



20 March 2026

Tēnā koe

**Official Information Act request**

Thank you for your email of 4 February 2026, requesting guidance on the handling of complaints.

I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Please find my decision on your request set out below.

Please find the attached **Appendix** for internal guidance and policies for complaint handling.

I will be publishing this decision letter, with your personal details deleted, on the Ministry's website in due course.

If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact [OIA\\_Requests@msd.govt.nz](mailto:OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz).

If you are not satisfied with my decision on your request, you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi nui

pp.

Anna Graham  
**General Manager**  
**Ministerial and Executive Services**

# Handling complaints

How to lodge a complaint, types of complaints, what to do with complaints around certain units/lines and how to manage them.

- ❗ All complaints for Emergency Housing (supplier or occupant) must be assigned to the relevant regional office - do not assign these to individual case managers.

You may get calls from people wanting to make a complaint. This could be for a variety of reasons including (but not limited to):

- how long it took us to answer their call
- a staff member providing insufficient information
- how long it took to get back to them about something
- an emergency housing supplier or occupant.

Clients have the right to make a complaint and have the matter looked into. We take all complaints seriously and aim to learn from them. We'll also try to make sure the same thing doesn't happen again. The caller may be happy to discuss their issue with you when they make the complaint, allowing you to resolve it immediately. If not, you must lodge it in old HIYA.

## ✓ Complaints for Remote Services Unit | Government Helpline | Fraud Investigation | Emergency Housing | Whiteware

### Remote Services Unit

Any RSU clients must be transferred to them on **Out of Scope** RSU clients can leave a voicemail, their complaint will be followed up by the unit. If they call outside of business hours, tell them to call back Monday - Friday, 8.30am - 4.30pm. Don't add the complaint in old HIYA.

### Government Helpline

Any complaints received on the Government Helpline should be recorded in the Government Helpline template. This gives visibility for any trends that may develop by working with other agencies but is not our issue to resolve.

The only complaints that should be lodged are ones about services provided through the Government Helpline or our response to the event.

## Fraud Investigation

If a client wants to make a complaint about a letter asking them to provide information, in the first instance please refer them to the Investigator who has sent the request. The investigator's name will be on the letter in CMS.

- If the client wants to lodge a complaint about information gathered for a previous fraud case, please refer them to the 'How to make a complaint about the investigation' section of [Fraud and investigations - Work and Income](#)
- Complaints about the right to gather information about a client (use of Schedule 6 powers) can also be lodged with the Office of the Privacy Commissioner or with the Ministry's internal Privacy Team.

## Emergency Housing

All complaints for Emergency Housing (supplier or occupant) must be assigned to the relevant regional office in old HIYA - do not assign these to individual case managers.

Make sure you choose the most accurate complaint type e.g. there are 10 emergency housing specific complaint types to choose from.

**Important:** If it's a complaint about an Emergency Housing occupant, please do not add any client information (first/last name, address, client number or contact number) into the form – leave these fields blank to maintain privacy.

## Whiteware

If the client has a complaint about a whiteware appliance or the service they have received, check they have raised this with the supplier first.

If the complaint is still unresolved:

1. lodge this in HIYA
2. complete the CMS note 'Hardship whiteware complaint' with as much detail as possible (issue, complaint number, etc)
3. copy and paste the CMS note into an email and forward to **Out of Scope** This team will then investigate the complaint with the whiteware supplier and provide the site with an outcome to complete HIYA.

The gatekeeper will assign the complaint to the client's office.

**More information:** [Complaints process involving preferred whiteware suppliers - Doogle](#)

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## ✓ How to lodge a complaint in HIYA



A complaint is not a Review of Decision (ROD). These have their own guidelines and processes.

Step	Process
1.	<p><b>Access old HIYA Complaint Management System</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. open your <a href="#">HIYA web browser</a></li><li>2. login<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• username - your CNP login</li><li>• password - your password</li></ul></li></ol>
2.	<p><b>Record the complaint</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Complete the form to record all details of the complaint <b>Important:</b> If it's a complaint about an Emergency Housing (EH) occupant, please do not add any client information (first/last name, address, client number or contact number) into the form – please leave these fields blank to maintain privacy.</li><li>2. Make sure you choose the most accurate complaint type eg there are 10 emergency housing specific complaint types to choose from. When selecting the site involved in the complaint:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ assign all EH supplier complaints to the relevant regional office</li><li>◦ assign all other complaints to the relevant service centre, regional office or unit - Do not assign to National Office, Contact Centre Operations, etc</li><li>◦ if you're unsure where the complaint should go, assign it to your site and the Gatekeeper who will determine where it's best to go.</li></ul></li><li>3. click 'submit' once you have finished.</li></ol> <div data-bbox="279 1370 1469 1778" style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 10px;"><p><b>Important</b></p><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• all information recorded must be professional. If the client has used abusive language, don't add this to the complaint. Just record that the client has used abusive/threatening/rude language</li><li>• if the complaint is about an individual, don't put their name in the details section. If you need to refer to them, please put their role eg, customer service representative or case manager (there is a separate section where you can add the name).</li></ul></div>
3.	<p><b>Complaint number</b></p> <p>Once you click 'Submit', a box will pop up with the HIYA complaint number.</p> <p>You need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• write this number down</li><li>• tell the client</li></ul>

- add it to a CMS note under 'General Engagement'

If you don't write the number down, you can search for it in the complaints list - it will be assigned to your site, with the date and time it was submitted. You can check by clicking on 'V'.

#### 4. Sign Off

Once the complaint has been submitted, the site gatekeeper who receive a system generated email to follow up and re-assign if necessary.

The assigned person will look into the complaint and update it as appropriate. Once the complaint has been resolved, you will receive an email (you don't have to do anything with this).

## ✓ Types of complaints

Complaints can be made verbally or in writing and can lodged with CSRs, services centres, regional or national office. All complaints must be lodged in the HIYA complaints system and then assigned to the correct place.

