authorities, and Victorian universities and TAFEs.</p> <p>Phone: 03 9613 6222 or 1800 806 314 (Regional)</p> <p>Visit: https://www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au/</p> <p>Access the complaints form here.</p>
Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA)	<p>The VRQA is the regulator for Child Safe Standards compliance in Schools</p> <p>Phone: +61 3 9637 2806 (from 9:00 am–5:00 pm, Monday–Friday)</p> <p>Email: vrqa@education.vic.gov.au</p> <p>Visit: https://www2.vrqa.vic.gov.au/</p> <p>Access the complaints form here.</p>
Quality Assessment and Regulation Division (QARD)	<p>QARD in the Department of Education and Training, is the regulator for early childhood education and care providers (such as registered childcare centres)</p> <p>Phone: 1300 307 415 between 9.00am - 5.00pm Monday to Friday.</p> <p>Email: quality.assessment.regulation@education.vic.gov.au .</p> <p>Access the complaints form here.</p>
Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH)	<p>DFFH is the regulator for out-of-home care providers (amongst other services)</p> <p>Email: child.safeguarding@dffh.vic.gov.au</p> <p>Visit: https://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/publications/child-safe-standards.</p>
Department of Health	<p>The Department of Health is the regulator for health services, including mental health services, drug and alcohol treatment services (amongst other services)</p> <p>Email: childsafestandards@health.vic.gov.au.</p> <p>Visit: https://www.health.vic.gov.au/chilsafestandards</p>
Wage Inspectorate Victoria (WIV)	<p>WIV is the regulator for organisations that employ children and hold a licence under the <i>Child Employment Act 2003</i> (Vic)</p> <p>Phone: 1800 287 287.</p> <p>Visit: https://www.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards-employing-children</p> <p>Access the complaints form here.</p>
Social Services Regulator (SSR)	<p>Social Services Regulator (SSR) is the Victorian regulator for providers of disability services, housing services, family violence and</p>

	<p>sexual assault services, and support services for parents and families. They also regulate out of home care services.</p> <p>Visit: https://www.vic.gov.au/ssr-reporting-notifiable-incident</p> <p>Access the complaints form here.</p>
NDIS Quality & Safeguards Commission	<p>This Commission is an independent agency established to improve the quality and safety of NDIS supports and services. It regulates NDIS providers, promotes safety and quality, resolves problems and identifies areas for improvement.</p> <p>Phone: 1800 035 544</p> <p>Visit: www.ndiscommission.gov.au</p> <p>Access the complaints form here</p>
Victorian Disability Worker Commission (VDWC)	<p>The VDWC can receive any enquiry, complaint or notification about any disability worker in Victoria.</p> <p>Phone: 1800 497 132</p> <p>Visit: www.vdwc.vic.gov.au</p> <p>Access the complaints form here.</p>
Appeal Costs Board	<p>The Appeal Costs Board is responsible for the administration of the Appeal Costs Act 1998. The Board serves a function similar to that of a compensation tribunal: in certain circumstances it may partially compensate litigating parties who suffer loss through incurring legal costs arising from judicial error or other special circumstances for which the litigating party is not responsible.</p> <p>Email: acb@justice.vic.gov.au</p> <p>Address: Secretariat Support to the Appeals Cost Board, Level 24, 121 Exhibition Street Melbourne VIC 3000</p>
Asset Confiscation Operations	<p>Asset Confiscation Operations manages the confiscation and disposal of property connected to crime.</p> <p>Email: confiscations@justice.vic.gov.au</p> <p>Telephone: 03 9137 9000</p> <p>Post: GPO Box 36A Melbourne VIC 3001</p>
Community Safety Building Authority (CSBA)	<p>The Community Safety Building Authority (CSBA) designs, procures, builds and upgrades infrastructure to keep the Victorian community safe.</p> <p>Mail: Community Safety Building Authority, Department of Justice and Community Safety, GPO Box 4356, Melbourne VIC 3000</p> <p>Tel: 03 8684 0000</p>
Coronial Council of Victoria	<p>The Coronial Council Secretariat is the first point of contact for all matters relating to the operation of the Victorian coronial system.</p> <p>Email: coronial.council@justice.vic.gov.au</p>

