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.

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.

Department of Communities (WA)

In this fact sheet, we introduce the Department of Communities (WA) (**DoC**). We outline how complaints can be made by any person to the DoC.

The DoC provides services and support to people, children, young people, families and communities in Western Australia. Its complaints process can cover concerns about DoC services, products, staff, complaint handling and operations, including child protection, children in care, disability services or supports provided by DoC, and other current DoC service areas.

Legislation and Key Terms

Relevant Legislation: Below are links to legislation that is relevant to the work of the Department of Communities (WA).

- Child protection
  - *Adoption Act 1994* (WA)
  - *Children and Community Services Act 2004* (WA)
  - *Working with Children (Screening) Act 2004* (WA)
- Community services
  - *Carers Recognition Act 2004* (WA)
  - *Child Care Services Act 2007* (WA)
  - *Education and Care Services National Law (WA) Act 2012* (WA)
- Disability services
  - *Declared Places (Mentally Impaired) Act 2015* (WA)
  - *Disability Services Act 1993* (WA)
  - *National Disability Insurance Scheme (Worker Screening) Act 2020* (WA)
- Volunteering
  - *Volunteers and Food and Other Donors (Protection from Liability) Act 2002* (WA)

Key terms:

Advocate: A person who supports another person to make a complaint or makes a complaint on their behalf. DoC may require signed consent before it can share information with an advocate.

Care Plan: A plan made by the CEO of the DoC for a child under section 89(2) of the Children and Community Services Act 2004 (WA).

Care Plan Review Panel: A separate statutory review pathway for certain care planning decisions about a child in the CEO's care. It is not the same as making an ordinary complaint to DoC.

Carer: A person who provides care for a child under a placement arrangement.

Central Intake Team: The DoC contact point for concerns about the wellbeing or safety of a child. This is separate from making an ordinary complaint about DoC service delivery.

Child: A person who is under 18 years of age.

Complaint: An expression of dissatisfaction made to or about an organisation in relation to its products, services, staff or the handling of a complaint, where a response or resolution is expected, either explicitly or implicitly, or is legally required.

Complainant: A person who has made a complaint, or an advocate who has made a complaint on behalf of another person.

Complaints Management Unit (CMU): The DoC unit that receives and assesses complaints and decides whether a matter should be declined, referred for early resolution, handled as a Tier One complaint, or handled as a Tier Two complaint.

Department of Communities (WA) / DoC: The Western Australian Department of Communities.

Department of Housing and Works: The Western Australian department now responsible for public housing and related housing complaint pathways following the transfer of housing functions from DoC from 1 July 2025.

Disability: For the purposes of the Disability Services Act 1993 (WA), disability means a disability that is attributable to an intellectual, psychiatric, cognitive, neurological, sensory or physical impairment, or a combination of those impairments; is permanent or likely to be permanent; may or may not be chronic or episodic; and results in substantially reduced capacity for communication, social interaction, learning or mobility and a need for continuing support services.

Early resolution: A process where a matter may be sent back to the relevant DoC district, region or business unit to try to resolve the issue without entering the formal complaints process.

Funded or contracted service: An external service provider that is funded or contracted by DoC to deliver a service. Complaints about these services may need to be raised with the provider first before DoC assesses whether it can take further action.

Public Housing: Rental housing provided by the Western Australian Government to eligible households. Public housing complaints are generally now Department of Housing and Works matters, not ordinary DoC complaints.

Public Interest Disclosure (PID): A separate protected disclosure pathway for reporting certain public sector wrongdoing. It is not the same as making an ordinary service complaint to DoC.

Respondent: The person, service area, business unit, district, region, staff member, funded service or agency whose conduct, service, decision, complaint handling or operation is the subject of the complaint.

Senior Complaint Investigator: A CMU officer who investigates Tier Two complaints.

Tier One complaint: A formal complaint assessed by the CMU and usually sent to the relevant DoC district, region or business unit for investigation and response.

Tier Two complaint: A further or elevated complaint investigation handled by a Senior Complaint Investigator in the CMU. A Tier Two investigation may occur if the person remains

dissatisfied after Tier One, or where the matter is complex, contentious, urgent, involves a conflict of interest, or is a complaint from a child or young person.

Young person: A person aged 10 to 25 years old.

