

ACT COMPLAINT AND ADVOCACY AGENCIES

Complaint and Advocacy Agencies in the ACT

There are organisations in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) which can offer advice and support to you in making a complaint. Should you be dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint, you may wish to consider contacting the ACT and Commonwealth Ombudsman, the ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal or the ACT Human Rights Commission. If you feel you need help at any time during the complaints process, you can contact one of the advocacy agencies.

Complaints Escalation Agencies:

ACT and Commonwealth Ombudsman

Investigates complaints from people about administrative actions or decisions made by ACT and Federal Government departments or bodies. The Ombudsman can also receive and investigate Public Interest Disclosures along with the Auditor General and Attorney General. An independent, confidential and impartial body with recommendation powers if complaints are found to be justified.

Phone: (02) 6276 3773

Indigenous Line: 1800 060 0111

Complaints Hotline: 1300 362 072

Address: Level 5, 14 Childers Square, Canberra City ACT

Postal Address: ACT Ombudsman, GPO Box 442, Canberra ACT 2601

Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au

Website: www.ombudsman.act.gov.au

ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal (ACAT)

The ACAT consolidates 16 jurisdictions and tribunals including Administrative Appeals Tribunal, Discrimination Tribunal, Guardianship and Management of Property Tribunal, Mental Health Tribunal and Residential Tenancies Tribunal.

Phone: (02) 6207 1740

Address: ACT Health Building, 4/1 Moore Street, Canberra ACT 2601

Postal Address: GPO Box 370, Canberra ACT

Email: tribunal@act.gov.au

Website: www.acat.act.gov.au

ACT Human Rights Commission

Encourages and assists in the resolution of complaints and promoting rights, assisting users and providers of disability services, health services, services for children and young people and services for older people to make improvements in the provision of services. Members of the commission include Children and Young People Commissioner, Disability and Community Services Commissioner, Discrimination Commissioner, Health Services Commissioner and Human Rights Commissioner.

Phone: (02) 6205 2222

TTY: (02) 6205 1666

Address: Level 2, 11 Moore Street, Canberra ACT 2601

Postal Address: GPO Box 158, Canberra ACT 2601

Email: human.rights@act.gov.au **or** ACTkids@act.gov.au **or** victimsupport@act.gov.au

Website: www.hrc.act.gov.au

Advocacy Agencies:

Aboriginal Legal Service NSW/ACT Ltd

The Aboriginal Legal Service (ALS) provides legal services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the South-East region of ACT, Queanbeyan, Goulburn, Cooma and Yass. Specialising in criminal law, children's care, protection law and family law, they assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men, women and children through representation in court, advice and information, and referral to further support services.

Phone: (02) 6120 8800

Care and Protection Law Practice: 1800 733 233

Police Charges and Court Matters: 1800 765 767

Address: Level 3, Colonial Mutual Building, 17-21 University Ave, Canberra ACT 2601

Postal Address: PO Box 434, Canberra ACT 2601

Website: www.alsnswact.org.au

ACT Children and Young People Commissioner (CYPC)

The CYPC is an independent statutory office created under the *Human Rights Commission Act 2005*. This means the CYPC is funded by the ACT Government and is independent from the Government.

The CYPC has a number of roles including consulting with children and young people and resolving complaints and concerns about services for children and young people.

Phone: (02) 6205 2222

Victim Support: 1800 822 272

TTY: (02) 6205 166

Address: Level 2, 11 Moore Street, Canberra City ACT 2601

Postal Address: ACT Human Rights Commission, GPO Box 158, Canberra ACT 2601

Email: human.rights@act.gov.au **or** ACTkids@act.gov.au **or** victimsupport@act.gov.au

Website: www.hrc.act.gov.au

ACT Disability, Aged and Carer Advocacy Service (ADACAS)

ADACAS is an independent, not-for-profit advocacy service for people with disabilities, older people and their carers. ADACAS provides free independent advocacy in the ACT.

Phone: (02) 6242 5060

TTY: 133 677 and ask for 02 6242 5060

Address: Unit 14, Weston Community Hub, Cnr Gritten & Hilder Sts, Weston ACT 2611

Postal Address: PO Box 3167 Weston Creek ACT 2611

Email: adacas@adacas.org.au

Website: www.adacas.org.au

ACT Law Society – Legal Advice Bureau

The Law Society operates a Legal Advice Bureau (LAB) at lunchtimes by appointment only. Members of the Society operate a roster at the Society's Civic office to give initial advice to any member of the public free of charge. LAB solicitors are not available for the drafting of documents or for court appearances. After the consultation you may be referred to another solicitor or, if eligible, to Legal Aid. The Legal Advice Bureau operates between 12pm and 2.30pm on weekdays, with Wednesday's reserved for family law matters.

Phone: (02) 6274 0300

Address: Level 4, 1 Farrell Place, Canberra ACT 2601

Postal Address: GPO Box 1562, Canberra ACT 2601

Email: mail@actlawsociety.asn.au

Website: www.actlawsociety.asn.au/

ACT Mental Health Consumer Network Inc

A consumer-led organisation representing the interests of mental health consumers to service providers, community and government at all levels. The Network is committed to social justice and the inclusion of people with experience of mental illness.

