

# *Your voice matters*

## *Complaints, feedback and whistleblowing process*

At Helping Hand we are committed to providing safe, professional, high quality care services. Your feedback could make us aware of problems we don't know about, so we want to hear from you.

When giving information to us, you can tell us if you would like it to be handled as a complaint, feedback, or as a whistleblowing disclosure.

Complaints and feedback give you the opportunity to let us know if you are satisfied with the way we provide a particular service, or if you have a concern. We would like to hear your suggestions or comments on any issues that impact you.

Whistleblowing disclosures can be made if you have a serious issue to raise, where you think Helping Hand or one of our workers has broken the law under the Aged Care Act.

## Complaints and Feedback

Anyone can give feedback or make a complaint, and there are several ways to do this. You can:



Use the TellTouch app or kiosk



Speak with a Helping Hand staff member



Call Helping Hand on **1300 653 600**



Complete a feedback form either online at **helpinghand.org.au/feedback** or via a paper form



Send a letter addressed to: **Feedback at Helping Hand, PO Box 66, North Adelaide SA 5006**



Send an email to **feedback@helpinghand.org.au**

You can also contact the Complaints Commissioner to give feedback or make a complaint about our services:

*By phone* 1800 951 822 (free call)

*Online* [agedcarequality.gov.au/contact-us/complaints-concerns/make-complaint](https://agedcarequality.gov.au/contact-us/complaints-concerns/make-complaint)

*By post* Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission, GPO Box 9819, in your capital city

We will not charge you any costs for making, withdrawing, or managing a complaint or feedback.

We will keep the details of your complaint or feedback private and will only share them if the law requires us to, or if sharing is the right thing to do in the situation.

All complaints and feedback will be handled fairly and without bias. We are open and honest in our communication and focus on restoring trust and respect.

You can make a complaint or give feedback anonymously, but this may limit how well we can investigate it.

We manage complaints and feedback according to our complaints and feedback management system.

### Responding to complaints

We will try to fix each issue raised in a complaint by taking the appropriate action as soon as possible after we receive the complaint. Our approach to solving complaints:

- looks at the type of issue raised;
- considers each person receiving our aged care services who is directly affected;
- works to resolve the issue(s) in the complaint; and
- helps us keep improving the way we deliver aged care services.

We will tell you the result of the complaint and explain why that result was reached. If someone made the complaint on your behalf, we will tell both you and them the outcome and the reasons for it. If the complaint was made anonymously, we cannot share the outcome directly with you, but we will still take steps to fix the issues raised.

We will also take reasonable steps to let the right person know how the complaint can be taken to the Complaints Commissioner.

### Responding to feedback

Unless the feedback was given anonymously, we will talk with the person who gave the feedback, the person it relates to, and their supporter (if they have one and give consent).

We will also take reasonable steps to let the right person know how the feedback can be taken to the Complaints Commissioner.

### Our commitment to you

We will take reasonable steps to make sure that anyone who makes a complaint or gives feedback, or has a complaint or feedback made on their behalf, is not treated badly because of it.

We will also take reasonable steps to make sure that no person receiving our aged care services is harmed, victimised, or punished in any way because of a complaint or feedback.

# Whistleblowers

## What counts as protected whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing is protected when you give information to one of the organisations or people listed under the *Making a whistleblowing disclosure* heading below (this can either be verbally or in writing, and can be anonymous); and you have good reason to believe that the information shows that Helping Hand or one of our workers may have broken law under the Aged Care Act. If your information meets these requirements, the Aged Care Act gives you legal protections.

This includes protection from any civil, criminal, or administrative penalty (including disciplinary action) for making a disclosure; and any contractual or other action, including ending a contract, for making a disclosure.

Whistleblowing will not be protected under the Aged Care Act if you share the information with someone not listed under the *Making a whistleblowing disclosure* heading below; or if the information is only about a personal complaint or workplace dispute that does not suggest a breach of the Aged Care Act; or if you knowingly make a false or misleading report.

## Making a whistleblowing disclosure

Anyone can make a whistleblowing disclosure, and there are several ways to do this. You can:

					
Tell Helping Hand directly via phone or online: (08) 8224 7989 <a href="https://helpinghand.org.au/whistleblower">helpinghand.org.au/whistleblower</a>	Talk to the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission: Ph 1800 951 822 or GPO Box 9819 in your capital city	Talk to the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing: Ph 1800 020 103 or GPO Box 9848 Canberra ACT 2601	Tell a registered aged care organisation, or one of its workers, or responsible persons	Tell a police officer Ph 131 444	Talk to an independent aged care advocate (see next page for advocacy details)

## Responding to whistleblower disclosures

All disclosures will be taken seriously and, where needed, investigated according to our procedures. When we investigate, we will look for evidence to support any claims or concerns raised in a whistleblowing disclosure.

Any Helping Hand workers or responsible persons who receive a whistleblowing disclosure must inform Helping Hand via the online form at [helpinghand.org.au/whistleblower](https://helpinghand.org.au/whistleblower)

## Our commitment to you

We will support all whistleblowers while their disclosure is being investigated by keeping their identity confidential (and anonymous if requested). We will do this by removing or covering any details that could reveal who they are; using gender-neutral language when referring to them; where possible, contacting them to check if parts of their disclosure might accidentally identify them; and ensuring disclosures are handled by qualified and appropriate staff.

We will check and support the immediate wellbeing and safety needs of the whistleblower.

We will protect the whistleblower's interests in line with this whistleblower process and the Aged Care Act.

We will deal with any victimisation or threats of victimisation. We will do this by training people who receive disclosures so they can recognise victimisation or threats; and taking action, including disciplinary action, against anyone (including staff) who engages in victimisation or threats. Victimisation or threats of victimisation will not be tolerated.

Any whistleblower who reasonably believes that they are being victimised or threatened because of a disclosure (or because someone thinks they made a disclosure); that their confidentiality or anonymity has been broken; or that they have not received the protections outlined in this document, should report this behaviour to Helping Hand's Whistleblower Reporting Manager at [whistleblower@helpinghand.org.au](mailto:whistleblower@helpinghand.org.au)

## Access to advocates, language services and other assistance

### Advocacy

The National Aged Care Advocacy Program (NACAP) provides free, confidential, and independent advocacy support to older people, their family and carers.

NACAP is delivered by the Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN), with locations in each state and territory. To find out more, visit the OPAN website at [opan.org.au](http://opan.org.au) or call OPAN on **1800 700 600**.

### Language Services

If you need an interpreter, just ask us and we can arrange one for you.

Interpreters are available by phone and in person.

### National Relay Service

If you have a hearing or speech impairment, you can contact us through the National Relay Service, a free Australia-wide phone service.

For TTY (speak and read; type and listen; type and read), call **1800 555 677**

For Voice Relay, call **1300 555 727**

For SMS Relay (text and listen), message **0423 677 767**

National Relay Service website: [accesshub.gov.au/about-the-nrs](http://accesshub.gov.au/about-the-nrs)



Helping Hand