



## **CONSUMER, TRADER & TENANCY TRIBUNAL COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT POLICY**

### **1. Introduction**

The purpose of this document is to outline the Consumer, Trader and Tenancy Tribunal (CTTT) policy in relation to the process of receiving and resolving complaints. This document is to be used to guide staff and management when handling complaints or customer dissatisfaction.

### **2. Commitment**

Management of the CTTT is committed to ensuring that complaints are dealt with in a responsive, efficient, effective, fair and economical way. The CTTT will:

- recognise and promote a customer's right to comment and complain
- ensure the framework for resolving complaints is efficient, fair and easily accessible to staff and customers
- provide relevant, timely and accurate information on the CTTT complaint handling process
- monitor and report on all complaints and actions arising from complaints
- recognise that properly handled and analysed, complaints and feedback help the CTTT improve business processes and service delivery
- treat all complaints confidentially.

The Chairperson and Deputy Chairpersons are responsible for the operation of the complaints handling system and the achievement of fair outcomes.

### **3. Scope of Complaints Policy**

The policy has application to all employees working at the CTTT including senior management, Members and conciliators.

#### **3.1 Definition of Complaint**

For the purpose of this policy a complaint is a record of a customer's dissatisfaction with delivery of a product or service offered by the CTTT or the conduct of CTTT staff, conciliator or Member.

The following types of complaints that can be dealt with under the CTTT Complaint Management Policy:

- Corporate and divisional policies
- Published administrative procedures
- Administrative decisions (excluding Tribunal Member decisions\*)
- Non-statutory fees and charges
- Actions of employees or agents
- Quality of service
- Timeliness of service
- Accuracy of information provided
- Accessibility of services including provision of sound recordings.

The CTTT can only deal with complaints where the complainant has been identified.

\* Dissatisfaction with Member decisions are not covered by this policy. Redress may be available through the rehearing or appeal process. For more information visit the CTTT website [www.cttt.nsw.gov.au](http://www.cttt.nsw.gov.au).

#### **4. CTTT Complaints Management System**

The Complaints Management System has the following components that align with best practice:

- centralised complaints management – including a CTTT Complaint Management policy and supporting material
- electronic complaints management system
- procedures and reporting mechanisms.

#### **5. Guiding Principles**

##### **5.1 Visibility and Access**

The CTTT complaint management system will be:

- publicised to ensure that customers, staff and other interested parties know where and how to make a complaint
- publicised on our website and through printed material such as brochures and fact sheets, our website and the intranet.
- complaints may be made by email, online through our feedback form, post, fax or face to face at a CTTT Registry
- CTTT will offer specialised services appropriate to individual need to achieve a satisfactory resolution for all parties such as interpreting services
- access to the complaints handling process will be free of charge to the complainant.

##### **5.2 Responsiveness**

The CTTT will ensure that:

- all staff are aware of the content of this policy and the complaints management system procedures

- all complaints are dealt with in a timely manner as per the agreed timeframes set out in the complaints management procedures and in accordance with the complaints handling flowchart (refer Appendix 1)
- all complainants are contacted within 28 days to either acknowledge receipt of the complaint and advised of the complaint handling process or provided with a final response.
- all complaints are tracked
- timeframes for resolution are monitored
- where a complaint is referred or escalated during the resolution process, complainants are informed.

### 5.3 Assessment and Action

This policy recognises the need to be fair to the individual or group raising the complaint, the organisation and also the person against whom the complaint was raised. Each complaint will be dealt with fairly and objectively. The CTTT will ensure that:

- complaints are assessed and categorised according to nominated criteria
- where appropriate, complaints and/or complainants are referred to external agencies upon receipt
- natural justice is observed wherever practicable
- comments of staff, conciliators and Members about whom the complaint has been made will be sought where practicable
- the sound recording of the hearing will be reviewed where practicable
- complaints will be resolved with as little formality and disputation as possible
- mediation, negotiation and informal resolution are optional alternatives to investigation
- privacy and confidentiality are observed as far as possible
- review staff have authority to make decisions or provide another appropriate remedy as outlined in the complaints handling model (refer Section 4 of this Policy)
- complaints will be assessed against the CTTT's service delivery charter, Member and staff code of conduct, CTTT policy and procedures and the reasonableness of the complaint.

### 5.4 Feedback

The CTTT will establish appropriate mechanisms and strategies to ensure that:

- complainants are advised of outcomes as soon as possible after a decision is made
- complainants are provided with a written outcome to their complaint
- complainants are advised of all available review mechanisms
- feedback is provided to relevant areas of the CTTT where potential system improvements are identified. Management will have responsibility for follow up.

## 5.5 Customer focused approach, continuous improvement and monitoring of effectiveness

The CTTT recognises that complaints management is not just about dealing with and resolving individual complaints. The complaints management system is designed to add value by using complaints data to identify areas where the CTTT's business processes and systems can be improved. The complaints management system at the CTTT will:

- record and monitor complaints
- categorise all complaint issues that can be related to business processes
- identify categories and trends
- channel information to staff who can prevent recurring problems
- where system issues are identified they are referred to the internal Continuous Improvement Reference Group (CIRG) for discussion
- record organisation learning's as a source of information for continuous improvement and measure customer/public satisfaction
- identification of complaint trends and action taken to address these trends is made available to relevant stakeholders. This will include a monthly report on complaints that includes an analysis of matters raised, by whom, types of complaints and implications for continuous improvement and progress in resolving complaints
- monitor the timeliness of the complaint resolution process
- review and audit the complaints management system from time to time.

## **6. Resources and Training**

Each CTTT employee and Member accepts responsibility for effective complaints handling. The CTTT will ensure appropriate technological and other resources are made available to ensure the maximum effectiveness of the system. All CTTT employees and Members will:

- be trained in complaints handling
- be aware of their roles, responsibilities and authorities in respect of complaints
- be aware of the complaints management systems and procedures and what information to give complainants
- record/report all complaints

## **7. Complaint outcomes**

The CTTT will ensure that:

- appropriate outcomes are offered that are fair to both the complainant and the CTTT
- the outcome sought by the complainant is considered as a first option
- informal resolution and compromise is attempted wherever possible

- the outcome addresses all elements of the complaint to provide a comprehensive resolution
- similar outcomes are offered to all persons in the same situation.

Where we cannot resolve or clarify a complaint to your satisfaction, we will inform you of the reasons for the decision made and will tell you about some options you can pursue for external review, including through the NSW Ombudsman, the Administrative Decisions Tribunal or another legal remedy. We cannot take responsibility for covering all the possible avenues for review.

## **8. Review of Complaints Handling Policy**

The CTTT Management team will review the complaints handling process on an annual basis to:

- ensure its continuing suitability, adequacy and effectiveness.
- identify and correct process and service deficiencies
- assess opportunities for improvement and the need for changes to the complaints handling process
- evaluate potential changes to the Complaints handling policy and objectives.
- customers, staff and other interested parties are consulted during the review of the CTTT complaints management system to ensure alignment with complaints handling best practice.

## APPENDIX A – Complaints Handling Process

The diagram below outlines the CTTT's complaints handling process.

