

# COMPLAINT HANDLING PROCESS

## OVERVIEW

At CommsChoice we strive to deliver a world-class service to our customers, however we understand that at times we get things wrong.

CommsChoice is dedicated to providing excellent customer service and maintaining a healthy customer relationship.

Therefore CommsChoice has a Complaints Policy to ensure all complaints are handled as efficiently and effectively as possible.

The following outlines our policy and procedures for the handling of verbal and written complaints. This Policy is compliant with the ACIF Industry Code on Complaint Handling. This policy forms part of our Standard Form of Agreement.

This document sets out our commitment to customers around managing and resolving complaints and what we do to take appropriate steps to identify and escalate complaints that are not resolved in a timely manner. The CEO of CommsChoice has ensured that all staff handling or dealing with customer complaints, are aware of this policy and the manner in which we deal with complaints.

## WHAT IS A COMPLAINT?

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction or grievance made to us verbally or in writing about any of our products and services, or how we have managed an existing complaint.

We do try and resolve all complaints in a timely manner, however we recognise that some complaints may take precedence over others. We view this as “urgent complaints” and they include the following:

- (a) a complaint in relation to a service outage that has an immediate ongoing business impact to a customer;
- (b) customers who fall under our financial hardship policy where the issue relating to the complaint might contribute to that customer's financial hardship; and
- (c) the disconnection or immanent disconnection of a customer's service with CommsChoice or one of our providers, where we have not followed the right process in disconnecting this service.

## WHO CAN MAKE A COMPLAINT?

Any customer has the right to make a complaint, and we must ensure that all complaints are dealt with efficiently, objectively and fairly.

We also provide help to any customer who needs it to formulate, lodge and progress a complaint with us.

## OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

- CommsChoice will provide an efficient, fair and structured mechanism for handling complaints.
- To provide our customers with access to the complaints handling process, including those customers with disabilities and special needs.
- CommsChoice will keep customers informed as to the progress of their complaint and the expected timeframe for resolution.
- We will regularly review our complaints so that we can improve our standard of customer service.

## HANDLING YOUR COMPLAINT

- Upon receiving a verbal or written complaint, we will endeavour to resolve the complaint immediately, and we will acknowledge your matter in writing within two (2) business days and provide you with a unique case reference number.
- Where we have not been able to resolve your complaint immediately, we will keep you informed of the progress of your complaint, proposed actions and the expected timeframe for resolution.
- Our aim is to resolve complaints in a timely manner and we will generally resolve a matter within fifteen (15) business days.
- Complex complaints may take longer than fifteen (15) business days to resolve. In these cases, we will regularly update you on the progress and likely timeframe for resolution.
- We will advise you in writing of the outcome of your complaint.
- We may impose a charge for handling your complaint in special circumstances. For example, we may charge you a fee where your complaint requires us to retrieve archived records.
- If your complaint resolution requires additional charges, these will be discussed and agreed with you prior to any action by us.

## THE STEPS WE TAKE TO RESOLVE COMPLAINTS

1. We will try to resolve your complaint at the time that it is lodged with us. However, if we need to investigate the complaint further, or it is an urgent complaint we will aim to resolve it, or tell you what we are doing to resolve it, within two (2) business days for urgent complaints and ten (10) business days for non-urgent or complex complaints.
2. Once we determine and agree how to resolve the issue with you, we will aim to finish all steps required to deliver that resolution to you within ten (10) business days. We will only implement the resolution once its been accepted by you.
3. This may differ when you agree to or request a different timeframe for resolution, or we need you to do something in order for us to resolve the complaint.
4. Sometimes we might not be able to resolve a complaint within the timeframes set out above. If that is the case, we will contact you to explain the reason for the delay and provide you with a new timeframe for resolution.
5. We aim to resolve urgent complaint within two (2) working days of being received subject to point 2, 3 and 4 above.

## HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT OR CHECK THE PROGRESS OF A COMPLAINT?

If you need to make a complaint, or would like to check the progress of a complaint please contact us in writing by one of the following means: -

- (a) via our website by clicking on the customer portal link;
- (b) via email to [complaints@commschoice.com.au](mailto:complaints@commschoice.com.au);
- (c) via fax by faxing your complaint to 1300 42 66 62;
- (d) via normal mail by writing to us at: -  
Level 9, 280 George Street  
Sydney NSW 2000; or
- (e) via phone by calling us on 1300 4 COMMS (1300 42 66 67).

### STEP ONE

If you have a complaint regarding any aspect of your account, or any dealings with CommsChoice, we urge you to contact our Customer Service team in the first instance on 1300 4 COMMS (1300 42 66 67).