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

The DoC may receive and investigate a broad range of complaints, including:	
Sub-category	**Example**
Children and young people's complaints about Communities' involvement or care *Children and Community Services Act 2004 (WA)* ss 7, 10, 21	**You should make a complaint if you are a child or young person and you are unhappy, worried, feel unsafe, want something fixed or explained, or want something changed about something Communities has done or is responsible for.** This includes complaints by children and young people in out-of-home care about a service they are getting, a service they think they should have received, how they have been treated, where they live, something that has made them feel unhappy or unsafe, or Communities not doing something about a problem. *Examples:* • *Mia is 13 and living in a foster placement arranged by Communities. She tells her case worker that two older children in the home threaten her at night and she does not feel safe, but she says nothing has changed.* • *Noah is 10 and living in residential care. His care arrangements say he can speak with his sister twice a week, but staff keep cancelling the calls and do not explain why.* • *Aaliyah is 16 and in out-of-home care. She has asked her case manager what support she will get before leaving care, but no one has explained a leaving-care plan or helped her prepare.* • *Kai is 12 and living in a Communities-arranged placement. He says there is often not enough food after school, and his case worker has not told him what will be done about it.* • *Tahlia is 15 and in care. She says Communities moved her to a new placement without explaining the reason in a way she understood or asking what she wanted.*
Child protection and children-in-care complaints about Communities' services, staff or decisions *Children and Community Services Act 2004 (WA)* ss 21, 89, 93	**You should make a complaint if your issue is about Communities' child protection work, a child in care, a Communities staff member, a service provided by Communities, or the way Communities handled a child protection complaint.** This may include concerns from a parent, carer, family member, foster carer or other involved person about case handling, communication, delay, support, contact, placement, care arrangements or staff conduct. *Examples:* • *Sophie's son is in out-of-home care. Communities changes his contact arrangements with his grandmother, and Sophie says the case worker has not explained the reason or told her how she can raise concerns.* • *Daniel is a foster carer for a child in the CEO's care. He has repeatedly asked the district office to arrange an overdue*

	specialist medical appointment and provide updated care information, but no one responds. • *Leanne is a parent in a child protection matter. She says a child protection worker spoke to her in a threatening way during a home visit, and the district office did not respond when she raised the staff conduct issue.* • *Omar's family was receiving support from Communities after child-safety concerns. The matter was closed, but Omar says no one explained what assessment was done or why the support stopped.* • *Grace is a kinship carer. Communities has delayed a case-planning meeting for months, leaving the child's school, contact and counselling arrangements unclear.* • *Morgan made a child protection complaint to Communities and says the complaint was not acknowledged or handled properly.*
Child safety, wellbeing, abuse, neglect and mandatory child sexual abuse reports *Children and Community Services Act 2004 (WA)* ss 28, 124B	**You should report a concern if you are worried that a child or young person in WA is unsafe, being abused or neglected, exposed to family violence, abandoned, or not receiving adequate care or treatment.** This is not the same as making a complaint about Communities. General wellbeing concerns go to the Central Intake Team, professional child-safety referrals use the Professional Referral pathway, and mandatory reporters must report reasonable beliefs of child sexual abuse to Communities. Life-threatening concerns should go to police on 000. *Examples:* • *Claire lives next door to two young children who are often left alone overnight, and there appears to be no safe adult caring for them.* • *Ms Chen is a teacher in WA. A student tells her about sexual abuse by an adult at home, and Ms Chen forms a reasonable belief that she must make a mandatory report.* • *Nina is a nurse in a hospital emergency department. She is worried that a baby may be unsafe at home because of serious family violence and untreated substance misuse in the household.* • *Jay works at a youth service. A 15-year-old tells him their parent has left WA and they have no safe place to stay.* • *Michael coaches a junior sports team. One child has repeated unexplained injuries, becomes frightened when it is time to go home, and says they are scared of a person in the household.*
Disability services and supports from Communities, including	**You should make a complaint if you are unhappy with a disability service or support you have received from Communities, or with how Communities has handled your disability service complaint.**

