

In Home Care (IHC) Support Agency Tasmania Complaint Policy

The IHC Support Agency recognises the rights of families and other IHC stakeholders. An effective feedback handling mechanism including complaints is essential in providing a quality service. Feedback both positive and corrective is a valuable and important tool for the IHC Support Agency as it supports us to identify the needs of our clients and stakeholders, understand any business shortcomings, increase client satisfaction and improve overall performance.

It is also a measure of client satisfaction. It provides positive feedback about aspects of the service that work well and is a useful source of information for continual improvement when there is a level of dissatisfaction with the service offered. We are committed to being responsive and resolving your complaint as quickly as possible.

This policy has been designed to provide guidance to you on the manner in which the IHC Support Agency receives and manages your complaint. We are committed to being consistent, fair and impartial when handling your complaint.

The objective of this policy is to ensure:

- you are aware of our complaint lodgement and handling processes
- both you and our staff understand our complaints handling process
- your complaint is investigated impartially with a balanced view of all information or evidence
- we take reasonable steps to actively protect your personal information, and
- your complaint is considered on its merits taking into account individual circumstances and needs.

IHC Support Agencies are the first point of contact for families and IHC Services, over time, for queries and complaints relating to the delivery of the IHC program. IHC policy complaints should be referred to the department.

Definition of a complaint

In this policy a complaint means an expression of dissatisfaction by you relating to service provided by us.

How can a complaint be made?

If you are dissatisfied with a service or a decision provided by us, you should in the first instance consider speaking directly with the staff member/s you have been dealing with. If you are uncomfortable with this or consider the relevant staff member is unable to address your concerns, you can lodge a complaint with us in one of the following ways by:

- completing a feedback form on our website <https://ihcsupportagencytas.com.au>
- telephoning us on 1300 052 057
- writing to us PO Box 422, South Hobart, 7004
- emailing info@ihcsupportagencytas.com.au

If we receive your complaint verbally and we consider it appropriate, we may ask you to put your complaint in writing.

Actions required vary depending on who makes the complaint and the type of complaint as outlined below.

IHC Support Agency Tasmania will direct any complaint

- that indicates that a child or children are at risk to the relevant State Regulatory Authority and the department’s state or territory office immediately.
- from families complaining about their IHC educator –to the IHC Service to resolve their concerns.
- from families complaining about their IHC Service to the Approved Provider, and if unresolved refer the complaint to the department.
- from an IHC educator complaining about a family –to the IHC Service and monitor further developments in terms of resolution. The IHC Support Agency should act as an intermediary in this situation as the agency is the conduit between the family and the service.
- from an IHC educator complaining about an IHC Service – The IHC Support Agencies should act as an intermediary where appropriate however noting this is a matter to be resolved by the employer and the employee/contractor
- from a family, an educator, an IHC Service or a Provider of a IHC Service, referral services or the public making complaints about an IHC Support Agency. These complaints should be initially referred to the relevant IHC Support Agency, through their formal complaints processes. If the complaint has not been addressed to the complainant’s satisfaction, then it can be referred to the department by emailing inhomecare@dese.gov.au.

The IHC Support Agency will filter complaints that should be handled by the Department or Services Australia (concerning Families) and guide them to the contact channels.

Complaints contact details for Child Care Payments and ICT

Families	Services Australia 1800 132 468 www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/contact-us/complaints-and-feedback
Providers and Services	Department of Education 1300 667 276 CCSHelpdesk@education.gov.au
CCS Fraud or non-compliance	Department of Education 1800 664 231 tipoffline@education.gov.au

(IHC Handbook 2022)

IHC Support Agency Tasmania must report any signs of fraud or non-compliance detected in a complaint to the relevant departmental state or territory office immediately.

What information do you need to tell us when lodging a complaint?