Our relevant staff member will give you their name so you know with whom you are speaking. Our objective is to resolve the vast majority of enquiries or complaints during your first contact with us.

If you prefer to put your complaint in writing, please include your correct and appropriate contact details, so that we may call you to discuss the matter in person. We will also respond to you in writing and provide you with the unique case id and other relevant information relating to your complaint.

### STEP TWO

Should you not be satisfied with the response tendered to you, you may ask for your complaint to be escalated to your Customer Experience Manager. Our Customer Experience team oversees complaints made to CommsChoice. This team is committed to supporting the above areas and carrying out reviews of policy and process, and will attend to matters that have not been resolved within the complaints process.

### STEP THREE

If you are not satisfied with the response tendered to you, you may ask your Customer Experience Manager to escalate your complaint to CommsChoice Head of Operations for investigation and resolution.

### STEP FOUR

If your complaint is not resolved to your satisfaction by CommsChoice and depending on the nature of your complaint you may refer your complaint to the following outside bodies:

#### OFFICE OF THE FEDERAL PRIVACY COMMISSIONER

The Office of the Federal Privacy Commissioner ("OFPC") can assist you with all matters related to privacy. To lodge a complaint with the OFPC you can call 1300 363 992 or write to: -

Director, Compliance  
Office of the Privacy Commissioner  
GPO Box 5218  
SYDNEY NSW 2001.

## OTHER

For certain telecommunications and trade practices issues, you may lodge a complaint to: -

- The Fair Trading Office in your state;
- The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission; and/or
- You may also seek independent legal advice from a solicitor as an alternative avenue for resolution.

## WHAT IS THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY OMBUDSMAN?

The Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman (TIO) is an independent and free alternate dispute resolution scheme for residential and small business consumers in respect of disputes over which the TIO has jurisdiction.

The TIO views itself as an office of last resort; accordingly, it should not be used as a first resort and should only be used once all other reasonable avenues are exhausted. They may be able to assist you if you have been unable to resolve your complaint with CommsChoice directly.

The TIO seeks the co-operation of BOTH parties through an alternative dispute resolution process to achieve an outcome that is fair and reasonable. To lodge a complaint with the TIO you can call 1800 062 058 or write to: -

TIO  
P O Box 276  
Collins Street West  
MELBOURNE VIC 8007

Alternatively, you can visit [www.tio.com.au](http://www.tio.com.au)

## WHAT KIND OF COMPLAINTS CAN THE TIO DEAL WITH?

The TIO deals with complaints about telecommunications services. Some of these include billing problems, telephone faults, poor customer service, mobile phone contract problems and Internet access difficulties.

The TIO also has a role in handling objections by owners or occupiers of land on which a carrier intends to undertake land inspection, or installation of certain types of facility or maintenance activities. Information about these objection processes, including the strict timeframes involved, is available in ACMA's fact sheet Installation of telecommunications facilities, or by contacting the TIO.

## WHEN SHOULD I GO TO THE TIO?

If you have a complaint about your phone or Internet Company, the first step you should take is to contact CommsChoice and try and resolve it directly with us. Usually the problem can be resolved at this stage and there is no reason to take the issue further. If you are not happy with the way your complaint is dealt with at first contact, you should escalate the matter within CommsChoice using the process set out above.

However, if CommsChoice doesn't respond to your complaint, or if you are unhappy with the resolution of the problem or think that their solution is unfair, then you can make a complaint to the TIO. The TIO will only handle the complaint if you have first contacted CommsChoice.

## HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE FOR THE TIO TO DEAL WITH A COMPLAINT?

More than 90 per cent of complaints to the TIO are sorted out within a few days, but the more complex cases can take a few weeks. It depends on the nature of the complaint.

## HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

The TIO service is free. There is no charge to have a complaint investigated by the TIO.

## WHO PAYS FOR THE TIO?

The TIO is funded entirely by the telecommunications industry. The TIO bills CommsChoice according to the number of complaints received against us.

## HOW DO I CONTACT THE TIO?

You can get more information about the TIO on the Internet at [www.tio.com.au](http://www.tio.com.au) or by calling 1800 062 058. If you don't speak English, you can call the Commonwealth Government's Translating and Interpreting Services on 131 450 and ask to be put through to the TIO. The TIO pays for the cost of using the interpreter service. The TIO also has fact sheets available in different languages.

## MORE INFORMATION

More information is available on the ACMA website – [www.acma.gov.au](http://www.acma.gov.au)