Complaint Type	Definition	Example
Action Taken	Complainant is not happy about the action a staff member has taken as it's caused hardship or distress to the client.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• staff member changes a client's appointment time without talking with the client first</li> <li>• client was referred to an inappropriate seminar</li> </ul>
CE Correspondence (National Office only)	<p>A complaint is made to the Chief Executive (CE) about a service received from MSD.</p> <p>This correspondence is formally lodged with Ministerial and Executive Services in National Office. There are strict timeframes for providing a written response in order for the letter to be sent from the CE.</p> <p>If a client requests the CE email suggest they are supplied with the feedback form <b>first</b>. This is the best way to make sure complaints are</p>	<p>More information: <a href="#">Ministerial and Executive Services</a></p>

	<p>sent to the right place. If this does not satisfy the client, have a chat with a manager to see if they can help alleviate the callers concerns.</p> <p>If this fails, then they can direct their concerns via email to:  <a href="mailto:Debbie_power@msd.govt.nz">Debbie_power@msd.govt.nz</a></p>	
<p><b>Confidentiality</b></p>	<p>Complainant states their information hasn't been kept confidential.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• personal information was discussed and overheard by nearby staff and clients</li> <li>• personal information has been released without the client's consent e.g. family members, third parties <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ client could see personal information of other clients on the desk when they came in</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Designated Health Practitioner OR Medical Appeals Board Member</b></p>	<p>A complaint about a designated health practitioner or medical practitioner on a medical appeals board.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Manner</b> e.g. practitioner was abrupt, rude or didn't give their case due consideration</li> <li>• <b>Conduct</b> - e.g. practitioner behaved or said something inappropriate</li> <li>• <b>Decision</b> - e.g. client is unhappy about</li> </ul>

		<p>a health practitioner's decision.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> this becomes a matter for the <a href="#">Medical Appeals Board</a>.</p>
<b>Environment</b>	A complaint about a service centre / community link's appearance or functionality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• not accessible to public transport / free parking</li> <li>• no suitable access for disabled clients</li> <li>• site is dirty / smells / dead plants</li> <li>• site is operating on skeleton staff due to planning or training</li> </ul>
<b>Information Provided</b>	Complainant is unhappy with information provided by staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• staff member has insufficient product / process knowledge</li> <li>• client wasn't offered appropriate advice or service</li> </ul>
<b>Interpersonal Skill / Staff Attitude</b>	Complaint about a staff member's attitude, manner or demeanour.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• client felt belittled during an appointment</li> <li>• staff member was abrupt on the phone or on reception</li> <li>• staff member wasn't listening to the client</li> </ul>
<b>Policy / Legislation /</b>	Complaint about the policy or processes used by Work and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• unhappy about opening hours</li> </ul>

<b>Procedural</b> (This is not a Review of Decision)	Income.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>feels a policy is incorrect / unfair / wants to change</li> </ul>
<b>Technology</b>	Complaints about delay in payments that have been caused by a system delay/fault in service provided due to system outages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>delayed payments from SWIFTT</li> <li>delays in answering calls at the contact centre</li> </ul>
<b>Timeliness</b>	Complaint about a delay in getting a service or decision from Work and Income.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>benefit application hasn't been granted and it is passed the expected timeframe.</li> <li>staff member hasn't responded to a client's voice mails / emails</li> </ul>
<b>Emergency Housing (EH)</b>	A complaint about an emergency housing supplier or occupant.	For examples, see <a href="#">Complaints from an EH Supplier or EH Occupant - Doogle</a>

Feedback

## Complaints Overview and Management

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This provides you with information about receiving, recording and managing complaints.

On this Page:

### What is a complaint?

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A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, usually about service, staff, behaviour or the environment. Complaints that relate to specific service received should not be dealt with by the person concerned, although the person concerned should be given an opportunity to provide an explanation.

A complaint can be made verbally, through the online complaint form on our website, or in writing. Complaints can be lodged with contact centres, service centres, regional offices or national office and should always be recorded in the [old HIYA system \[http://hiya/Default.jsp\]](http://hiya/Default.jsp).

**Note** a complaint is not a review of decision; these have their own guidelines and processes.

The link below provides you with definitions and examples of the types of complaints you may receive. These are also available via a link directly on the lodging a complaint form in the HIYA Complaints Management System.

[Complaint types, definitions and examples \[http://doogie/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/work-and-income/core-procedures/complaints/complaint-types-definitions-and-examples.html\]](http://doogie/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/work-and-income/core-procedures/complaints/complaint-types-definitions-and-examples.html)

### Where are complaints recorded?

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While complaints can be received through multiple channels, they should all be recorded in the HIYA Complaints system. This allows recording and managing of a complaint from receipt to resolution.

Standards about how to manage a complaint have also been developed.

Complaints should be recorded even if they can be resolved immediately.

Providing a central and standard complaint process supports Service Excellence. Service Excellence is an agreed set of standard practices and processes used to deliver service to Work and Income clients, resulting in a professional and consistent service.

[Our Client Commitments \[http://doogie/business-groups/helping-clients/service-delivery/strategy-and-change/client-commitments/client-commitment-overview.html\]](http://doogie/business-groups/helping-clients/service-delivery/strategy-and-change/client-commitments/client-commitment-overview.html)

### Timeliness Standards

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A complaint must be:

acknowledged within 24 hours (unless it is resolved within that time).

fully investigated and resolved within 5 working days, unless there is a good and sufficient reason for the delay.

Where there is a delay, the client must be kept informed of progress.

### Who manages complaints?

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A complaint can be received and recorded by any person (or through the online complaint form on the [Work and Income website \[https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/about-work-and-income/complaints/index.html\]](https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/about-work-and-income/complaints/index.html)). The webform will route the complaint to a person within the clients region. They will ensure it is sent to the correct place. Generally this person will lodge the complaint to HIYA for the appropriate unit. Exceptions to this will be where the complaint:

If the complaint is in relation to the Contact Centre service or staff, please lodge in HIYA to the relevant Contact Centre and assign to the region's Contact Centre liaison manager.

Sensitive matters that may need to be escalated to HR or a Senior Manager

Non-complaints (i.e., requests for Hardship assistance; questions) - which can be booked to Q-Manager as an appointment.

Once it is recorded it will automatically be assigned to a gatekeeper or designated person. The gatekeeper or designated person will be responsible for managing the complaint from the time it is received until the time it is resolved.

Gatekeepers or designated people are generally:

**Service Centre** - Manager Client Service Delivery or Manager Client Service Operations

**Regional Office** - Executive Assistant to the Regional Director

**Contact Centres and Processing Units** - Service Manager Client Service Support or specifically assigned gatekeepers  
**National Office** - will vary depending on department

Gatekeepers and designated persons may assign the complaint to a more appropriate person to resolve, however they are still responsible for the complaint until it is resolved.

