

Complaints and Feedback about Youth Justice NSW



EASY READ



Communities
& Justice
Youth Justice

juvenile.justice.nsw.gov.au

Youth Justice is always interested in your feedback on our services. If you have a complaint, want to tell us how we can do better or want to tell us what you like about us, you can:



Talk to the Manager of this Youth Justice Office or Centre



Email the YJNSW Executive at complaints-feedbackYJNSW@justice.nsw.gov.au



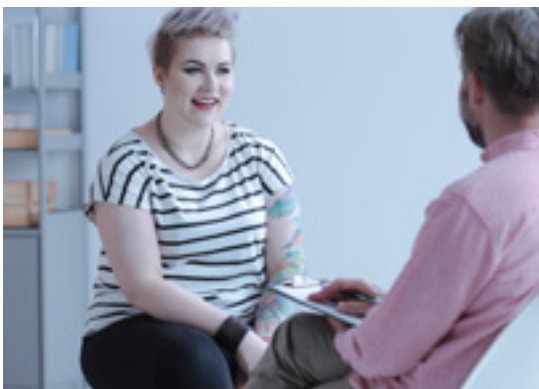
Write to:
Director, Strategy and Engagement
Youth Justice NSW
GPO Box 31
Sydney NSW 2001

Complaints and Feedback



This document is about making a complaint and giving feedback about Youth Justice NSW.

We will use **YJNSW** for short.



It talks about things like:

- What you can make a complaint or give feedback about.
- How you can make a complaint or give feedback.
- The support you can get when you make a complaint.
- The rules for YJNSW when dealing with complaints and feedback.



To make a complaint you need to fill out a form.

You can find forms on the internet at juvenile.justice.nsw.gov.au OR at your Youth Justice Office Reception.

You can also ask your caseworker, a manager or any member of staff for a form.

What is a complaint and what is feedback?



YJNSW wants you to feel safe and have a say in things that are about you.

It is important for YJNSW that you can trust them with any kind of problem.

YJNSW wants you to speak up if things are not right.



Making a complaint means speaking up about something that is not right.



If you do want to make a complaint then there is a process that everyone needs to follow.



A complaint can sometimes be a smaller issue that YJNSW staff can help you sort out directly.



YJNSW staff can help you decide:

- If you want to make a formal complaint.
- OR
- If things can be sorted for you without making a complaint.



Feedback means what you think of something.

Who can make a complaint or give feedback?



The person making a complaint is called a complainant.



A complainant can be:

- Yourself or any other young person that is getting a service from YJNSW.
- The family or carer of a young person getting a service from YJNSW.
- A victim or the victim's support person.
- Your support person or representative.
- Official Visitor.



A representative is someone making the complaint for you.



This could be:

- Your support person.
- Your Youth Justice Caseworker.
- Your doctor.
- A barrister or solicitor.
- An officer of the Aboriginal Legal Service.



The NSW Ombudsman is an independent organisation that makes sure that other organisations like YJNSW are doing their job right.

What can your complaint be about?



You can complain about your safety or the quality of care at YJNSW.



This could be things like:

- The way YJNSW employees or volunteers behave or treat you.
- Anything that makes you feel unsafe when you are with YJNSW.
- The behaviour of other young people at YJNSW.
- The quality of care you get from YJNSW or other services paid by YJNSW.

How do you make a complaint or give feedback?



You can find information about how to make a complaint in:

- YJNSW Community Offices.
- Youth Justice Centres.
- Youth Justice website.



To make a complaint you need to fill out a form.

You can find complaint forms in lots of places like reception areas or counselling rooms and on the internet at **juvenile.justice.nsw.gov.au**

Sometimes there are only posters telling you where you can get the form.

You can also ask your caseworker or a manager to help you.



You can also ask YJNSW staff.

YJNSW staff can tell you:

- How you can make a complaint or give feedback.
- Who can help you with your complaint.
- Where to get a complaint form.
- How to make a complaint to an external organisation.



An external organisation could be:

- NSW Ombudsman.
- Official Visitors to Youth Justice Centres managed by the Inspector of Custodial Services.
- NSW Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC).



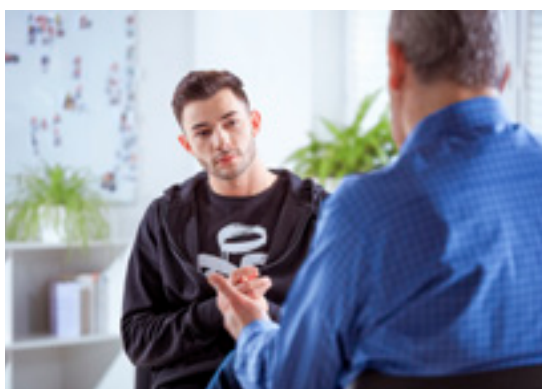
YJNSW can help you with your complaint to an external organisation.

You can also choose not to tell YJNSW about your complaint.

What support can you get when I make a complaint?



It can be scary and stressful to make a complaint. You might be nervous that people get angry or treat you in a different way.



YJNSW staff are there to support you.