When we are investigating your complaint, we will be relying on information provided by you and information we may already be holding. We may need to contact you to clarify details or request additional information where necessary. To help us investigate your complaint quickly and efficiently we will ask you for the following information:

- your name and contact details
- the name of the person you have been dealing with
- the nature of the complaint
- details of any steps you have already taken to resolve the complaint
- details of conversations you may have had with us that may be relevant to your complaint
- copies of any documentation which supports your complaint.

Recording a complaint

When taking a complaint, we will record:

- your name and contact details
- your complaint including the facts and the cause/s of your complaint
- the outcome and any actions taken following the investigation of your complaint
- All dates and times relating to actions taken to resolve the complaint and communications between us.

As part of our on-going improvement plan, complaints will be monitored by management for any identifying trends and rectification/remedial action taken to mitigate any identified issues.

If you lodge a complaint, we will record your personal information solely for the purposes of addressing your complaint. Your personal details will actively be protected from disclosure, unless you expressly consent to disclosure and/or the IHC Support Agency is required to report under mandatory and/or Commonwealth Government IHC contract requirements.

Feedback to you

The IHC Support Agency Tasmania is committed to resolving your issues at the first point of contact, however, this will not be possible in all circumstances, in which case a more formal complaints process will be followed. Please note depending on the nature of the complaint will inform whether the complaint is referred on to the relevant party (as described previously) or actioned within the IHC Support Agency.

We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within three (3) business days. We are committed to resolving your complaint within 10 business days of you lodging your complaint, however, this may not always be possible on every occasion. Where we have been unable to resolve your complaint within 10 business days, we will inform you of the reason for the delay and specify a date when we will be in a position to finalise your complaint.

Once your complaint has been received, we will undertake an initial review of your complaint. There may be circumstances during the initial review or investigation of your complaint where we may need to clarify certain aspects of your complaint or request additional documentation from you. In such circumstances we will explain the purpose of seeking clarification or additional documentation and provide you with feedback on the status of your complaint at that time.

During the initial review or investigation stage we may need to seek further clarification or documentation from you to assist us in resolving your complaint. If we have sought clarification or additional documentation from you and we are waiting on you to provide this information, we may not be able to meet our 10-business day finalisation commitment. In such circumstances upon receipt of your clarification or additional documentation we will indicate to you when we expect to be able to finalise your complaint.

Once we have finalised your complaint, we will advise you of our findings and any action we have taken. We will do this in writing, unless it has been mutually agreed that we can provide it to you verbally. You have the right to make enquiries about the current status of your complaint at any time by contacting us.