## Assessing and logging a client complaint

If a complaint is received, then the following steps should be taken:

Step	Action	Links
1.	<p>Initial assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the complaint need to be escalated immediately (e.g. threat of harm to self or others)?</li> <li>If yes, go to step 2.</li> <li>If no, continue.</li> <li>Do we need more information?</li> <li>If yes, email the submitter to request more information.</li> <li>If no, continue to step 3.</li> </ul>	
2.	<p>Ensure you complete the following to escalate the complaint appropriately.</p> <p>Threats of self-harm:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact the manager(s) of the local Service Centre for a welfare check to be arranged (by Police) immediately.</li> <li>Ensure the complaint is lodged in HIYA and assigned to the appropriate manager.</li> </ul> <p>Threats to staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Email the following people/teams immediately: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manager(s) for the Service Centre, or Unit</li> <li>Regional Director - or Senior Manager (Manager Contact Centre Services/Manager Centralised Services)</li> <li>Health, Safety and Security and IT Security teams at National Office</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Threat to contact media outlets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Email the following people/teams immediately <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="https://doogle.ssi.govt.nz/business-groups/helping-clients/service-delivery/teams/dce-office.html">DCE Office Service Delivery [https://doogle.ssi.govt.nz/business-groups/helping-clients/service-delivery/teams/dce-office.html]</a></li> <li><a href="https://doogle.ssi.govt.nz/business-groups/organisational-assurance-and-communications/comms-and-engagement/media-team.html">Media [https://doogle.ssi.govt.nz/business-groups/organisational-assurance-and-communications/comms-and-engagement/media-team.html]</a></li> <li>Manager(s) for the local office(s)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Next, continue to step 3 regarding the complaint itself.</p>	Recording incidents in STAR
3.	<p>For complaints about our Contact Centre or Processing Units, is the staff member been identified?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If yes, continue to step 4.</li> <li>If no, refer to <a href="https://doogle.ssi.govt.nz/community/display/HIYA/Contact+Centre+liaison+guide">Contact Centre Services [https://doogle.ssi.govt.nz/community/display/HIYA/Contact+Centre+liaison+guide]</a> to confirm staff member details (or, speak with your Manager) and continue to step 4.</li> </ul>	
4.	<p>Lodge details in HIYA. An email will be sent to the gatekeeper of the assigned site.</p> <p><a href="http://doogle/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/work-and-income/core-procedures/complaints/hiya-instructions-for-complaints.html">Process on how to log a complaint in HIYA [http://doogle/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/work-and-income/core-procedures/complaints/hiya-instructions-for-complaints.html]</a></p>	

## Managing and resolving a complaint

Complaints will be reviewed and resolved by a manager or gatekeeper. The process is detailed on a separate page on Doogle.

[Process to manage, resolve and sign-off complaints \[http://doogle/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/work-and-income/core-procedures/complaints/resolving-and-signing-off-a-complaint.html\]](http://doogle/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/work-and-income/core-procedures/complaints/resolving-and-signing-off-a-complaint.html)

## Complaints from Emergency Housing Occupants or Suppliers

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Complaints about EH suppliers and/or EH occupants are managed by Regional Managers or a delegated person.

For more information see:

[EH Supplier \(Complainant\) Complaint Process \[http://doogle/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/social-housing/eh-suppliers-complainant-complaints.html\]](http://doogle/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/social-housing/eh-suppliers-complainant-complaints.html)

[EH Occupant Complaint Process \[http://doogle/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/social-housing/eh-occupant-complaints-process.html\]](http://doogle/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/social-housing/eh-occupant-complaints-process.html)

## Complaints for Youth Service (Youth Payment and Young Parent Payment)

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Youth Service complaints are generally managed by one of the following:

Youth Services Support Unit (YSSU)

Service Provider

Regional Contracts Manager

Service Centre Manager

For more information see:

[Complaints process for Youth Service \[http://doogle/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/work-and-income/core-procedures/complaints/complaints-process-for-youth-service.html\]](http://doogle/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/work-and-income/core-procedures/complaints/complaints-process-for-youth-service.html)

## Complaints about Preferred Suppliers (Whiteware; Glasses)

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The complaints process about a preferred supplier for Hardship Assistance will depend on what the issue is. For more information see:

[Complaints process involving whiteware suppliers \[http://doogle/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/work-and-income/core-procedures/complaints/complaints-process-involving-preferred-whiteware-suppliers.html\]](http://doogle/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/work-and-income/core-procedures/complaints/complaints-process-involving-preferred-whiteware-suppliers.html)

## Reporting and monitoring

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### Monitoring

Complaints must be regularly monitored by gatekeepers and designated staff to ensure that standards are met, with an emphasis on quality, accuracy and timeliness.

### Reporting

A report can be obtained from HIYA at any time and can provide information about complaint types, outstanding complaints and/or signed off complaints.

You can also monitor trends and other information by exporting the standard HIYA complaint report to 'csv' format. From this you can report on all data that is captured when a report is lodged.

Managers should regularly monitor for trends so that improvements can be made.

Automated reporting from HIYA is currently being developed and will be available from this page in 2008.

## HIYA Complaint types, definitions, and examples

This page provides examples of complaint types found in the HIYA Complaints Management System. A definition and example of each complaint type is provided to help you determine what your complaint is about so it can be recorded correctly. Recording complaints correctly assist with reporting and managing complaints.

<b>Complaint Types</b>	<b>Definitions and examples</b>
<b>Action Taken</b>	<p><b>Definition</b></p> <p>The person making the complaint is not happy about the action the staff member has taken as it caused hardship or distress.</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff member changes an appointment the client made and now attending at the new time will cause hardship and distress (eg childcare/transport issues).</li> <li>• Staff member referred the client to an inappropriate seminar.</li> </ul>
<b>Confidentiality</b>	<p><b>Definition</b></p> <p>A complaint about keeping a client's information confidential</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A client complains that they were unhappy about their personal details being overheard by nearby staff and clients.</li> <li>• A client complains that they could see the names and details of other clients on the desk where they were being interviewed for a benefit.</li> <li>• A client complains that their benefit details have been discussed with other family members without their consent.</li> </ul>
<b>Designated Health Practitioner</b>	<p><b>Definition</b></p> <p>A client complains about a designated health practitioner or a health practitioner on a medical appeals board.</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manner - a client complains about the health practitioner's manner e.g. they were abrupt or rude or did not give their case due consideration.</li> <li>• Conduct - a client complains that the health practitioner behaved or said something inappropriate.</li> <li>• Decision - a client complains that they are unhappy about a health practitioner's decision. <b>Note:</b> This becomes a matter for the medical appeals process.</li> </ul> <p><b>Process for managing designated health practitioner complaints</b>  <a href="https://doogle.ssi.govt.nz/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/work-and-income/core-procedures/complaints/complaints-about-designated-doctors.html">[https://doogle.ssi.govt.nz/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/work-and-income/core-procedures/complaints/complaints-about-designated-doctors.html]</a></p>