Phone: (02) 6230 5796

Address: Level 2 Room 11, Griffin Centre, 20 Genge Street, Canberra ACT 2601

Postal Address: PO Box 469, Civic Square ACT 2608

Email: actmhcn@actmhcn.org.au

Website: www.actmhcn.org.au

ACT Official Visitor Scheme

The Scheme provides a monitoring and complaints system for entitled persons in a visitable place, who are dependent on the service provider or accommodation manager supporting them. The ACT has Official Visitors for Children and Young People, ACT Health (Mental Health), Corrections, Disability and Housing (Homelessness) who visit places and make enquiries related to persons staying in places known as a visitable place. Visitable places are determined by the relevant legislation.

Phone: 1800 150 036 or 6207 9800

TTY: 1800 424 183

Address: Public Trustee and Guardian, Ground Floor, 221 London Circuit, Canberra ACT 2601

Postal Address: PO Box 221, Civic Square ACT 2608

Children and Young People Official Visitor: C/- OCYFS, Strategic Partnerships, GPO Box 158, Canberra ACT 2601

Email: ptg@act.gov.au

Website: www.ptg.act.gov.au/resources/visitor-scheme

Advocacy for Inclusion

Provides individual, self and systemic advocacy for people with disabilities who live in the ACT and region to enable each individual to overcome discrimination and empower them to control their lives and participate in the community.

Phone: (02) 6257 4005

Postal Address: Suite 2.02 Griffin Centre, 20 Genge Street, Canberra ACT 2601

Email: info@advocacyforinclusion.org

Website: www.advocacyforinclusion.org

Australian Red Cross ACT – Support Services for Birth Families

Provision of support and advice to assist birth families to self-advocate within the Child and Youth Protection system.

Phone: (02) 6234 7600

Address: Level 1, 3 Dann Close, Garran ACT 2605

Postal Address: PO Box 610, Mawson ACT 2607

Website: www.redcross.org.au

Canberra Community Law (formerly Welfare Rights & Legal Centre)

A community legal centre dedicated to providing legal services to people on low incomes or facing other disadvantage related to tenancy, public housing, homelessness, social security, social support, and disability discrimination law.

Social Security and Tenancy Advice: (02) 6218 7977 (Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri 9.30am-1pm)

Housing Law and Public Housing Duty Lawyer: (02) 6218 7977

Disability and Discrimination Law: (02) 6218 7918

Dhurrawang Aboriginal Human Rights Program: (02) 6218 7900

Street Law (outreach legal service for the homeless): (02) 6218 7995 or 1800 787 529

Night Time Legal Advice: (02) 6218 7999 or drop in (Tue 6pm-8pm)

Socio-Legal Practice: (02) 6218 7900

Address: Level 1, 21 Barry Drive, Turner ACT 2612

Postal Address: PO Box 337, Civic Square ACT 2608

Email: info@canberracommunitylaw.org.au

Website: www.canberracommunitylaw.org.au

Carers ACT

Through this service advocacy staff can help carers negotiate complex bureaucracy, link into financial or legal service support and access services such as the Human Rights Commission and Ombudsman.

Information and Advice: 1800 242 636

Respite Services: 1800 052 222

Head Office: (02) 6296 9900

Address: 2/80 Beaufort Crescent, Holt ACT 2615

Email: carers@carersact.org.au

Website: www.carersact.org.au

Children with Disability Australia

Children with Disability Australia (CDA) is the national peak body which represents children and young people (aged 0-25) with disability and their families.

Phone: (03) 9417 1025 or 1800 222 660

Email: info@cyda.org.au

Website: www.cyda.org.au/home

Create Foundation

CREATE Foundation is the national peak consumer body representing the voices of children and young people with an out-of-home care experience (including kinship care, foster care and residential care).

Phone: (02)6232 2409 or 1800 655 105

Address: Cnr Cooyong Street and Scotts Crossing, Civic ACT 2601

Postal Address: PO Box 603, Civic Square ACT 2608

Email: act@create.org.au

Website: www.create.org.au

Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline

An Australia-wide telephone hotline for reporting abuse and neglect of people with disabilities using government funded services. Allegations are referred to the appropriate authority for investigation.

Phone: 1800 880 052

Website: www.jobaccess.gov.au

Family Inclusion Network ACT (FIN ACT Inc)

FIN ACT Inc is a not-for-profit organisation which promotes the needs of parents, children and families involved in the child protection system. FIN ACT Inc does not provide services however, can offer you informal advice and/or referral to services which may assist you to understand what is required of you and work towards your goals.

Phone: Not available

Postal Address: PO Box 4093, Kingston ACT 2604

Email: finact@ymail.com

Website: www.finact.com.au

Kinship and Foster Carers Advocacy

This service offers support to foster carers or kinship carers to represent their views and assist with advocacy.

Phone: 0447 632 067

CYPS After Hours Crisis Services: 1300 556 729

Email: kinshipfostercare@carersact.org.au

Website: www.carersact.or.au/kinship-and-foster-carers-advocacy

Legal Aid ACT

Legal Aid ACT provides legal advice, information, assistance and representation, especially to people who are socially or economically disadvantaged. This service can assist with matters such as criminal law, family law and some civil law issues. Legal Aid also provides a free Helpline.

