

Compliments and Complaints Unit (CCU)

Factsheet: Unreasonable Complainant Conduct

The Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) acknowledges a customer's right to make a complaint. The QAS expects that complainant conduct will be appropriate and reasonable and must not compromise employee safety and wellbeing.

The QAS will treat all complainants with fairness and respect, and QAS staff are entitled to be treated with the same level of fairness and respect they afford to complainants.

What is unreasonable complainant conduct?

Conduct is unreasonable if it involves actions or behaviours, which because of the nature or frequency, raises substantial health, safety, wellbeing, resource or equity issues for the QAS, its staff, other service users or the complainant themselves.

QAS considers the physical and emotional safety of all parties involved in a complaint to be paramount.

Unreasonable complaint conduct is categorised as:

- Unreasonable persistence
- Unreasonable demands
- Unreasonable lack of cooperation
- Unreasonable arguments
- Unreasonable behaviours

Mutual responsibilities

In managing complaints, both the QAS and the complainants have responsibilities regarding conduct.

Complainants are expected to:

- cooperate in a respectful way.
- understand that unreasonable conduct will not be tolerated by the QAS.
- not threaten, abuse or act in a threatening manner towards QAS staff.
- be polite, courteous and cooperative when interacting with QAS staff.
- comply with any management strategies imposed by the QAS.

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- understand that the QAS may terminate contact if conduct is unreasonable, but the complaint will still be dealt with, unless it is frivolous or vexatious.

The QAS will:

- have an effective complaints management system, policy and procedures which outline how we will receive, assess, handle, record and review complaints
- ensure that all complaints are dealt with professionally, fairly, impartially and ethically
- ensure that staff treat complainants with courtesy and respect
- ensure that complainants are not subjected to any detrimental action in reprisal for making a complaint
- help complainants understand reasonable and unreasonable conduct.
- set boundaries and clearly explain the consequences of unacceptable conduct
- take action where unacceptable complainant conduct occurs.

What will QAS do if unreasonable complainant conduct occurs?

Where unreasonable conduct is identified, the QAS will implement strategies to enable the customer complaint or internal review to be productively resolved. Where the conduct is not able to be managed through various strategies, the QAS may consider the option to terminate contact with the complainant.

It is important to note that unless the complaint is frivolous or vexatious, the complaint will still be addressed even if contact with the complainant is terminated. Complainants can seek an external review through:

- [Queensland Ombudsman](#) – the Queensland Ombudsman is an independent body who investigate complaints about the actions and decisions of Queensland agencies.
- [Queensland Human Rights Commission](#) – the Queensland Human Rights Commission is an independent body who handles complaints under the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* and the *Human Right Act 2019*.
- [Office of the Health Ombudsman](#) - the Office of the Health Ombudsman is Queensland's health service complaints agency. They are an independent statutory body and the one place all Queenslanders should go if they have a complaint about a health service provider or a health service provided to them, a family member or someone in their care.

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Want more information?

Customers

For more information on the QAS Complaints Management Framework refer to the [QAS Website](#) or email QAS.Feedback@ambulance.qld.gov.au.

Employees

For more information on the QAS Complaints Management Framework refer to the [QAS Portal](#) or email QAS.Feedback@ambulance.qld.gov.au.