<b>Environment</b>	<p><b>Definition</b></p> <p>A complaint about a Work and Income service centre's appearance or functionality, where it is situated and its appearance.</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A client complains about there being no accessible public transport or a free public car park close to the service centre.</li> <li>• A complaint about a service centre not having suitable access for the disabled.</li> <li>• A client complains that the service centre was dirty with dead pot plants and a terrible odour.</li> <li>• Sites away planning or training and operating with skeleton staff.</li> </ul>
<b>Information provided</b>	<p><b>Definition</b></p> <p>A complaint about a staff member not having sufficient knowledge or not offering the appropriate advice or services.</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A client complains that when they applied for benefit the staff member could not advise them the date they would be entitled to a benefit and the amount they would be receiving.</li> <li>• A client complains that when they phoned Work and Income enquiring on their entitlement to supplementary assistance, the person they spoke to was very vague and not helpful.</li> </ul>
<b>Interpersonal skills / staff attitude</b>	<p><b>Definition</b></p> <p>A complaint about a staff member's manner, attitude, or demeanour.</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A client complains that they felt belittled by a staff member when applying for a food grant.</li> <li>• A complaint about a staff member who was abrupt on the phone or at reception.</li> <li>• A complaint about the staff member not listening to the client.</li> </ul>
<b>Policy / Legislation / Procedure</b>	<p><b>Definition</b></p> <p>Client complains about the policy and processes used by Work and Income. (Note: this is not a review of decision).</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Client dissatisfied with the requirement to provide identification at application.</li> <li>• Client not happy about the hours we are open.</li> </ul>
<b>Technology</b>	

	<p><b>Definition</b></p> <p>Client complains about the delay in payments that have been caused by a system delay/fault or delay in service provided due to system outages.</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delayed payments from SWIFTT.</li> <li>• Delay in answering calls at the contact centre.</li> </ul>
<b>Timeliness</b>	<p><b>Definition</b></p> <p>A complaint about a delay in receiving a service or decision from Work and Income.</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A client phones as they lodged their application for benefit a fortnight ago and has not had a response.</li> <li>• A client queries why the staff member has not responded to several voice messages left on their answerphone.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Emergency housing occupant complaint types</b></p>	
<p><b>Emergency Housing Occupant</b></p> <p>Safety Concerns</p>	<p><b>Definition</b></p> <p>A complaint about the safety of the motel that the EH occupant is staying in.</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EH occupant complains that they feel unsafe around staff and/or other guests.</li> <li>• EH occupant complains that they feel unsafe or concerned about the environment, e.g. no outside lighting or broken or unsafe facilities.</li> <li>• EH occupant complains that they feel unsafe from other individuals, e.g. they've received unwanted contact from ex-partners or family or are concerned about general public loitering.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Emergency Housing Occupant</b></p> <p>Substandard property conditions</p>	<p><b>Definition</b></p> <p>A complaint about the condition of the property.</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EH occupant complains about unsanitary or unclean rooms.</li> <li>• EH occupant complains about insects or bugs.</li> <li>• EH occupant complains about broken or damaged equipment or furniture.</li> <li>• EH occupant complains about lack of amenities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Emergency Housing Occupant</b></p> <p>Poor customer Service</p>	<p><b>Definition</b></p> <p>A complaint about the service provided by the motel.</p>

	<p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EH occupant complains about the staff member's manner e.g. staff member was abrupt or rude.</li> <li>• EH occupant complains that the staff behaviour was inappropriate.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Emergency Housing Occupant</b> Other</p>	<p><b>Definition</b></p> <p>Any other complaints which do not fall under the complaint types outlined for emergency housing occupants.</p>

### Emergency housing supplier complaint types

<p><b>Emergency housing supplier (Complainant)</b> Occupant behaviour</p>	<p><b>Definition</b></p> <p>A complaint about the occupant's manner, attitude or behaviour</p> <p><b>Example:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EH supplier complains about the occupant's manner e.g. occupant was abusive or abrupt to motel staff</li> <li>• EH supplier staff complains that the occupant's behaviour was inappropriate.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Emergency housing supplier (Complainant)</b> Safety Concerns</p>	<p><b>Definition</b></p> <p>A complaint about the safety of the EH supplier staff</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EH supplier complains that they feel unsafe around the occupant due to ongoing behavioural issues eg occupant continuously aggressive</li> <li>• EH supplier complains that they feel unsafe from other individuals who are associated with the occupant e.g. visitors of the occupant are aggressive towards staff or gang affiliated.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Emergency housing supplier (Complainant)</b> Theft / loss of property</p>	<p><b>Definition</b></p> <p>A complaint about property from the motel being lost or stolen.</p> <p><b>Example:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EH suppliers concerned that artefacts or furniture is going missing from occupant rooms</li> <li>• EH suppliers staff complained about their property going missing e.g. shoes, bags, jewellery, phones, or other items.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Emergency housing supplier (Complainant)</b> Other</p>	<p><b>Definition</b></p> <p>Any other complaints which do not fall under the complaint types outlined for Emergency housing suppliers (complainant).</p>



## Assessing and logging complaints in HIYA

If you receive a complaint, the following process must be followed so the complaint can be managed from receipt to resolution.

Stage	Steps	Tools & Forms
<b>Access HIYA Complaints Management System</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There are three ways to access HIYA:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Start Button &gt; Menu System &gt; HIYA &gt; HIYA Live</i></li> <li>• In the location bar in Doogole, type <i>HIYA</i> and press <i>ENTER</i></li> <li>• From the link in an email if you are accessing a complaint that is already lodged.</li> </ul> <p>Or use this link - <i>(Old) HIYA</i> [<a href="http://hiya/Default.jsp">http://hiya/Default.jsp</a>].</p> </li> <li>2. Log in to <a href="http://hiya/Default.jsp">HIYA</a> [<a href="http://hiya/Default.jsp">http://hiya/Default.jsp</a>]. Use your CNP Login, e.g. jblog001 and enter the password. The password will be the same password you use to access your calendar.</li> <li>3. From the menu bar, select <i>Complaint</i>.</li> </ol>	
<b>Record a complaint</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Select <i>Lodge Complaint</i> from the Complaints homepage. This can also be selected from the menu bar.</li> <li>5. Complete the form to record all the details of the complaint.  Ensure that you enter as much detail as possible. Remember that clients can request copies of their personal information, so ensure the information you enter is appropriate. If a staff member is the subject of a complaint, do not enter their name in the details section; there is a separate field for this which links to the Global directory.  You may also add attachments to the complaint, e.g. a scanned copy of the complaint and/or other relevant information.</li> <li>6. If necessary, <i>Secure</i> the complaint at the time it is lodged. Only managers can un-secure complaints.</li> <li>7. Submit the form. If you have not completed compulsory fields, an error message will appear.</li> </ol>	
<b>System actions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. A unique identifier number is allocated to the complaint. You should note this number as you may need it when searching for and updating complaints later.  If you don't keep the number, you are able to search for the complaint from the complaint list - see step 10.</li> <li>9. An email notification will automatically be sent to the gatekeeper or designated person as soon as the complaint is submitted. It will specify the required response time and provide a link to the complaint where it can be viewed, assigned or updated.  Keep the email until the complaint is resolved as this is the easiest way to access the complaint again.</li> </ol>	