	Post: C/- The Secretariat, Level 24, 121 Exhibition Street Melbourne VIC 3000
Fines Victoria	<p>Fines Victoria is a Victorian Government administrative body established to manage the administration and enforcement of infringement fines and court fines across Victoria.</p> <p>Telephone: 03 9200 8222</p> <p>Website: https://online.fines.vic.gov.au/ (External link)</p> <p>Postal address: GPO Box 1916 Melbourne VIC 3001</p> <p>Street address: Ground level, 277 William Street Melbourne VIC 3000</p>
Freedom of Information Unit	To request access to documents held by the Department of Justice and Community Safety, contact the Department's Freedom of Information Unit or make a request online .
Honorary Justice Services Support	<p>Honorary Justice Services Support is responsible for appointing and managing honorary justice volunteers, a group consisting of Justices of the Peace and Bail Justices.</p> <p>Email: jp@justice.vic.gov.au</p> <p>Telephone: 03 9136 3415</p> <p>Postal address: GPO Box 4356 Melbourne VIC 3000</p>
Information Privacy Unit	<p>The Information Privacy Unit manages the handling of personal information at the Department of Justice and Community Safety and can assist with enquiries from the public about information management by the Department.</p> <p>Email: privacy@justice.vic.gov.au (External link)</p> <p>Telephone: 03 8684 0178</p> <p>Street address: Level 24, 121 Exhibition Street Melbourne VIC 3000</p>
Koori Justice Unit	<p>The core role of the Koori Justice Unit (KJU) is to develop and support improved and equitable justice outcomes for the Aboriginal community.</p> <p>Email: koori.justice@justice.vic.gov.au</p> <p>Street address: Level 30, 121 Exhibition Street Melbourne VIC 3000</p>
Regional Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committees	<p>Established throughout Victoria to develop and implement regional justice plans for the Aboriginal community.</p> <p>Website: https://www.aboriginaljustice.vic.gov.au/regional-aboriginal-justice-advisory-committees</p>
Liquor Control Victoria (LCV)	<p>The Victorian Liquor Commission regulates Victoria's licensing, sale and supply of liquor.</p> <p>Email: contact@liquor.vic.gov.au</p> <p>Telephone: 1300 182 457</p> <p>Website: https://www.vic.gov.au/liquor-licensing</p>

	<p>Postal address: PO Box 1019 Richmond North VIC 3121</p>
<p>Sheriff's Office Victoria</p>	<p>Sheriffs are officers of the Court who take action against people who do not comply with their debt-related court orders.</p> <p>Telephone: 03 9200 8222</p> <p>Postal address: GPO Box 1916 Melbourne VIC 3001</p> <p>Street address: Ground Level, 277 William Street Melbourne VIC 3000</p>
<p>Victims Support Agency</p>	<p>The official Victorian Government service offering free information and support for people affected by crime.</p> <p>Email: vsa@justice.vic.gov.au</p> <p>Telephone: 03 8684 6700</p> <p>Toll free: 1800 819 817 (Victims of Crime Helpline)</p> <p>Website: https://www.victimsofcrime.vic.gov.au/</p>
<p>Courts and Tribunals</p>	<p>Courts and tribunals can make binding and enforceable determinations. You may want to seek legal advice about the option of pursuing your complaint at court if it relates to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compensation (including workers compensation claims); • development application decisions; • orders made by local councils; • decisions, fines and orders of regulators and licensing authorities; and • disputes over expert assessments.

Need help?

Organisations that can help you make your complaint, provide support or advocacy or give you more information

Organisation	Contact Details	How they can help
DJCSV	Website: https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/ Telephone: 03 8684 0000 or 1300 365 111 (for regional callers)	You can contact the DJCSV directly if you have any further questions or need assistance with your complaint.
Translating and Interpreter Service	Website: www.tisnational.gov.au Telephone: 131 450	Provides interpreting and translation services for people if English is not their first language.
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.
1800 RESPECT	Website: 1800respect.org.au/ Telephone: 1800 737 732	Provides support for people who have experienced violence and abuse. They also provide information for people supporting someone who is experiencing violence and abuse.
Beyond Blue	Website: beyondblue.org.au/ Telephone: 1300 224 636	Provide support for people experiencing anxiety, depression and mental illness.
Kids Helpline	Website: https://kidshelpline.com.au/ Telephone: 1800 551 800	Provides support for children and young people.

Self-help tools and additional resources

Resource	How this helps
Where to make a complaint	Guidance from DJCSV on how to make a complaint.
Law Society: Know Your Rights	Guidance for individuals who are uncertain about where to start when seeking legal advice.
Call It Out	Online register for racism/discrimination experienced or witnessed towards First Nations Australians. Not an official complaints body.