

The agency will manage the response to the complaint

In most circumstances the agency will manage the process to resolve your complaint as the agency is likely to know the situation. Once you make a complaint you will be advised who at the agency will work with you to find a solution and how to contact them. You should talk to this person about the supports available to assist you to engage in the complaint management process for example, a support person, interpreter or assistive technology.

What is the timeframe for my complaint to be resolved?

The Diocese expects that each agency will work to resolve complaints as quickly as possible and in the best interests of the people involved. The agency will consult with you on a pathway to resolve the complaint that is appropriate for the concerns raised and provides reasonable timeframes for actions to be completed.

If the agency is unable to respond to your complaint the agency will tell you where you may refer your concerns.

What you may expect from the agency?

The agency will treat you with dignity and respect and work with you to resolve the complaint as effectively, efficiently and quickly as possible. The agency will be objective and impartial in the assessment of your complaint and take all reasonable steps to maintain your privacy. The agency will work with you to reach a satisfactory resolution to the complaint.

What the agency may expect from you?

That you communicate constructively, respectfully and in the spirit of partnership throughout the complaint resolution process and model this positive behaviour for other people who may be involved.

What information will I receive when my complaint is resolved at the agency?

When the complaint is resolved at the agency you may be provided with feedback relevant to you and the management of the complaint. You may also receive information about how to refer your complaint to the Diocese should you not be satisfied with the agency response.

Options for review within the Diocese

If you are not satisfied with the agency response you may refer the complaint to the Complaint Management Service at the Diocese by phone 1300 461 831 or email feedback@mn.catholic.org.au. A Resolution Officer may then review what has happened and consider options to resolve the complaint including by agreement or by Administrative Review. Information about the process for Administrative Review is available at www.mn.catholic.org.au/about/policies

Options for review external to the Diocese

You may refer the complaint to a relevant organisation external to the Diocese however, you are encouraged to raise your concerns with the Diocese first. External agencies that may be relevant include the NSW Ombudsman www.ombo.nsw.gov.au and the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission www.humanrights.gov.au



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PO Box 756 Newcastle NSW 2300

P 1300 461 831

E feedback@mn.catholic.org.au

www.mn.catholic.org.au

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How to make a complaint



The Diocese is committed to providing across its agencies a fair, effective and efficient complaint management process that is consistent with the Catholic Social Teachings.

A diocesan agency provides a service on behalf of the Diocese, for example systemic schools and St Nicholas centres.

You may provide feedback or make a complaint directly to the agency involved in person, by phone, by email or letter or through the online complaint form at www.mn.catholic.org.au or by scanning the QR code.



What can I complain about?

You may make a complaint about a service offered by the Diocese, a diocesan worker or the handling of a complaint.

What should I include in my complaint?

When making a complaint you should provide a brief explanation of your concerns and provide enough information to determine the best way to resolve the concerns.

You may consider:

- ▶ What happened and where did this take place?
When did it occur (date and time) and who were the people involved?
- ▶ Did anyone else witness what happened?
Have you included their details?
- ▶ Are there any relevant emails, letters or documents?
If these are in your possession you should provide a copy.
- ▶ Any action already taken to resolve the concerns?
- ▶ Any other information relevant to the circumstances leading to the complaint?
- ▶ What you think is needed to resolve your complaint?



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1. PREPARE THE COMPLAINT

Consider:

- what happened?
- where and when?
- details of any witnesses.
- relevant documents or emails.
- information relevant to the circumstances leading to the complaint.
- options for the complaint to be resolved.



2. CONTACT THE AGENCY

(for example, school)

You may do this by:

- talking with a staff member you feel comfortable with,
- telephone,
- email or letter,
- using the online form by scanning the QR code in this brochure.



3. WORK WITH THE AGENCY TO RESOLVE YOUR CONCERNS

- Tell the Agency if there is a person you prefer to work with to resolve the complaint.
- A person will be allocated to work with you to find a satisfactory solution.
- Tell this person if you require support for example a support person or interpreter.
- Work with the Agency to resolve the complaint as effectively, efficiently and quickly as possible.
- Model constructive and respectful communication as you work with the Agency to address the concerns.
- Consider whether dispute resolution may be beneficial.



4. CONTACT THE COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT SERVICE FOR SUPPORT

- A Resolution Officer at the Diocese can support you to work with the Agency to resolve the complaint
- The Resolution Officer is impartial and will work to facilitate the Agency process to resolve the complaint by offering support to both you and the Agency
- A referral to the Complaint Management Service may be made by contacting a Resolution Officer by phone 1300 461 831 or email feedback@mn.catholic.org.au



5. REFERRAL OUTSIDE OF THE AGENCY

A complaint may be referred to the Diocesan Complaint Management Service when:

- there is a conflict of interest, concern about reprisal or the complaint is about senior leadership, or
- options for resolution at the Agency have been exhausted and the complaint is not resolved.

The Diocesan Complaint Management Service will work to close the complaint by:

- agreement, including by dispute resolution conference if this is appropriate, or
- Administrative Review please see the Safeguarding Framework Policy www.mn.catholic.org.au/about/policies



6. EXTERNAL REVIEW OPTIONS

- You may refer the complaint external to the Diocese however, you are encouraged to raise your concerns with the Diocese first.
- External agencies that may be relevant include the NSW Ombudsman www.ombo.nsw.gov.au and the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission www.humanrights.gov.au