restrictive-practice concerns where Communities has a role	This may include service quality, delay, communication, staff conduct, complaint handling, or concerns connected to Communities' role in WA's authorisation framework for restrictive practices. If the issue is about an NDIS-funded provider's service quality or safeguarding obligations, the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission may be the better pathway. Some health or disability service complaints may also need HaDSCO. *Examples:* • *Ella receives disability support from Communities. Her rostered support regularly does not arrive, leaving her without help for essential daily tasks.* • *Sam's parent is told a WA disability provider is locking Sam's food cupboard as part of a behaviour support plan, but no one can explain whether the restrictive practice has gone through the WA authorisation process.* • *Priya lodged a complaint with Communities about a disability support issue and says she has not been contacted or told whether her complaint is being looked at.* • *Aisha's carer says a Communities disability service worker spoke disrespectfully to Aisha during support visits and then dismissed the family's complaint without explaining the outcome.* • *Jordan asked Communities for information about their disability support complaint in an accessible format, but the response was delayed and they still cannot understand what is happening.*
Education and care service regulatory concerns handled by ECRU *Education and Care Services National Law (WA) Act 2012; Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012*	**You should report a concern to ECRU if your complaint is about an approved education and care service and relates to legal or regulatory requirements.** This includes concerns about educator qualifications, educator-to-child ratios, children's supervision, or matters affecting children's health, safety and wellbeing at the service. ECRU encourages people to try resolving the matter with the service first unless the matter is serious, has not been satisfactorily addressed, or the person does not feel comfortable raising it directly. *Examples:* • *Bella's father says Little Tides Long Day Care Centre, an approved service in WA, repeatedly leaves toddlers unsupervised in the outdoor yard while educators are inside.* • *Naveen works at an outside school hours care service. He says the service regularly operates with too few educators for the number of children, and management tells staff not to record the ratio problem.* • *Amara's parent says an approved childcare service is not following Amara's anaphylaxis management plan, and the approved provider dismissed repeated written concerns.*

	• *Erin says a family day care service is allowing a person who is not properly qualified or approved to supervise children alone.* • *Grace says an approved service has broken climbing equipment in the playground, but children continue to use the area despite repeated reports to management.* • *Tom says an outside school hours care service left a child unattended on a bus after transport, and the service did not appear to follow its incident response process.*
Screening/check complaints, feedback, appeals or disputes — WWC Check and NDIS Check	**You should make a complaint, give feedback, or use the relevant review, appeal or dispute pathway if your issue is about a Working with Children Check or an NDIS Worker Screening Check handled by a Communities screening unit.** For NDIS Checks, Communities has pathways for complaints, formal complaints, appeals, disputes and feedback. A formal complaint can be made where a person is concerned or dissatisfied with an aspect of the NDIS Check. If the issue is about review of an NDIS Check decision or a criminal record dispute, use the appeals/disputes process rather than a general service complaint. For WWC Checks, the WWC Screening Unit can deal with complaints about aspects of a WWC Check, including customer service, personal information, website issues and timely feedback about application status. *Examples:* • *Amir lodged an NDIS Check in WA. The Screening Unit gave him inconsistent information about what documents were needed and then stopped responding to his enquiries.* • *Priya received an NDIS Check decision from the WA Screening Unit and wants to use the review or dispute process rather than make a general service complaint.* • *Marcus says the criminal record information used in his NDIS Check appears to include a charge that belongs to someone else, and he wants to dispute that record.* • *Thomas says his WWC Check renewal was treated as withdrawn even though he provided the requested information on time, and he wants the Screening Unit to check the application status and explain what happened.* • *A childcare employer checks the WWC online validation system and says an employee's card status appears incorrect, even though the employee has shown a current WWC Card.* • *Hannah says the WWC Check website will not let her check the status of her application, and she cannot get timely information from the Screening Unit.*

