

PRACTICE GUIDE

First Attempt at Resolution (FAAR)

This procedure provides direction for departmental staff on how to apply the First Attempt at Resolution (FAAR) process when managing a person's initial expression of dissatisfaction and is to be read in conjunction with the department's complaints management [policy and procedure](#).

Our department is committed to managing any concerns in a way that is accountable, transparent, timely and fair. We are committed to a culturally responsive complaint process that is flexible and adaptable to build trust, strengthen relationships and improve outcomes for families and children.

Most concerns raised to the department are initially treated as a FAAR. A FAAR is the step prior to a complaint being generated and is therefore outside of the complaints management policy. The goal of a FAAR is to have an early resolution to concerns and allows the point of service that caused the dissatisfaction an opportunity to resolve the concerns quickly and locally. A FAAR should take no longer than 5 business days from the date the concerns were received by the department to be addressed.

Approximately 75% of all concerns raised with the department are successfully resolved through a FAAR process.

How can people raise concerns?

A FAAR can be raised in writing or verbally. This can be:

- directly with the departmental officer they are working with or a supervisor (e.g., child safety officer or team leader at a local service centre)
- with a local regional office
- with the department's Complaints Unit.

Most concerns raised with a local regional office, or the Complaints Unit will be referred to the local service centre in the first instance if there is no record of a previous FAAR.

How do I know if the concerns should be managed as a FAAR?

Identify whether the concerns raised are an expression of dissatisfaction or part of day-to-day operations. Consider is the person:

- raising concerns because they are dissatisfied with a departmental decision (or lack of decision), or service provided (or not provided); and
- seeking a different outcome.



If the answer is yes, then commence a FAAR process.

Where do I record a FAAR?

Record the FAAR in a record keeping system e.g., ICMS complaint case note or iDocs.

- Clearly label the case note as a FAAR.
- If the FAAR was referred by a regional office or the complaints unit, include the Cxx-xxxx reference number included in the email.
- If you don't have access to a suitable record keeping system you can provide the details and outcome of the FAAR to the Complaint Unit to record in the complaints record keeping system, Resolve.

What information do I need to record?

Accurate record keeping enables complaints to be progressed through the departments complaint management system in a timely manner, it is important to record:

- the name and contact details of the person raising the concerns
- what the concerns are about and what outcome they are seeking
- what actions have or will be taken to resolve the concerns.

What can't be addressed as a FAAR?

Staff may escalate an initial expression of dissatisfaction to be managed as complaint if the concerns include:

- alleged limitation of the Human Rights Act 2019
- Conduct and Performance Excellence (CaPE) allegations
- alleged breaches of the Information Privacy Act 2009
- Public Interest Disclosures

How do I support a person to raise a complaint?


If an initial expression of dissatisfaction is escalated to a complaint or, if after the FAAR, the person remains dissatisfied, you can support them to raise a complaint by directing them to:

- your regional office complaints team
- the Complaints Unit
- the department's compliments and complaints webpage.

Office of Public Guardian (OPG) and FAAR processes

The department and the OPG have an agreement about complaints management processes: *Memorandum of Understanding Concerning Management of Complaints (MOU)*.

- It outlines the process for referable matters lodged by the OPG.
- It describes the role of Community Visitors (CV) and Child Advocate Legal Officers (CALO) whose statutory functions include raising concerns, disputes, or complaints (called 'referable matters') in relation to or on behalf of children and young people in care.

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- In most instances, a CV or CALO will initially raise a 'referrable matter' with a child safety officer and a senior team leader for a local resolution through the FAAR process.
 - If the OPG remain dissatisfied following the FAAR process, the OPG may lodge a complaint with the service manager, the regional office, or the Complaints Unit.

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