Stage	Steps	Tools & Forms
Assign or reassign the complaint	<p>The email notification is system generated, so you can not respond to it.</p> <p>10. The complaint is added to the Complaints List. You can search in this list and it can also be filtered from the links in the <i>Form</i> column. Each individual complaint can be assigned/updated, viewed and sign-off by selecting the appropriate letter link:</p> <p><b>A - Assign / Update</b></p> <p><b>V - View details</b> (you can view all the complaint details)</p> <p><b>S - Sign-off</b> (this may only be completed when the complaint is resolved)</p> <p>11. Gatekeepers or designated people will receive the complaint as soon as it is loaded. They may reassign the complaint to a more appropriate person to resolve.</p> <p>If you need to reassign the complaint to another staff member in another site you need to identify that site using the <i>site</i> selection field before assigning the right person. If you leave the <i>Assigned to</i> field empty, the complaint will automatically assign to the gatekeeper or designated person at the new site.</p> <p>12. Add a comment to the <i>Update comment</i> field to explain the actions you have taken.</p> <p>13. Click the <i>Update</i> button.</p>	
Add updates	<p>14. Use the <i>Update comment</i> field to record all progress towards resolving the complaint.</p> <p>15. Click the <i>Update</i> button at the bottom of the screen.</p>	
Record the resolution	<p>16. Resolve the complaint as soon as possible. If it is not resolved within 5 working days it will be automatically escalated to your manager.</p> <p>See the full resolution process - <a href="http://doogie/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/work-and-income/core-procedures/complaints/resolving-and-signing-off-a-complaint.html">Resolve and sign-off a complaint</a> (<a href="http://doogie/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/work-and-income/core-procedures/complaints/resolving-and-signing-off-a-complaint.html">http://doogie/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/work-and-income/core-procedures/complaints/resolving-and-signing-off-a-complaint.html</a>).</p> <p>17. Record the outcome in the <i>Resolution Detail</i> field.</p> <p>18. Add notes into the client's record in CMS to outline what their complaint was and what the resolution has been.</p>	
Sign-off	<p>19. Click the <i>Sign-off</i> button.</p> <p><b>Note</b> Although a complaint may be signed-off, you can still update the complaint using the <i>Update comment</i> field at any time.</p>	<p><a href="http://doogie/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/work-and-income/core-procedures/complaints-landing-page.html">Complaints index</a> (<a href="http://doogie/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/work-and-income/core-procedures/complaints-landing-page.html">http://doogie/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/work-and-income/core-procedures/complaints-landing-page.html</a>)</p> <p><a href="http://doogie/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/work-and-income/core-procedures/complaints/resolving-and-signing-off-a-complaint.html">Resolve and sign-off a complaint</a> (<a href="http://doogie/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/work-and-income/core-procedures/complaints/resolving-and-signing-off-a-complaint.html">http://doogie/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/work-and-income/core-procedures/complaints/resolving-and-signing-off-a-complaint.html</a>)</p>

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## Managing and resolving a complaint

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This page provides you with information on how to resolve and sign off a complaint in the HIYA complaints management tool along with a list of outcomes you will need to select.

On this Page:

### Acknowledging the complaint

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A complaint must be acknowledged in writing if it can not be resolved within 24 hours of receipt. When a complaint is acknowledged the letter must explain the next step of the process and advise when a reply can be expected, particularly if the resolution may take more than five days.

The following can be used as a template to acknowledge the complaint:

Thank you for your (letter/phone call/email) of (date) about (summarise complaint details).

Work and Income or [Name of Youth Service Provider] (delete one) is currently investigating the issue you have raised. You will receive a response as soon as possible.

If you have any questions regarding this you can phone (name of staff investigating complaint) on (enter phone number).

### Investigating a complaint

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The person to who the complaint is assigned will obtain all relevant information and investigate the complaint fully. If the complaint involves a staff member, the staff member may need to provide a written explanation.

If the investigation reveals that staff actions were inappropriate, staff training or performance management may be appropriate.

The complaint record in HIYA should be updated as progress is made. Keep the person who made the complaint informed if the resolution is likely to take more than five days.

### Contacting the complainant

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MSD should attempt to contact the complainant, where necessary (for example, anonymous complaints will not be able to be contacted), to resolve the complaint. MSD should attempt contact several times to provide opportunity for resolution.

Contact should be made through the complainants preferred contact method (which is noted on HIYA). A general guideline should be that MSD should make contact at least three times, at different times of the day.

Where the complainant is unable to be contacted, then correspondence must be sent to the complainant. This should be sent to the complainant to their preferred contact method (i.e., email or letter, dependent on their preference, or in voice mail if no other contact details are known).

#### ECS Letter to be sent to complainant:

The letter can be found in CMS (ECS) Letters. Ideally this should be sent from a client's record so that it can be retained on their record if follow-up is made. To access the letter, from the client's record:

select, '...' on the top-right hand corner.

select, 'New Letter'

in the filed, 'Letter Template name' find, 'Complaint No Contact letter'

select, 'Next' and ensure the address is correct and select 'Save'

select, 'Launch ECS Letter'

enter relevant information about the complaint and your contact details in the fields

#### If client prefers e-mail, use the template below:

Kia ora [name],

We received your complaint on [date] for [reason].

We attempted to contact you on [date], [date] and [date] by [phone, email or phone and email] to discuss this further.

[If we have made action - Since receiving your complaint, we have ...]

As we have not been able to contact you, we have closed the complaint.

If you wish to discuss this complaint with us, please contact me directly on [phone or email - do not use contact centre number].

Nāku iti noa, nā  
[manager name]  
[manager title]

## Escalations

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If a complaint is not resolved within five working days it automatically escalates to the immediate manager of the person assigned to the complaint. This will not occur if a good and sufficient reason for the delay has been recorded as an *update* in HIYA, prior to the expiry date.

