

# Complaints and dispute resolution – Customer Service Policy

1 October 2022 | Rev 3

## 1. Purpose

AusNet is committed to putting customers at the heart of everything we do. Our focus is on understanding and supporting the needs of our customers with the aim of creating a seamless customer experience, building trust and doing what's right for our local communities.

Every customer has the right to make a complaint if they are dissatisfied with the services we provide. We will not discriminate against anyone as a result of that person making a complaint.

AusNet Services has developed this policy to ensure complaints are managed well, foster a culture that encourages feedback and support the business continuously improve.

The aim of this policy is to outline AusNet Services' commitment and overall approach to managing and resolving customer complaints by:

- putting in place an open and transparent complaint handling system
- specifying the key performance indicators to which we will hold ourselves accountable including timeframes for resolving complaints
- clarifying the roles and responsibilities of our employees and contractors
- ensuring staff handle complaints fairly and objectively
- ensuring staff have the skills and training to manage and/or escalate customer complaints
- setting out how employees will record and analyse complaint data to identify where we can improve our services.
- managing complaints in line with legislative requirements.

## 2. Scope

This policy outlines the minimum standards expected from our business in the management and resolution of complaints.

This policy applies to all:

- AusNet Services employees including permanent, temporary, casual, or part-time employees, contractors or volunteers.
- Individuals or organisations who wish to make a complaint or dispute relating to AusNet Services.

This policy does not apply to:

- complaints already covered under other statutory review mechanisms
- complaints made about retailer partners
- complaints made by AusNet Services employees or AusNet Services contractors about incidents of harassment, discrimination and bullying or other offensive workplace behaviour – this process is covered by (Code of Conduct).

In developing this Policy, AusNet Services has adopted industry best practice and ensured that its complaints management process is compliant with the Australian Standard AS ISO 10002- 2014 'Customer Satisfaction – Guidelines for complaints handling in organisations'.

## 3. Principles, pathways and considerations

### 3.1 Guiding principles

This policy is supported by these guiding principles:

**Commitment** – we are committed to resolving complaints and have a culture that recognises an individual's right to complain. We value complaints and recognise them as being part of our business of serving our communities and improving service delivery.

**Accessibility** – people with a range of needs can easily complain and staff actively assist them to navigate the complaints process.

**Transparency** – we make it clear how to complain, where to complain and how the complaint will be handled. The steps taken to respond to a complaint are recorded and will stand up to scrutiny.

**Timeliness** – issues should be resolved quickly rather than allowing them to escalate through inaction

**Objectivity and fairness** – complaints are dealt with courteously, impartially, within established timeframes and are assessed on merit.

**Privacy** – AusNet Services treats the complaint respectfully and handles all personal information in accordance with the Privacy Act and AusNet Services Privacy Policy

**Accountability** - we are accountable internally and externally for our decision making and complaint handling performance. We provide explanations and reasons for decisions and ensure that our decisions are subject to appropriate review processes.

**Continuous improvement** – acting on, learning from and using complaint data helps us identify problems and improve services.

- Accessibility, independence, fairness, accountability, efficiency, effectiveness

### 3.2 How to make a complaint

Customers are able to lodge a complaint or dispute relating to AusNet Services by:

- Online: [www.ausnetservices.com.au/contact-us](http://www.ausnetservices.com.au/contact-us)
- Email: [customersupport@ausnetservices.com.au](mailto:customersupport@ausnetservices.com.au)
- Phone: 1300 360 795 (8am-5pm, Monday to Friday)
- Mail: Locked Bag 14051, Melbourne VIC 8001

### 3.2 Time frame

AusNet Services is committed to resolving complaints in a timely manner.

Complaints that cannot be resolved at first contact will:

- be acknowledged within two business days of receipt
- responded to with the aim of resolving them within 10 business days.

If the complaint is more complex in nature and cannot be resolved in this timeframe we will engage with the customer or their agent at regular intervals to inform them of the progress of their complaint.

If your complaint is not resolved to your satisfaction, you have the right to contact the Energy & Water Ombudsman of Victoria (EWOV). They provide an independent service, easy to access and free of charge to you.

They can be contacted by:

Phone: 1800 500 509

Website: <https://www.ewov.com.au/contact-us>

## Frivolous/vexatious complaints or unacceptable behaviour

Most people who use our services act reasonably and responsibly in their interactions with us, even when they are experiencing high levels of distress, frustration or anger about their complaint.

In a very small number of cases some people behave in ways that are inappropriate and unacceptable, despite our best efforts to help them.

In the event that unreasonable behaviour puts the safety or wellbeing of our employees or contractors at risk, AusNet Services reserve the right to cease engagement with a complainant. In extreme cases this may also mean to restrict or completely terminate a complainant's access to our services with regard to complaint management.