




Minister for Communities, Women and Youth
Minister for Child Safety
Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence

Your reference: Petition 2739-17
Our reference: COM 05349-2017

1 William Street Brisbane 4000
GPO Box 806 Brisbane
Queensland 4001 Australia
Telephone +61 7 3719 7500
Email communities@ministerial.qld.gov.au

- 6 OCT 2017

Mr Neil Laurie
Clerk of Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie 

I refer to petition number 2739-17 tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 5 September 2017 regarding Child Safety's complaints process. Please accept this letter as my response to this petition.

The Palaszczuk Government takes public sector accountability, ethics and the professionalism of its officers very seriously. The Government demonstrates this commitment by expecting all public sector employees to uphold the Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service by committing to, and demonstrating, the intent and spirit of the ethics principles and values. The Code is based on the public sector ethics principles, as outlined in the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*. The Government also expects public sector employees to comply with all relevant legislation and government directives, policies, circulars and standards.

I acknowledge that many Queenslanders have very high expectations of the department, due to its role in delivering services to vulnerable children and their families, and those expectations are shared by the Palaszczuk Government. Our Child Safety and complaints management staff are dedicated to providing the highest level of service possible.

The Queensland Government takes complaints seriously and has implemented a 'best practice' complaints management system and culture aligned to the Australian/New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 10002:2014 Guidelines for Complaint Management in Organisations.

Following the Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry, oversight of child safety complaints is the responsibility of the Queensland Ombudsman. I am pleased to advise that following several reviews made by the Queensland Ombudsman of the department's complaints management system, all complaint management processes for the department have been completely transformed to improve complaint management handling processes. This has included the revision of all processes, procedures and systems used for complaint handling, improved reporting to identify trends, and the development of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Office of the Public Guardian for the management of Child Safety Complaints.

The department is strongly committed to improving responsiveness to the feedback of our clients and to improving complaints handling. Complainant surveys are conducted on an annual basis, with feedback used to improve our practices. The department often has to make tough decisions that people may not like; however, we are committed to engaging with families, children and young people to ensure their voices are heard and their needs are met.

Investigations into the allegations and recommendations made in the e-petition do not support any further reviews of the current complaints management system. The department is confident that the complaints management framework, policies, procedures and guidelines implemented in 2016, based on the reviews and recommendations made by the Commission of Inquiry into Child Protection, the Queensland Ombudsman and the department's internal audit process, have provided major improvements to how complaints are managed and how children and young people interact with the department.

If anyone has concerns about decisions made by the department, or wishes to make a formal complaint about those decisions they should contact the Complaints Unit by telephone on 1800 080 464, by email to feedback@communities.qld.gov.au or by mail to GPO Box 806, Brisbane QLD 4001.

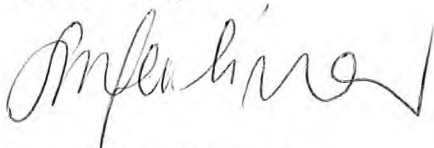
Should anyone remain dissatisfied with the outcome, the complaint can be referred to the Queensland Ombudsman by telephone on 3005 7000 or 1800 068 908, by mail to GPO Box 3314, Brisbane 4001; by email to ombudsman@ombudsman.qld.gov.au or in person at Level 18, 53 Albert Street, Brisbane.

Where anyone has concerns or information about corruption and criminal acts they should immediately refer those concerns to the Crime and Corruption Commission by telephone on 3360 6060 or 1800 061 611, via email to mailbox@ccc.qld.gov.au or fax 3360 6333.

I trust this information is of assistance to the petitioner and I thank the petitioner for raising their concerns with me.

I would be pleased if you would arrange the tabling of this response under Standing Order 125(3). If you require any further information or assistance in relation to this matter, please contact Ms Cynthia Kennedy, Chief of Staff in my office on 3719 7500.

Yours sincerely



Shannon Fentiman MP
Minister for Communities, Women and Youth
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