While a complaint is unresolved, *update* HIYA to reflect any progress.

**Note** in the case of absence or if a complaint is made against a designated person or gatekeeper, the complaint should be assigned to that person's immediate manager.

## Recording a resolution

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When a complaint is lodged in HIYA it is important to resolve the complaint as soon as possible.

Complaints should be resolved within five working days, if it is not resolved within five working days it will be automatically escalated to your manager who will become the assigned person. If it is still not resolved within another five working days, it will escalate to the Regional Director and the following week to the Regional Commissioner.

All complaints received by National Office are assigned to the Service Centre in the region where the complaint was lodged.

To enter the Complaint Assign/Update screen to record a resolution select the 'A' (Complaint Assign/Update) icon. This screen is used to record the progress towards resolution.

You can extend the expiry date by changing the date in the **Response Expected By** field.

You can reassign the complaint to another site or person by using the drop down arrows beside the 'Site' field or 'Assigned to' field.

When finished click on the **update** button at the bottom of the screen to save and enter your details.

## Sign-Off a complaint

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To record the outcome and prevent escalation of the complaint you must 'sign off' the complaint. To do this you need to select the 'Sign Off' icon (S).

Complete the following mandatory fields:

### Is the complaint valid?

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Determine whether the complaint lodged is valid. Do we have notes recorded in CMS? Did the complainant talk to staff or the EH supplier or the EH occupant? Was the complaint substantiated? Then in the HIYA Complaint tool, select from one of the following:

Yes  
No  
Unknown  
Error

### How did we advise the complainant?

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In the HIYA Complaint tool, select from one of the following:

Telephone  
Cellphone  
Letter  
Email  
Face to face

### Outcome (Select one of the following):

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You need to ensure you select the most appropriate outcome when resolving the complaint. This is important for reporting purposes.

<b>Outcome reason</b>	<b>Example</b>
<b>Resolved - complainant satisfied</b>	The complainant is satisfied with the outcome and the complaint is closed
<b>Resolved - complainant dissatisfied</b>	The complaint has been investigated and closed off; however, the complainant is not satisfied with the response or outcome.  <b>Note:</b> If the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution and wishes to progress it further, then the complaint should be recorded in HIYA as a new complaint. This will then be managed by the immediate manager of the person who initially resolved the complaint.  The complainant needs to be given details of where the complaint has been escalated to and who they can contact.
<b>Resolved - complainant satisfied ROD</b>	The complainant is satisfied with the response however, they still request a Review of Decision. An example could be a single male with no children applying for a Sole Parent Support Benefit. The complainant understands why we cannot grant a Sole Parent Support Benefit however, they wish to pursue the BRC process to challenge our policy/legislation.
<b>Unresolved - complainant dissatisfied ROD</b>	The complainant is not satisfied with the response and would like to submit a Review of Decision.
<b>Error</b>	Complaint closed – complaint was added in error and has been closed off.
<b>Closed - Lack of representation</b>	Complaint closed - lack of information. Have tried to contact the complainant to discuss the complaint but with no response.
<b>Closed - Message Left</b>	Complaint investigated and issue resolved. Closed off after trying to contact the complainant to advise them of the outcome. Left a message for the complainant to contact us.
<b>EH complaints – No Further Action</b>	The complaint required no further action as issue was resolved.
<b>EH complaints – Client Relocated</b>	The complaint was investigated, and the occupant has been relocated to another EH supplier or private accommodation.
<b>EH complaints – Police Notified</b>	The complaint was investigated, and the incident was referred to Police for further investigation. <b>Note:</b> In some circumstances due to safety concerns, the Police were called immediately.
<b>EH complaints – Local Council Notified</b>	This outcome reason should only be selected if you are resolving a complaint from an EH occupant about a EH supplier  <b>Example –</b> The complaint was investigated, due to ongoing concerns with the condition of the property, the EH supplier was referred to the regional council for further investigation.
<b>EH complaints - Withdrawn</b>	The complainant has decided to withdraw the complaint. Complaint is closed.
<b>EH complaints - Unsubstantiated</b>	The complaint was investigated and the allegations were not substantiated therefore complaint is closed.

### **What action have you taken as a result of the complaint?**

This section is a free text box field, you can outline your actions in this field. You will need to ensure the information you enter is appropriate and relevant.

Examples of an action taken to sign-off a complaint may include:

- talking to the complainant
- talking to the complainant's case manager
- talking to the EH supplier
- reviewing the complainants file/record
- paying arrears
- providing a Review of Decision form
- Notified Police and client relocated

Although a complaint may be signed-off, you can still update the complaint using the Update comment field at any time.

To end click the **'Sign Off'** button.

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## Complaints process involving preferred whiteware suppliers

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This page provides you with information on the complaints process involving preferred whiteware supplier.

On this Page:

The process for complaints about the preferred supplier depends on what the issue is. The document below provides a high level view of the complaints process involving preferred whiteware suppliers.

[Whiteware complaints process map \(PDF 34.3KB\) \[http://doogie/documents/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/work-and-income/core-procedures/complaints/whiteware-complaints-process-map.pdf\]](http://doogie/documents/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/work-and-income/core-procedures/complaints/whiteware-complaints-process-map.pdf)

### Complaints about whiteware suppliers

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If a complaint relating to a whiteware supplier is unresolved and the client contacts MSD, the staff member receiving the complaint should lodge in HIYA and assign to the service centre the client belongs to. The staff member then completes the CMS note 'Hardship whiteware complaint' and document as much information about the complaint as necessary.

The CMS note must then be copied and pasted into an email and forward to the **Out of Scope** **Out of Scope** email address. The Operational Support team will then investigate the complaint with the preferred supplier and provide the site with an outcome to complete in HIYA.

### Complaints about MSD

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The existing complaints process will apply for complaints relating to MSD staff. Work and Income and Senior Services complaints will be logged in HIYA and managed through the existing process. StudyLink complaints will be managed through SKLBase.

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## complaints process for youth service

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This page provides information about processes you should follow when you receive a complaint from a young person enrolled in Youth Service.

On this Page:

### how and where a young person can make a complaint

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A young person can make a complaint verbally or in writing. They may approach the Youth Service provider or contact MSD.

A young person may have appointed an agent or organisation to act or represent them (for example, an advocate or MP) who may make a complaint on their behalf.

**Note** a complaint about an outcome of an application does not always initiate a Review of Decision.

For more information about the Review of Decision process, see the following page:

[Review of Decision \[http://doogle/business-groups/organisational-integrity/client-advocacy-and-review/review-and-client-representatives/index.html\]](http://doogle/business-groups/organisational-integrity/client-advocacy-and-review/review-and-client-representatives/index.html)

### managing complaints

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There are three areas within Youth Service that manage their processes, and complaints about them separately.

