

Complaints Management



Customer Complaints Annual Report 2019-2020

Complaints Management



Resolving complaints

The Public Trustee is committed to ensuring that the services provided to the people of Queensland are relevant and that our customers are satisfied with that service.

All of our customer complaints management information can be found on the Public Trustee's website www.pt.qld.gov.au.

The Public Trustee has a formal policy for dealing with concerns and complaints – see our [Complaints Management Policy](#). We also have a [Complaints Journey](#) brochure which helps to explain the complaints process in a simpler, easier to follow format.

A primary objective of our Complaints Management Policy is to have any concerns or complaints of customers resolved at the place where the service was delivered.

Human Rights complaints

The Public Trustee has been embedding human rights understanding across our organisation before and since the commencement of the Human Rights Act 2019 (Human Rights Act) on 1 January 2020.

During 2019-20, the Public Trustee received five complaints that were assessed as human rights complaints:

- three complaints were identified by the complainant as human rights related
- two complaints were assessed by the Public Trustee as being human rights related.

The complaints were resolved by the Public Trustee providing an explanation to the customers or the customers' support network about the decision that was made or the action that was taken. In each case, the Public Trustee was of the view that it had acted compatibly with human rights and in line with its obligations under the Human Rights Act.

The Queensland Human Rights Commission has not notified the Public Trustee of any unresolved complaints that it has accepted for review.

Improvements to our Customer Complaints Management System

The Public Trustee conducts a review of our Complaints Management Policy at two year intervals.

Our Complaints Policy was most recently revised in December 2019, to comply with the obligations of public sector entities under the *Human Rights Act 2019*.

In early 2020, the Public Trustee introduced its Customers First Agenda, based on the human rights reforms and with an aim to guide the organisation to becoming a more modern, socially and financially responsible service that values human rights, puts the customer first and continues to embed greater levels of trust, transparency and engagement.

Our commitment to Customers First includes implementing best practice complaint handling processes, which is reflected in our *Strategic Plan 2020-2024*.

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In the latter half of the 2019-20 financial year, the Queensland Audit Office (QAO) undertook a Performance Audit on the responsiveness of Queensland's guardianship and administration system to complaint and investigations.

The audit examined the system and its effectiveness for complaints relating to customers where PTQ has been appointed financial administrator or financial attorney. Complaints relating to other PTQ services including Wills and deceased estate administration were not in-scope.

It is expected that a report will be tabled by the Auditor-General, in accordance with section 67 of the Auditor-General Act 2009, in October

The Public Trustee will be implementing a number of changes throughout the 2020-21 financial year as a result of the findings of this audit and in line with our focus on Customers First.

Complaints Data for 2019-20

Section 219A of the *Public Service Act 2008* requires Queensland Government agencies to implement a system for dealing with customer complaints and publish a range of information by 30 September after each financial year on their website.

The Public Trustee is committed to ensuring that the services we provide are relevant and that our clients are satisfied with that service. Our Complaints Management Policy and Procedure provide a framework for managing complaints which ensures that complaints received by the Public Trustee are managed and reported in an accountable, transparent, timely and meaningful way.

Complaints Received

As at 30 June 2020	
Complaints received in the financial year 2019-20	
<i>The total number of complaints recorded in the Complaints Management System</i>	621
Complaints resulting in no further action	
<i>The number of complaints which were resolved in the first instance</i>	427
Complaints resulting in further action	
<i>The number of complaints where additional activity was required to resolve the complaint, for example a specific remedy for the client or complainant or a change in policy or procedures</i>	194

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In the past year, the Public Trustee has embedded our commitment to our customers through our Customers First Agenda. This has resulted in improvements to our reporting and monitoring of complaints, and greater levels of accountability that reflect the customer-centric focus of the Public Trustee, and ongoing commitment to continuous improvement.

In July 2019, the Public Trustee began recording Complaints received by frontline staff. Frontline complaints are received and resolved by the officer who receives them. Ninety-one frontline complaints were received, and included in the total number of complaints (621) for the 2019-20 financial year.

The Public Trustee has a number of business activities from which complaints are generated. A breakdown of Complaints by activity area is shown in the following table:

Activity	Number of Complaints	% of Complaints
Disability Services	427	68.76%
Deceased Estate	126	20.29%
Will	27	4.35%
Unclaimed	9	1.45%
Legal	9	1.45%
Minor	8	1.29%
EPA	6	0.97%
Trusts	6	0.97%
Property	1	0.16%
Group Homes	1	0.16%
Miscellaneous	1	0.16%
Grand Total	621	100%

Complaint Issues raised

Complaints received by the Public Trustee are grouped into seven categories. These categories are:

- The Legislation
- The Decision
- Privacy Breach
- PT Policies and Procedures
- Fees and Charges
- Human Rights Breach
- Service Delivery
- Staff Conduct

These categories also have sub-categories to provide better analysis of each issue. More than one issue may be raised in a complaint. As a result, the number of issues raised is greater than the total number of complaints, and is shown in the table on the following page.

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Issue	Number
The Decision: Management of Affairs	158
Service Delivery: Unacceptable time delay	130
The Decision: Budget	80
Service Delivery: Failure to follow procedure/process	75
Service Delivery: Lack of communication/not keeping client regularly informed	51
PT Policies or Procedures (Dissatisfaction with policy/procedure)	50
Service Delivery: Insufficient information/explanation given	46
Staff Conduct: Rude or unfriendly manner	44
Staff Conduct: Unprofessional conduct	42
Fees and Charges: Fee(s) too high	34
Service Delivery: Insufficient funds for living expenses	26
Staff Conduct: Lack of empathy	22
Service Delivery: Failure to deliver on promise	18
The Legislation: PT Appointment	13
Fees and Charges: Incomplete information given re Fee(s)	13
Service Delivery: Multiple changes in Trust Officer	13
Service Delivery: Incorrect information given	12
Fees and Charges: Fee(s) Incorrectly charged	9
Privacy Breach (Non Compliance with Information Privacy Principles)	5
Human Rights breach	5
The Legislation: Other Legislated requirements	3
Total Issues	691

Complaints resulting in further action

The Public Trustee records complaints in our Complaints Management System database. Each complaint is able to be allocated a remedy that occurred as a result of the complaint. The remedies for those complaints recorded as resulting in further action are listed in the table below.

Remedy	Number
Apology/Admission/Acknowledgement of fault	64
Change of decision	45
Service Improvement	37
Explanation of process	16
No action recorded	11
Reduction/Reimbursement of Fees and Charges	5
Training opportunity	4
Explanation of decision	4
Compensation	3
Staff counselling	3
Correction of misleading/incorrect records	2
Total	194

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Contact us

For further information on the Public Trustee's complaints management practices, please contact:

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The Public Trustee
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If you need an interpreter call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) on 131 450 and request to be transferred to the Public Trustee on 1300 360 044.