	• *Sarah says the WWC Screening Unit sent information about her application status to an old employer after she had updated her contact and employment details.*
General Communities service, staff, complaint handling, website or operations complaints	**You should make a complaint if your issue is about another Communities service, product, staff member, complaint-handling process, website/technical issue, or aspect of Communities' operations that is not better covered by one of the more specific pathways above.** This residual pathway is for general complaints and feedback about Communities. It should not be used where the issue is more specifically about child protection, a child or young person in care, disability services from Communities, ECRU, WWC Check, NDIS Check, or housing now handled by the Department of Housing and Works. *Examples:* • *Rina contacted Communities about an emergency relief referral and says she was repeatedly given contradictory information about what help was available.* • *Grace contacted a Communities family and domestic violence support pathway and was told someone would call her back urgently, but no one followed up.* • *Baljit's community organisation applied for a Communities-administered grant and says uploaded documents were lost and staff have not responded to follow-up emails.* • *Alex tried to lodge a general Communities complaint online, but the webform failed repeatedly and there was no clear way to report the technical problem.* • *Morgan complained to Communities about a service issue and says the complaint itself was not acknowledged or handled properly.* • *Lara contacted Communities about a homelessness support referral and says staff kept transferring her between teams without explaining who was responsible for responding.*
Exclusions	**Do not use this Communities pathway for current public housing complaints**. From 1 July 2025, Communities' housing functions moved to the Department of Housing and Works, which now has the current public housing complaints pathway. Private rental matters should not be routed to Communities. This includes public housing complaints, disruptive behaviour reports about public housing properties, housing maintenance, public housing tenancy management, and public works / procurement.

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

Jurisdiction	Description
State	The DoC has the power to hear complaints under the law of Western Australia.
Geographical Scope	The DoC can receive and handle complaints in relation to matters in Western Australia.
Time Limitations	Generally, the DoC will not investigate complaints that are over 12 months old without good reason for a delay in making the complaint. This is at the discretion of DoC.
Exclusions	There are some aspects of complaints that the DoC is unable to deal with. It cannot, for example: • change care plan decisions (these are addressed by the Care Plan Review Panel); • change decisions that the judge at a court made about you and your family; • manage a complaint about the death of a child or service user (these are addressed by the Coroner's Office of Western Australia); • change decisions made by the Adoptions Application Committee; • deal with a matter that is subject to a court or legal process; • deal with a matter where there is an existing internal or external appeal or review process; • deal with potential criminal matters (these must be reported to the Police); • deal with complaints and/or grievances from DoC employees (these should be referred to the Line manager, Employee Relations, or Misconduct Assessment Team); • deal with decisions and actions of the Working with Children Check regarding the issuing of notices (these are addressed using the Working with Children Complaints Resolution Process); and • change decisions about referring a person to Centrelink for Income Management (these are reviewed by district director).

Step 3: Who can you make a complaint against?

Respondent	Description
Department of Communities	You can complain about Communities as an agency where the issue is about a Communities service, product, staff conduct in a service context, complaint handling, or another aspect of its operations.
District, region or business unit	A complaint may relate to the district, region or business unit responsible for the service, action, response or decision. Tier One

Respondent	Description
	complaints are generally sent to the relevant district, region or business unit for investigation and response.
Communities staff, in a service-delivery context	You can complain about staff conduct where the issue is connected to the service you received, how you were treated, or how your complaint was handled. Suspected employee misconduct is not handled through the ordinary complaints process and is referred to the Misconduct Assessment Team.
Funded or contracted external services	You may be able to raise a complaint involving an external agency or service funded or contracted by Communities. The Complaints Management Unit will assess whether the issue is about the funded service, Communities, or both, and which area is best placed to respond.
Exclusions	You cannot make a complaint to the DoC against an employee of the DoC for suspected employee misconduct. This complaint must be addressed through the Misconduct Assessment Team at Misconduct.Assessment@communities.wa.gov.au.

Step 4: Are you eligible to make a complaint?

Eligibility	Description
Who can make a complaint?	Anyone can make a complaint to the DoC. Communities also expressly welcomes complaints from children and young people.
Pre-requisite steps	There are no pre-requisite steps which you need to take before making a complaint to the DoC. However, where it is appropriate to do so, the DoC recommends that you attempt to resolve your complaint first with the relevant body or agency.
Can complaints be made on behalf of someone?	Yes – complaints can be made by the complainant themselves, with a support person, or by an advocate making the complaint on the complainant's behalf. If using an advocate or support person, ensure you provide signed consent for them to act on your behalf and for the DoC to share information with them.
Exclusions	**DoC employee grievances or misconduct matters** DoC employees should not use this ordinary complaints process for employment grievances or suspected employee misconduct matters. These should be addressed through the relevant line manager, Employee Relations, or the Misconduct Assessment Team at Misconduct.Assessment@communities.wa.gov.au. **12 months or older**

Eligibility	Description
	Your complaint may also be declined if it is regarding a matter that is over 12 months old and you do not have good reason for a delay in making the complaint.