**A Youth Service provider** (contracted provider or MSD in-house provider) delivers Youth Service to young people who receive Youth Payment (YP), Young Parent Payment (YPP), or are enrolled in the NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) service.

**The Youth Service Support Unit (YSSU)** processes financial assistance and administrative support for Youth Service providers.

**The Independent Assessment Provider** works with young people and their families, performing Family Breakdown Assessments and facilitating Family Reconciliation Counselling.

### complaints process

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All written and verbal complaints received by MSD must be recorded in the HIYA Complaints Management System. Once recorded, the complaint will be assigned to YSSU and issued with a number and an email is automatically generated to the YSSU report writers. The email provides a link to the information entered in HIYA.

Youth Service providers who receive complaints directly will record the information in the Activity Reporting Tool (ART) and notify YSSU. YSSU will then record this in HIYA.

The process to record, update and acknowledge a complaint in doogle is available at the following link:

[Complaints Overview and Management \[http://doogle/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/work-and-income/core-procedures/complaints/index.html\]](http://doogle/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/work-and-income/core-procedures/complaints/index.html)

### the role of yssu report writers

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YSSU Report Writers are in charge of ensuring the complaint is addressed and assigning the complaint to the appropriate area.

The YSSU Report Writer will determine who will manage the complaint; this would generally be one of the following:

YSSU

National Director Youth Services (complaints about the MSD in-house provider)

Regional Contracts Manager (RCM)

Youth Service provider.

**Note:** Complaints relating to specific services received must not be dealt with by the person concerned, although the person concerned must be allowed to provide an explanation.

### complaints with multiple issues

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A complaint may contain multiple issues which require investigation by more than one area within Youth Service.

In these cases, the YSSU Report Writers will:

coordinate the investigation and resolution of the issues with the different areas, and keep the complainant informed of the progress and the outcome of the complaint.

**Note:** if part of the complaint relates to issues with a service provider, YSSU will advise the complainant by acknowledgment letter that the service provider will investigate and contact the complainant shortly. In these cases, the RCM will oversee the service provider's management of the complaint. However, YSSU will complete the final letter advising the outcomes of all the complaints.

## **timeframes**

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A complaint must be acknowledged or resolved within 24 hours of receipt.

The following template is to be used when acknowledging the receipt of a complaint:

[Complaints acknowledgement letter \(Word 26.5KB\)](http://doogie/documents/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/work-and-income/core-procedures/complaints/complaint-acknowledgement-letter-template.doc) [<http://doogie/documents/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/work-and-income/core-procedures/complaints/complaint-acknowledgement-letter-template.doc>]

All complaints must be investigated and resolved within five working days unless there is a good and sufficient reason for the delay. Where there is a delay, the complainant must be updated regularly.

Examples of good and sufficient reasons may include:

the complainant requests support such as an interpreter, agent and/or advocate. In this case, the review can be delayed until the support is available

the complainant is absent

a staff member who is related to the complaint is on leave and unable to provide information  
aspects of the complaint are complex and will take longer to investigate and resolve.

## **escalations**

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If a complaint is not resolved within five working days, it automatically escalates to the immediate manager of the unit assigned to the complaint.

When a complaint remains unresolved, HIYA must be updated to reflect any progress.

## **msd receives a complaint about a youth service provider**

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If YSSU or MSD receives a complaint about a Youth Service provider, the complaint is lodged in HIYA and assigned to the YSSU Report Writers, who will reassign it to the RCM.

The RCM will contact the young person to acknowledge receipt of the complaint.

Following this, the RCM will assign the complaint to the Youth Service provider to investigate and resolve the issue with the young person.

The Youth Service providers must enter the information into the young person's ART profile. The complaint must be scanned and uploaded to ART if it is in writing.

On completion of the investigation, the Youth Service provider must email the RCM and detail:

the recommended resolution

the contact with the young person, and

any action taken since receipt of complaint.

As MSD has received the complaint, the RCM is responsible for providing a written response to the young person.

The RCM will send the young person a letter outlining the outcome and containing information about what they can do or who to contact if they are still dissatisfied.

RCMs must finalise the complaint in HIYA.

## **msd receives a complaint about an msd in-house youth service provider**

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Complaints about an MSD in-house Youth Service provider should be managed by the National Director Youth Services.

However, if complaints are about a Youth Development Specialist, YSSU will allocate the complaint to HIYA and assign it to the appropriate Service Manager, Youth Service.

## **youth service provider receives a complaint about msd**

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If a Youth Service provider receives a verbal or written complaint about MSD, they must notify YSSU, which will acknowledge and assign the complaint to the most appropriate person. The complaint will be investigated and finalised using standard processes.

Youth Service providers ensure that all verbal and written complaints are recorded in the young person's profile in ART.

Where the young person or a person acting on behalf of the young person (for example, an agent) complains to Youth Service provider, they must:

provide them with an MSD complaints brochure

advise that their complaint will be sent to MSD for investigation and they will be contacted with the resolution or an update within the next five working days.

### **youth service provider receives a complaint about their service**

---

Any complaint a service provider receives about the service or a decision made must be addressed and resolved by the service provider by their organisation's policy and procedure for complaints and dispute resolution.

Any complaint received from a young person must be documented and recorded, including whether the matter was resolved and/or whether any further action is required.

The Youth Service provider should record this information in ART on the young person's record.

If the complaint can't be resolved and the young person feels the matter could escalate further, or they receive a severe or high-risk complaint (for example, those alleging serious misconduct or harm) the Youth Service providers must notify their RCM immediately and the National Youth Service team <sup>Out of Scope</sup>

### **if the young person is dissatisfied with the outcome of a complaint resolved by the service provider**

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If the complaint is about the management of an earlier complaint or the resolution of the original complaint, the Youth Service provider must notify their local RCM immediately. The RCM will then manage this complaint.

### **reporting**

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HIYA can provide a report at any time that provides information about complaint types, outstanding complaints, and/or signed-off complaints.

### **further information**

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More information about complaints can be found by selecting the following links:

[Making a complaint \[http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/about-work-and-income/complaints/index.html\]](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/about-work-and-income/complaints/index.html)

[Advocates \[http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/providers/advocates/index.html\]](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/providers/advocates/index.html)

[Youth Service website \[http://www.youthservice.govt.nz/\]](http://www.youthservice.govt.nz/)

## Complaints about designated health practitioners and Medical Appeals Board members

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This page provides an overview of how to manage a complaint received from a client about a designated health practitioner or a Medical Appeals Board member.