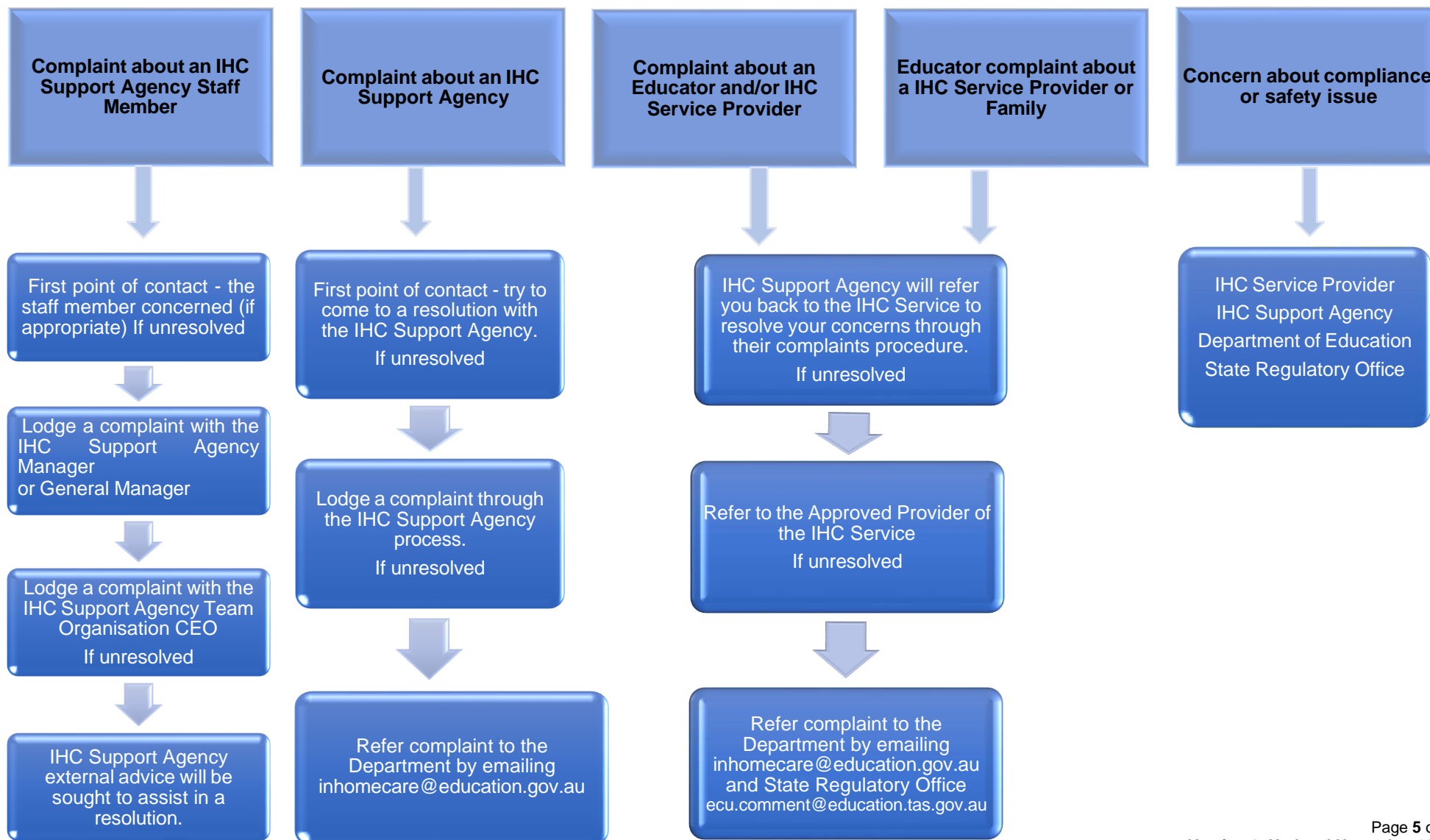
Complaint about IHC Support Agency Staff

If you complain about a member of our staff, we will treat your complaint confidentially, impartially and equally (giving equal treatment to all people). Complaints must be made by the 'person' vs 'here say' so as a fair and just process can be undertaken for all parties concerned. We will investigate your complaint thoroughly by finding out the relevant facts, speaking with the relevant people and verifying explanations where possible.

We will also treat our staff member objectively by:

- informing them of any complaint about their performance
- providing them with an opportunity to explain the circumstances
- providing them with appropriate support, and
- updating them on the complaint investigation and the result.

Refer to flow chart below :



Contact Details:

In Home Care Support Agency Tasmania	1300 052 057 info@ihcsupportagencytas.com.au Online at https://ihcsupportagencytas.com.au
In Home Care Service Provider/s	Wanslea 1800 444 262 Inhomecaretas@wanslea.asn.au
Commonwealth Government IHC Program	inhomecare@education.gov.au
Families	Services Australia 1800 132 468 www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/contact-us/complaints-and-feedback
Providers and Services (and Educators)	Department of Education 1300 667 276 CCSHelpdesk@education.gov.au
CCS Fraud or non-compliance	Department of Education 1800 664 231 tipoffline@education.gov.au

Version Control

Version 1 29/06/2018	Development
Version 2 20/08/2018	Updated
Version 3 24/08/2019	Updated to include 'families seeking a review of an IHC Support Agency decision'
Version 4 11/04/2020	Updated Dept. email and added IHC new providers
Version 5 December 2022	Updated content to reflect IHC Handbook (July 2022)
Version 6 November 2023	Updated links, Department Name and removed 2 IHC Providers no longer current