Step 5: What remedies are available at this body?

Power	Description
Early resolution	Some matters may be referred back to the relevant district, region or business unit for early resolution without entering the formal complaints process. This may be used for issues not yet discussed with the relevant area, simple or minor issues, or urgent issues where formal complaint timeframes are not practical.
Opportunities for service improvement	A complaint may lead to opportunities for service improvement. Communities treats complaints as part of continuous service improvement, not only individual dispute resolution.
Safety or criminal referral	If a complaint raises safety concerns or criminal matters, Communities may forward the matter to the Central Intake Team, the relevant district, region or business unit, police or another agency as appropriate.
What the process cannot guarantee	The complaint process does not guarantee a particular remedy, compensation, staff discipline, reversal of a court or tribunal decision, or a change to a decision that has a separate statutory review pathway.
Additional information	You may withdraw a complaint, or the complaint may be resolved before or during investigation. The Complaints Management Unit should confirm withdrawal or resolution in writing, but may continue investigating a withdrawn complaint if warranted.

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

Requirement	Description
Format	You can generally make a complaint via an online form or telephone, and sometimes by email, post and in person. See **step 7** for further information on the specific methods of how complaints can be made. If you require translation or interpretation assistance, you can call the Translating and Interpreting Service on 131 450. If you are deaf or find it hard to hear or speak to hearing people on the phone, you can use the National Relay Service. • TTY/voice calls: 133 677 • Speak and listen: 1300 555 727 • SMS relay: 0423 677 767

Requirement	Description
Personal Details	In submitting a complaint via the online forms, the DoC requires the following personal details: • first and last name; • email (not for housing complaints); • postal address (only for housing complaints); and • phone number (only for housing complaints).
Anonymous complaints	Anonymous complaints can be received and assessed. However, Communities cannot provide the outcome to an anonymous complainant, and anonymity may limit what Communities can do if it cannot contact the person for more information.
Relevant Facts	Children and Young People Complaints The DoC may ask you to: • Identify the Communities service, office, work unit, district, region, funded service or staff member involved, if you know this • Explain clearly what happened, when it happened, who was involved, and why you are unhappy, worried, or want something fixed or explained • Include what you have already done to try to resolve the issue, including any contact with the service, office, case manager, funded service or relevant business area • Say what you think should be done to fix the problem, explain the decision, improve the service, address the concern, or help you understand what happened • Attach copies of relevant documents if you have them, and keep the originals. Useful material may include letters, emails, care-related documents, previous complaint responses, notes of conversations, dates, names and reference numbers
What NOT to include	Do not include false or misleading statements.
Additional information you need to know	Tell Communities if you need an interpreter, a support person, accessible communication, help using the phone, culturally appropriate support, or another adjustment.

Step 7: Lodging your complaint and next steps.

Step	Description
Where to lodge your complaint	Children and Young People Complaints **Online form**: Department of Communities - Children and young people complaints and feedback

Step	Description
	Telephone (free call): 1800 333 325 **Post**: Complaints Management Unit Department of Communities Locked Bag 5000 Fremantle, WA, 6959
	Child Protection and Children in Care Complaints **Online form**: Department of Communities - Child protection complaints and feedback **Telephone** (free call): 1800 333 325 If you have concerns for the wellbeing or safety of a child, you should contact the Central Intake Team on 1800 273 889 **In person**: Child protection office locations can be found here
	Disability Complaints **Online form**: Department of Communities - Disabilities complaints and feedback **Telephone** (free call): 1800 333 325 (select option 3 (disability)) **Email**: CLO@communities.wa.gov.au **Post**: Department of Communities Locked Bag 5000 Fremantle, WA, 6959
	General Complaints **Online form:** Department of Communities - General complaints and feedback **Telephone:** 1800 333 325 (select the relevant option) **Post:** Department of Communities Locked Bag 5000 Fremantle, WA, 6959
Receipt/ acknowledgement of complaint	Children and Young People Complaints The DoC will call you back. When they call you, the number will appear as 'private'.
	Child Protection and Children in Care Complaints & General Complaints After you lodge the form, you will be contacted by a member of the Complaints Management Unit within two (2) working days to discuss your complaint. When they call you, the number will appear as 'private'.

