



DoCS AND CARERS, WORKING TOGETHER

foster
carers:
hearing
your
concerns



NSW Department of
Community Services



New South Wales Government



SUPPORT FOR YOU

The NSW Department of Community Services (DoCS) recognises and appreciates the significant contribution of foster carers in supporting and nurturing the children and young persons in your care.

DoCS is committed to providing a professional level of service to support you in this rewarding but challenging role.

Your feedback helps us continue to improve our services to you.

This brochure explains how to take action if you are not satisfied with our level of service to you as a foster carer.

You can contact us if you:

- are dissatisfied with a decision we make or the way we made it
- were treated unfairly or inappropriately
- were discriminated against
- experienced a lack of acknowledgment or follow up
- require a better explanation or apology than you have received
- need to express a point of view that might help improve our services
- would like to discuss some other issue.



THE THREE STEP PROCESS

The steps below will help to ensure you receive timely responses to all urgent and non-urgent requests.

If a situation is urgent:

1. Call 000 if you have immediate concerns about the safety and well-being of the child/young person in your care.
2. Contact your local Community Services Centre (CSC) during business hours.
3. Contact the Helpline on 133 627 if after hours.

If a situation is not urgent:

1. Your local Community Services Centre (CSC)

You should always approach DoCS casework staff first. Staff in your local area know you and your foster child and are in the best position to help you.

If they are unable to help, or you are not satisfied with the response you receive, then speak or write to the Manager Casework. If the Manager Casework is unable to help, or you are not satisfied with the response, then contact the Manager Client Services at your local CSC.



2. Your Foster Care Complaints Liaison Officer

If you have contacted your local CSC and your concern has not been resolved, or you do not receive acknowledgement within one working week, then you should call the DoCS Complaints Unit on 1800 000 164 (toll free).

We will make every effort to resolve your concerns promptly. Serious or complex cases might need a more extensive investigation and require more time before a response can be provided. In this case, we will keep you informed of the progress of the matter.

3. Independent review

If you have raised your concerns with us and you are not satisfied with our response, then you have the option of contacting the NSW Ombudsman.

Some decisions can also be reviewed by the Administrative Decisions Tribunal (ADT). If you want to raise the matter with the ADT you should do this within 28 days of the decision being made.

Your Casework Manager or the Foster Care Complaints Liaison Officer can provide more information.





CONTACTS

NSW Department of Community Services (DoCS)

DoCS casework staff or your local Community Services Centre (DoCS office) should always be your first point of contact.

To contact your local DoCS office, look under 'Community Services, Department of' in the White Pages.

www.community.nsw.gov.au

DoCS Helpline

132 111 (for general public)

133 627 (for mandatory reporting)

TTY: 02 9633 7698

OTHER USEFUL CONTACTS

Foster Care Complaints Unit

Ph: 1800 000 164 (Toll free)

Fax: 02 9716 2987

Aboriginal Child, Family and Community Care State Secretariat

Ph: 02 9264 8190

Ph: 1800 888 698 (Toll free)

www.absec.org.au

Administrative Decisions Tribunal

Ph: 1800 060 410 (Toll free)

TTY: 02 9235 2674

www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/adt

Aboriginal Statewide Foster Carer Support Service (ASFCS)

Ph: 02 9264 0088

Freecall: 1800 888 698

NSW Ombudsman

Ph: 02 9286 1000

Ph: 1800 451 524 (Toll free)

TTY: 02 9264 8050

www.ombo.nsw.gov.au

Connecting Carers NSW

Ph: 1300 794 653

(Local call, 24 hours)

Foster Parents Support Network (FPSN)

Ph: 02 9608 8494

Freecall: 1800 262 445 (24 hours)

www.fosterparentsupportnetwork.org.au

CREATE Foundation

Ph: 02 9267 0977

Freecall: 1800 655 105

www.create.org.au

Interpreter

Should you need an interpreter, please contact the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 131 450 and ask to be connected to our number.

To report a child or
young person at risk
of harm from abuse
or neglect contact
DoCS Helpline 132 111
TTY 02 9633 7698

People featured in photographs in this
brochure are models only.

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