

National Relay Service Complaints Policy

(from NRS Outreach Complaints Management Plan 2015-16)

The National Relay Service – responding to complaints

The National Relay Service [NRS] is a telephone relay service that allows Australians who are deaf, or who have a hearing or speech impairment to communicate with anyone who uses a standard telephone and vice versa.

The NRS is an initiative provided under contract with the Commonwealth. The NRS is funded by a levy on eligible telecommunications carriers.

The NRS consists of:

- *The Relay Service*. This provides a call centre where Relay Officers relay your calls to other people.
- *The Outreach Service*. This raises awareness and provides information about the NRS through activities such as Information Sessions, a customer service Helpdesk, training on using the NRS, and other support for users and potential users of the NRS.

Have you got a problem or complaint about the NRS?

The NRS has a complaints policy which seeks to ensure a fair and effective response where anyone has a concern or complaint about the NRS. The policy also helps us to listen to customers, learn from customers and improve our service to you.

Anyone can make a complaint about the NRS. A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, concern or frustration with NRS services. You might have a complaint about the quality of NRS services; about the behaviour of an NRS staff member; about NRS policies and procedures that may impact adversely on you; or concerns about privacy or other matters.

There are no charges for making a complaint to the NRS.

If you have a problem or complaint, the NRS will make every effort to sort it out. We will:

- Treat you with respect
- Tell you what will happen while your complaint is being looked at, and keep you informed of progress
- Tell you who will deal with the complaint
- Be fair and open in the way your complaint is handled
- Deal with your complaint in a timely manner and give you reasons for the decision we make about your complaint
- Protect your privacy.

We are keen to hear any concerns you have as this helps us to improve our services to you.

- The best way to help us give you a better service, and to answer your concerns, is by:
- Telling us honestly, completely and accurately about what has happened
- Telling us quickly about your concerns. Don't sit on your problems
- Treating our staff with courtesy.

The NRS may contact you about irregular calls through the NRS

The NRS may contact you if there appear to be irregular, harassing or unwanted calls arising from your phone number. Please be aware that you must abide by the terms and conditions of use of the NRS [see <http://www.relayservice.gov.au/about/terms-and-conditions/>]. In summary:

- This means you must comply with the type of requirements that other phone users have when they use a phone service
- If the NRS believes someone is generating unwanted, harassing or illegal calls from your number, NRS may contact you to check this and discuss further action.

How can you make a complaint?

You can lodge a concern or complaint in a number of different ways:

- By TTY: 1800 555 630 - our Helpdesk can take your TTY call and note details of your concern or complaint.
- By phone: 1800 555 660 – speak to our Helpdesk who will take details of your concern or complaint.
- By email: You should direct your feedback or complaint to feedback@relayservice.gov.au
- Via the online complaints form on our website:
<http://www.relayservice.gov.au/contact/complaint/>
- By fax: 1800 555 690 to lodge your complaint by fax
- By SMS: 0416 001 350 to lodge your complaint by SMS
- In writing: You should direct your complaint to:
NRS Helpdesk
Level 2, 10 Mallett Street,
Camperdown NSW 2050
- In person: You can make a complaint directly to any staff person in the NRS; or you may want to contact the NRS Helpdesk who can direct your complaint, ensuring the best possible outcome.

What happens to your complaint?

NRS will give careful attention to your complaint. NRS will allocate a Helpdesk Customer Service Officer to take responsibility for seeing that your complaint is resolved.

The main steps of our complaints policy are as shown.

Step 1

An NRS Helpdesk (HD) Customer Service Officer (CSO) writes to you within two Business Days of receipt of your complaint. They will confirm with you that they have received your complaint. The responding CSO will remain the complainant's primary contact throughout the process (unless NRS management is required to respond).

Step 1
NRS Helpdesk Customer Service Officer contacts you [within two business days] to tell you they have received your complaint.



Step 2

We investigate your complaint. We keep you informed about progress, contacting you within ten Business Days after acknowledging the initial complaint.

Step 2
Your complaint is investigated. HD CSO contacts you within 10 Business Days to let you know progress.



Step 3

We report to you about the complaint. We aim to resolve your complaint within 20 Business Days of when you lodged the complaint. Early resolution may be possible simply by clarifying misunderstandings; however, if a complaint is complicated, it may take longer to resolve. If resolution of the problem is not possible (due to technical or NRS service limitations) then a clear explanation will be provided. This report/email should be non-technical language.

Step 3
HD CSO sends you a report [within 20 Business Days or earlier] about your complaint. This report will outline actions the NRS has taken to resolve your complaint.

What if you aren't happy with the outcome of the complaint?

Sometimes it is not possible to sort out a complaint completely. If so, our Complaints Coordinator will work with you to look at other ways to address your concerns.

If you are not happy with the outcome of your complaint, you can do a number of things:

- You can ask **us to check our decision about your complaint, or the way we handled it**. This request should be in writing to your Complaints Coordinator. The complaint may be managed by other senior staff like the Customer Service Manager at NRS Outreach.
- **If your complaint is about telecommunications issues or how your complaint has been handled by the NRS** you can **contact the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman [TIO]**. The TIO provides a free and independent service to consumers with complaints about their telephone or internet service. Details for contacting the TIO:
 - Freecall: 1800 062 058
 - TTY: 1800 675 692
 - Web: www.tio.com.au
 - Freefax: 1800 630 614
 - Email: tio@tio.com.au
 - Post: PO Box 276 Collins Street West, Melbourne Vic 8007
- **If your complaint is not covered by the responsibilities of the TIO**, you can **contact the Australian Consumer and Competition Commission [ACCC] or the Office of Fair Trading in your State or Territory**. The ACCC can provide advice to consumers and businesses about their rights and obligations under the Trade Practices Act 1974; and can assist in resolving a dispute by directing parties to appropriate complaints resolution options. The consumer protection work of the ACCC complements that of the State and Territory Offices of Fair Trading which administer similar legislation within each state or territory.

Details for contacting the ACCC:

Phone: 1300 302 502 [Australian callers]

Postal Address: GPO Box 3648, Sydney NSW 2001

Details for contacting the Offices of Fair Trading:

There is an Office of Fair Trading in each State and Territory.

| STATE | PHONE | WEBSITE |
|-------|------------------------------|--|
| NSW | 13 32 20 or 02 9895 0111 | www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au |
| NT | 1800 019 319 or 08 8999 1999 | www.consumeraffairs.nt.gov.au |
| ACT | 02 6207 3000 | www.ors.act.gov.au |
| QLD | 13 74 68 | www.fairtrading.qld.gov.au |
| SA | 131 882 | www.ocba.sa.gov.au |
| TAS | 1300 654 499 | www.consumer.tas.gov.au |
| VIC | 1300 558 181 | www.consumer.vic.gov.au |
| WA | 1300 304 054 | www.commerce.wa.gov.au |