Step	Description
	If you do not receive a return call, you can contact the DoC on 1800 333 325. This is a free call.
	Disabilities Complaints The director, manager or their delegate will call or send you an email in two (2) working days to acknowledge receipt of your complaint and obtain further information prior to investigation. If they call you, the number may show as 'private number' or 'no caller ID'. If you do not answer, they will leave you a message.
Assessment/ investigation	The Complaints Management Unit assesses complaints to decide whether the matter should be declined, referred for early resolution, lodged as a Tier One complaint, or lodged as a Tier Two complaint. • **Tier One investigation:** For child protection, disability and general complaints, the relevant designated officer should contact the complainant or advocate within seven working days of allocation, consider relevant information, and provide an outcome letter within 21 working days from lodgement. • **Tier Two investigation:** If you remain dissatisfied after Tier One, you can request a Tier Two investigation by the Complaints Management Unit. The Senior Complaint Investigator may speak with the complainant or advocate, speak with other relevant parties, review documents, consider policies and procedures, and prepare an outcome letter and internal investigation report. • **Priority Tier Two matters:** Complaints from children and young people are elevated directly to Tier Two and allocated to a Senior Complaint Investigator within two working days. Tier Two complaints from approved foster carers are prioritised, and urgent or contentious Tier Two complaints may also be prioritised.
Additional information you need to know	If urgent Police assistance is required, please call 000. A complaint may be withdrawn or resolved before or during investigation. Communities should confirm withdrawal or resolution in writing, but may continue an investigation without the complainant's active involvement if warranted.

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

Avenue	Description
Internal escalation to Tier Two	If you are not satisfied with a Tier One outcome, you can ask the Complaints Management Unit for a Tier Two investigation. Tier One complaints where there has been more than a 12-month delay in requesting escalation to Tier Two may be excluded unless there is a compelling reason for the delay.

Avenue	Description
External review	If you remain unhappy with the Tier Two response, or want to take the complaint outside the Department, you can contact **Ombudsman WA**. Ombudsman WA will generally encourage people to use Communities' Tier One and Tier Two process before Ombudsman enquiries or investigation. **Telephone**: (08) 9220 7555 **Website:** www.ombudsman.wa.gov.au You also may wish to consider obtaining legal advice.
Disability external complaint avenues	If the complaint is about disability services provided by Communities, external avenues may include HaDSCO. If the supports are NDIS-funded, the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission may also be relevant.
Care Plan Review Panel	If the issue is a reviewable care planning decision for a child in the CEO's care, the Care Plan Review Panel is the separate statutory pathway. It is not an ordinary complaint outcome. If you are not satisfied with the CEO's decision after the Care Plan Review Panel process, you may be able to apply to the State Administrative Tribunal for a further review. Time limits apply, and the Tribunal may have power to extend time.
Public interest disclosure	A public interest disclosure is a separate protected disclosure pathway for certain public sector wrongdoing, such as misconduct, offences, misuse of public resources, or risks to public health or safety. It should be made to an appropriate PID officer and should not be treated as an ordinary service complaint.

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

Complaint body	Description
Crisis Care	**Crisis Care** offers support in Western Australia for reported concerns regarding a child's safety and wellbeing, as well as information and referrals for individuals in crisis. If you are experiencing Family and Domestic Violence, you may also contact Crisis Care to discuss accommodation assistance and support services. **Telephone** (free call): 1800 199 008
Health and Disability Services Complaints Office	The **Health and Disability Services Complaints Office (HaDSCO)** can handle complaints about the health, mental health or disability service (not provided by the NDIS) you have received. In the first instance, try talking to your service provider, but if your problem is not resolved, or you feel you cannot approach them directly, you can lodge a complaint with the HDSCO. **Online form:** https://www.hadsco.wa.gov.au/Make-a-Complaint