YJNSW staff must make sure you are safe and not treated in a different way because of your complaint.



These people can help you with your complaint, filling in the form and other things:

- YJNSW community office employees like caseworkers, psychologists and managers.
- Youth Justice Centre employees like unit managers, youth officers, caseworkers and psychologists.



Support person

You can ask to have a support person.

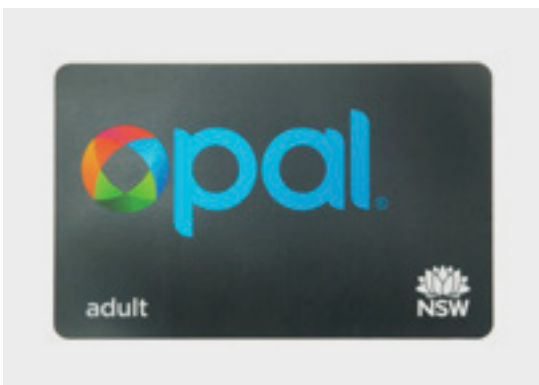
This could be:

- Someone from your family, your partner or carer.
- A friend from the centre (NOT a co-offender).
- A lawyer.
- A chaplain or Official Visitor.
- YJNSW staff that agree to support you.



Your support person should:

- Help you make the complaint.
- Keep you up to date about your complaint.
- Make sure you understand everything.
- Be there for you if you feel sad or upset.



YJNSW might help with things like paying for your support person's travel to visit you.



If you are a young Aboriginal person, you can get extra support from an Aboriginal staff member.



You can choose if you want this extra support or not.



Representative

You have the right to use a representative.

Your representative can make the complaint for you.

YJNSW does not pay for your representative.

YJNSW might pay for phone calls or if there are special reasons why you need a representative.

Special reasons can be your:

- Mental health or disability.
- Language or culture.



You can have a representative and a support person.

If you are a young Aboriginal person, you can have a representative, a support person and an Aboriginal staff member to support you.



Interpreter

YJNSW will pay for an interpreter if:

- You have problems speaking or understanding English.
- You are hearing-impaired or deaf.



Complaint handler

YJNSW will have one person that is responsible for your complaint.

This person is called the complaint handler.

Your complaint handler is someone who is neutral because they have nothing to do with your complaint.



If you are an Aboriginal person, your complaint handler will get support from an Aboriginal staff member to make sure your culture is respected.



If you are worried that you will be treated in a bad way because of your complaint, you can talk to a manager.



If you are still unsure, you can make your complaint to an external organisation instead like NSW Ombudsman.

What happens after you make a complaint?



YJNSW must keep you up to date about what is happening with your complaint.



If your complaint is about a YJNSW staff member, this person is not allowed to talk to you about your complaint.

Tell another staff member or manager if this happens.



Information about you and your complaint will be kept as private as possible.

YJNSW will only share information with people that are part of sorting out your complaint.



Complaints should be sorted within 5 days.

Some complaints might take longer.

All complaints should be sorted within 21 days.



YJNSW might look into your complaint and decide that it is **frivolous or vexatious**.

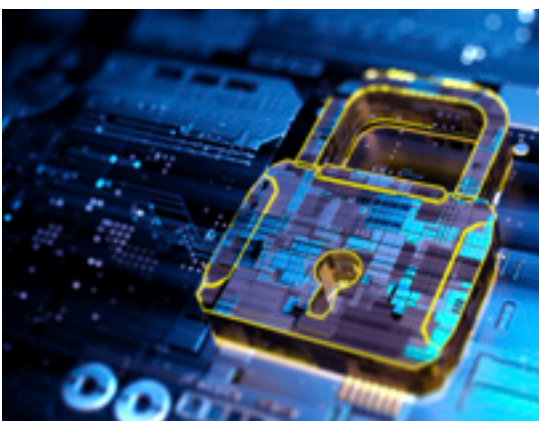
Frivolous or vexatious means that your complaint was not meant seriously. You only made the complaint to annoy or cause trouble.



YJNSW must tell you in a letter why they will not sort out your complaint.

It must be written in a way that you understand their decision.

Your complaint handler can help you understand it.



Everything about your complaint must be recorded in the complaints database.

Your information is private and confidential there.



A complainant who is not satisfied with the decision on the complaint may apply to the complaint handler's supervisor or to the Secretary for a review of that decision.



If you are not happy with:

- How YJNSW dealt with your complaint.
- The outcome of your complaint.

You can get in touch with an external party.

This could be NSW Ombudsman or Official Visitors for example.

Rules that YJNSW have to follow



YJNSW must:

- Tell you about your rights including the right to make a complaint.
- Protect you and your rights when you make a complaint.
- Support you to make a complaint.
- Have clear rules for dealing with complaints.
- Treat all parties in a fair way.
- Sort out complaints as quickly as possible.
- Keep you up to date about your complaint.
- Keep all information confidential.
- Keep records of all decisions and reasons for decisions.

A complainant who is not satisfied with the decision may appeal to the complaint handler's supervisor or to the Secretary for a review of that decision.



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