On this Page:

### Designated health practitioners

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A client is referred to a designated health practitioner by Work & Income. A designated health practitioner provides a report to Work and Income about whether a person meets the medical criteria for Supported Living Payment/CDA and/or has the capacity to undertake suitable work. Designated health practitioners are non-treating health practitioners as they are not providing a health service to the client.

Generally when someone wishes to complain about a health practitioner, he or she complains to the Health and Disability Commissioner. However, because a designated health practitioner is not the client's treating health practitioner, the Health and Disability Commissioner does not manage these complaints. Work and Income's complaints process applies instead. This includes complaints about the recommendations made by designated health practitioners.

### Complaints processes

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It is important to understand the nature of the complaint in order to follow the correct process according to the type of complaint. The complaints generally relate to:

the manner or conduct of designated health practitioners, or  
a medical assessment that supported the decision made by a case manager.

A complaint may also concern the manner or conduct of a designated health practitioner and/or the designated health practitioner's recommendation to Work and Income. These two complaints should be managed separately using the medical appeals process and the complaints process. Clients will need to be advised of both processes.

Complaints received about the manner and conduct of a designated health practitioner are managed through the Complaints Process and recorded in the HIYA Complaints Management System.

If the complaint is about the designated health practitioner's recommendation resulting in a decision to decline or cancel a benefit, clients can seek a review of the decision by appealing to the Medical Appeals Board.

Please follow the links to information on the complaints process and medical appeals process.

[Medical Appeals \[https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/work-and-income/health-disability/medical-appeals/medical-appeals-board-processes-and-resource.html\]](https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/work-and-income/health-disability/medical-appeals/medical-appeals-board-processes-and-resource.html)

[Complaint types, definitions and examples \[http://doogie/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/work-and-income/core-procedures/complaints/complaint-types-definitions-and-examples.html\]](http://doogie/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/work-and-income/core-procedures/complaints/complaint-types-definitions-and-examples.html)

### Medical Appeals Board members

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Medical Appeals Boards provide an expert re-evaluation of the medical evidence on which decisions about medical eligibility and capacity for work, for Supported Living Payment, and Child Disability Allowance were made. The decision of the Medical Appeals Board is final with no right of review. However, a client may seek a judicial review of the process by which a Medical Appeals Board reached its decision.

Generally when someone wishes to complain about a health practitioner, they address their complaint to the Health and Disability Commissioner. However, because Medical Appeals Board members are not providing a health service, the Health and Disability Commissioner does not usually manage complaints about Medical Appeals Board members. Work and Income's complaint process applies instead.

The Regional Health and Disability Team must make every effort to assist with the complaints process. If needed, the Principal Health and Disability Advisors at National Office can ensure that complaints are investigated thoroughly and that constant communication with both the client and Board member is maintained.

#### Informing the Medical Appeals Coordinator of complaints

The Medical Appeals Coordinator should be informed of complaints against Board members, particularly where it may be inappropriate for the Board member to continue in their role while the complaint is being investigated. In these cases the coordinator should discuss this with their Regional Health and Disability Team.

## Examples of complaints about designated health practitioners and Board members

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It is important to obtain as much information as possible from the client to understand the nature of the complaint and to determine the process to resolve it.

Complaints from clients about designated health practitioners and Board members cover a range of issues and each may need to be treated differently. The complaint could be about the health practitioner's or Board member's manner or conduct and it could also include a request to review the designated health practitioner's recommendation. Complaints about the manner or conduct of a designated health practitioner or Board member should be processed through the Complaints Process.

Complaints about the decision made by Work and Income are reviewed through the medical appeals process on application.

Examples of types of complaints include:

### **Manner**

A client may complain about the manner of a designated health practitioner or medical appeals board member. For example he or she may feel the health practitioner was rude, abrupt or did not listen, or that their situation was not given due consideration. This should be addressed through the complaints process.

### **Conduct**

A client may complain about the conduct of designated health practitioner's or medical appeals board member. For example he or she may have said something inappropriate or acted in an inappropriate way. This should be addressed through the complaints process.

### **Decision or Recommendation**

A client may complain about the recommendation of a designated health practitioner that supported the decision made by a case manager. This should be treated as an appeal to the medical appeal board.

## Management of complaints and responsibility for resolution

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### **Service Centre**

Service centre managers and assistant service centre managers manage client complaints received within the service centre. All complaints about the manner and conduct of health practitioners should be discussed with your service centre manager and the Regional Health and Disability Team.

Contact with the client about the progress and outcome of the complaint is essential and is generally made by the case manager, assistant service centre manager or service centre manager.

Once all relevant information has been received, the person who has been assigned to resolve the complaint should contact the client to agree on the resolution and follow this up in writing.

**Note:** If you require legal advice, contact your regional solicitor.

### **Regional Office**

The service centre manager should inform the regional health and disability team of complaints about designated health practitioners and Medical Appeals Board members.

The Regional Health and Disability Coordinators manage relationships with health practitioners in their region and they are likely to be the most appropriate person to discuss complaints with the health practitioner or Board member when required.

However in some cases it may be more appropriate for the Principal Health and Disability Advisors at National Office to manage the relationship with the health practitioner.

### **National Office**

Following an investigation of the complaint by the regional health and disability team, the Principal Health Advisor and Principal Disability Advisor at national office will be informed of complaints about a health practitioner, particularly those complaints concerning a health practitioner's manner or conduct.

Discussion between the regional health and disability team and the Principal Health Advisor or Principal Disability Advisor will determine the approach to address the complaint and who will make contact with the health practitioner or Board member as appropriate.

[Medical Appeals \[https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/work-and-income/health-disability/medical-appeals/medical-appeals-board-processes-and-resource.html\]](https://doogie.ssi.govt.nz/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/work-and-income/health-disability/medical-appeals/medical-appeals-board-processes-and-resource.html)

## Recording the complaint in HIYA

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Complaints about the manner and conduct of designated health practitioners and Medical Appeals Board members must be recorded in the HIYA Complaints Management System using the 'Complaint Type' (drop down box) and selecting either 'Designated Doctor' or 'Medical Appeals Board member'.

For complaints about medical appeals board members enter the name of the health practitioner and a brief description of the complaint in the 'Detail' field.

By recording the complaint in HIYA we are able to establish over time if a health practitioner or Board member has been subject to more than one complaint and how they have been managed.

**Note:** if the complaint is only about a recommendation made by a designated health practitioner that supports the decision made by Work and Income, then the medical appeals process should be followed. The complaint is not recorded in HIYA.

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