Phone: (02) 6243 3411

Legal Aid ACT Helpline: 1300 654 314

Address: 2 Allsop Street, Canberra City ACT 2601

Postal Address: GPO Box 512, Canberra ACT 2601

Email: legalaid@legalaidact.org.au

Website: www.legalaidact.org.au

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Quality and Safeguards Commission

The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission is an independent agency established to improve the quality and safety of NDIS supports and services. The NDIS Commission responds to concerns, complaints and reportable incidents, including abuse and neglect of NDIS participants. It also registers and regulates NDIS providers and oversees the NDIS Code of Conduct and NDIS Practice Standards.

Phone: 1800 035 544

Postal Address: NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, PO Box 210, Penrith NSW 2750

Email: contactcentre@ndiscrimination.gov.au

Website: www.ndiscommission.gov.au

Older Person ACT Legal Service

The Older Person ACT Legal Service provides support, information and referral to services that may assist older people in abusive situations.

Phone: (02) 6243 3436

National Elder Abuse Hotline: 1800 353 374

Email: www.legalaidact.org.au/opals

Onelink

OneLink brings together families, support services, and community resources to help promote the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and families. OneLink can also assist workers in other community organisations who are looking for information and support to help manage their client's more complex issues.

Onelink is delivered in partnership between Woden Community Service and Belconnen Community Service with funding assistance from the ACT Government's Community Services Directorate.

Phone: 1800 176 468

Email: info@onelink.org.au

Website: www.onelink.org.au

People with Disabilities ACT

People with Disabilities (PWD) is the peak consumer voice for people with disabilities in the ACT. PWD ACT represents, promotes and supports the collective interests of people with disabilities.

Phone: (02) 6286 4223

Address: SHOUT Building One, Pearce community Centre, Collett Place Pearce ACT

Postal Address: PWD ACCT PO Box 717 Mawson ACT 2607

Email: admin@pwdact.org.au

Website: pwdact.org.au

Public Advocate ACT

Promotes and individually represents the rights and interests of people with who are not able to represent or protect themselves including children and young people, adults with a mental illness or impaired decision-making ability who require protection from abuse, exploitation or neglect.

Phone: (02) 6205 2222

SMS: 0466 169 997

Address: Level 2, 11 Moore Street, Canberra City ACT 2601

Postal Address: PO Box 158 Canberra City ACT 2601

Email: hrc@act.gov.au

Website: hrc.act.gov.au/public-advocate

RSL ACT Veteran's Support Centre (VSC)

Provides pension, advocacy and welfare services veterans and serving ADF personnel to prepare and submit claims and appeals under the various Veterans' entitlement Acts.

Phone: (02) 6285 1931

Address: Grant Cameron Community Centre 27 Mully Street Holder ACT

Tenants' Union ACT Inc

The Tenants' Union ACT is a not for profit community legal centre offering free services for people renting their homes in the ACT. It provides free tenancy advice, advocacy and referrals as well as information, presentations and training.

Phone: (02) 6247 1026

Address: 21 Barry Drive, Turner ACT 2612

Postal Address: PO Box 8, Civic Square ACT 2608

Website: <http://www.tenantsact.org.au>

Women’s Legal Centre Inc

This service is a community legal centre for women in Canberra and the surrounding area which aims to improve women’s access to justice. The Centre provides free, confidential telephone advice to women on legal issues and can refer clients to appropriate lawyers and other support services. No drop-in service, by appointment only.

Phone Advice Line: (02) 6257 4499 (Monday to Friday 9.30am – 12pm)

Outside Canberra: 1800 634 669

Administration: (02) 6257 4377

Postal Address: PO Box 1726 Canberra City ACT 2601

Email: admin@womenslegalact.org

Website: www.womenslegalact.org

Women with Disabilities ACT

Women with Disabilities ACT is a peer support and systemic advocacy group of women with disabilities who live in the ACT and region.

Phone: (02) 6291 6842 or 0468 324 695

Address: Level 2 71 Northbourne Avenue Canberra ACT 2601

Website: www.wwdact.org.au

Further Community Service Information

CONTACT Canberra provides the Community Information Services program and offers the general public information and referral to community services, organisations and support groups in the Canberra region. It includes a shopfront where low income earners can book time on public computers and are provided with free phone use to call government agencies and community organisations.

Phone: (02) 6248 7988

Address: Room G02, Ground Floor, New Griffin Centre, 20 Genge Street, Canberra ACT 2601

Website: www.vc-act.org.au

Accessibility

The ACT Government is committed to making its information, services, events and venues, accessible to as many people as possible.

If you have difficulty reading a standard printed document and would like to receive this publication in an **alternative format** – such as large print or audio – please telephone **(02) 6207 0334**.

If English is not your first language and you require the **translating and interpreting services** – please telephone **131 450**.

If you are deaf or hearing impaired and require the **National Relay Service**, phone **133 677 then ask for 133 427**