Complaint body	Description
	Telephone: (08) 6551 7600 **Email:** mail@hadsco.wa.gov.au **Post:** PO Box B61, Perth WA 6838 **In person:** Reception Desk, Albert Facey House 469 Wellington Street, Perth WA 6000
National Disability Insurance Scheme Quality and Safeguards Commission	If you are receiving NDIS funded services from the DoC, you can also make a complaint regarding these services to the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission. **Online form:** https://forms.business.gov.au/smartforms/servlet/SmartForm.html?formCode=PRD00-OCF **Telephone** (free call)**:** 1800 035 544 **Website:** www.ndiscommission.gov.au
Care Plan Review Panel	The **Care Plan Review Panel** can review decisions that are made as part of a care plan for children in the care of the CEO of the DoC.[1] However, the Panel cannot review decisions made by the courts or decisions made as part of a provisional care plan, or points in a care plan covered in areas that outline identified needs of the child. A completed application form must be posted or emailed. For more information, click here.
Women's Domestic Violence Helpline	The **Women's Domestic Violence Helpline** provides support to women, with or without children, who are experiencing family and domestic violence in Western Australia. It is a 24-hour service and can provide information and advice, referral to local advocacy and support services, liaison with police if necessary, assessing the child's experience, and support in escaping situations of family and domestic violence. **Telephone** (free call): 1800 007 339
Men's Domestic Violence Helpline	The **Men's Domestic Violence Helpline** provides telephone information and referrals for men who are concerned about their violent and abusive behaviours, as well as for male victims of family and domestic violence in Western Australia. **Telephone** (free call): 1800 000 599
Working with Children Complaints Resolution Process	You may wish to complain about an aspect of a **Working with Children Check**, including: • the quality of customer service; • how your personal information is handled; • the website; and

[1] *Children and Community Services Act 2004* (WA)

Complaint body	Description
	• access to timely feedback about the status of an application. However, you cannot make a complaint via this process about the processing of applications, investigations or audits, and you cannot make anonymous complaints. You also cannot apply to have a decision reviewed – this is handled by the State Administrative Tribunal. For more information, click here.
Australian Human Rights Commission	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 your sex, disability, race, age or sexual preference, the AHRC may be able to help. There are also State Government discrimination complaint bodies who may also be able to assist.
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 OAIC can also review freedom of information decisions that are made by Australian Government agencies and ministers. There are also State Government privacy and information complaint bodies who may also be able to assist.
National Anti-Corruption Commission	The **National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC)** handles complaints about serious or systemic corruption in the Australian Government public sector. There are also a State Government corruption complaint bodies who may also be able to assist.
Additional information you need to know	Sometimes you may need to work with more than one government agency to resolve different parts of your complaint.

Need help 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
Department of Communities WA	**Website**: Department of Communities **Email**: enquiries@communities.wa.gov.au **Telephone**: 1800 176 888 **Post:** Locked Bag 5000 Fremantle, WA, 6959	You can contact the DoC directly if you have any further questions or need assistance with your complaint.
The Advocate for Children in Care	**Website:** Advocate for Children in Care **Telephone** (free call): 1800 460 696 **Mobile:** 0429 086 508 **Email:** advocate@communities.wa.gov.au	Offers support to children and young people in care (and their relatives, friends, carers or involved professionals) to assist them with problems or concerns they may have that they cannot work out with their case worker. They can: • listen and help them say what they want to say and help get adults to listen; • provide information and advice about having a decision reviewed or making a complaint if they believe the decision is wrong; • provide information about what children and young people are entitled to, and how they should be treated; and • speak to people in authority about what young people say works or does not work in their lives.
Translating and Interpreter Service	**Website**: https://www.tisnational.gov.au/ **Telephone**: 131 450	Provides interpreting and translation services for people if English is not their first language.
Aboriginal Interpreting WA	**Website:** Aboriginal Language Interpreting Service - AIWAAC **Telephone:** 1800 330 331	Provides translation and interpreting services in over 40 WA Aboriginal languages.

	Email: bookings@aiwaac.org.au **Post:** Yawuru Buru PO Box 3599 Broome, WA, 6725	
National Relay Service	**Website**: www.accesshub.gov.au **TTY/voice calls**: 133 677 **Speak and listen**: 1300 555 727 **SMS relay**: 0423 677 767	Provides a range of services to support people who are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment to communicate.

Self-help tools and additional resources

Resource	How this helps
Children and young people – make a complaint	A list of frequently asked questions for children and young people about making a complaint to the DoC.
Complaints Kit – Child protection matters	Guidance on how to make a complaint related to child protection matters.
Complaints management policy	The complaints management policy of the DoC.
Call It Out	Online register for racism/discrimination experienced or witnessed towards First Nations Australians. Not an official complaints body.
Law Society: Know Your Rights	Guidance for individuals who are uncertain about where to start when seeking legal advice.