



Complaints to local councils

Victorian Ombudsman



Easy English



Hard words

This book has some hard words.

The first time we write a hard word

- the word is in **blue**
- we write what the hard word means.

You can get help with this book



You can get someone to help you

- read this book
- know what this book is about



- find more information.

About this book



This book is written by the Victorian Ombudsman.

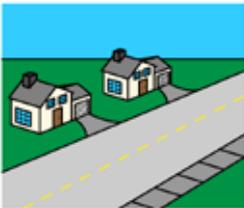


This book tells you how **local councils** deal with **complaints**.



Local councils are groups of people in charge of things in your community such as

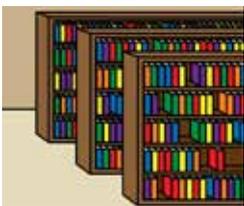
- rubbish collection



- local roads



- parks and pools



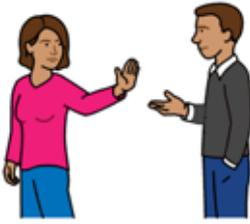
- libraries

- parking fines.



Complaints mean you tell someone you are **not** happy about a service.

Why did we make this book?



Some councils did **not** deal with complaints the right way in the past.



We made a survey to see if councils now do a better job with complaints.

Complaints are a good thing.



Complaints help councils

- know when there is a problem

- do a better job next time



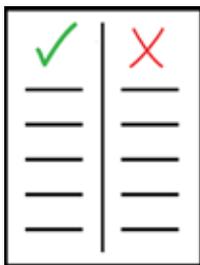
- make the community better.

What did we find?

Things councils did well



Our survey showed councils now deal with complaints in a better way.



Many councils have

- made more rules that tell staff how to deal with complaints the right way



- replied to complaints in a good amount of time



- made it easy for people to complain in a way that works for them. For example

- online

- in a letter

- in person.



Things councils must do better

Our survey found things councils can do better.



Councils must make **accessible** ways for people to make complaints.



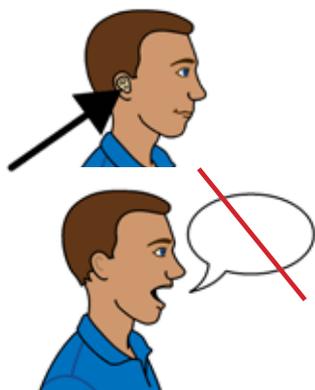
Accessible means you can make a complaint in a way that works for you.

It may be hard for some people to make a complaint.



For example

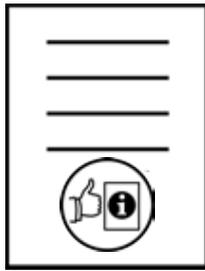
- people who can **not** read well
- people who do **not** speak or read English



- for people with disability.

For example

- deaf people
- people who find it hard to speak.

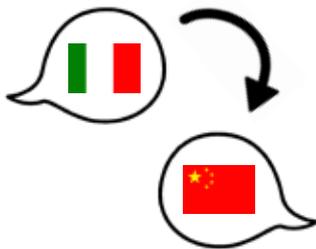


Councils must give the community information about complaints

- in Easy English
- in other languages



- with **translation and interpreting services**.

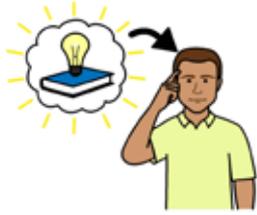


Translation and interpreting services

- turn information from one language into another language



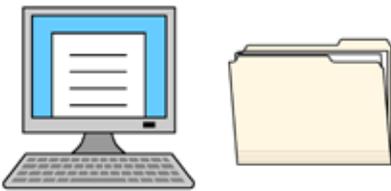
- help people who do **not** speak or write English understand information.



Councils need to learn from complaints.



We found councils do **not** always record complaints the right way.



The council must do a better job to

- record all complaints



- talk about complaints.



When councils record all complaints they can

- see all the things people say
- fix problems the right way.

What happens next?



We will help councils deal with complaints.



We will update our guide that gives councils tips on how to deal with complaints well.



The government agrees with our ideas.

The government will do 3 things.



1 Explain what complaints mean to all councils in Victoria.



2 Make a rule all councils need to write a plan to deal with complaints.

3 Make a rule all councils must tell the community how many complaints they get.



More information

For more information contact
the Victorian Ombudsman



Call 03 9613 6222



Website www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au



If you need help to speak or listen

Contact Victorian Ombudsman through the
National Relay Service or NRS.

Call the NRS help desk

1800 555 660

Go to the NRS website

communications.gov.au/accesshub/nrs

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Scope's Communication and Inclusion Resource Centre wrote the Easy English version in September, 2019.

To contact Scope call 1300 472 673 or visit www.scopeaust.org.au

To see the original contact Vic Ombudsman.

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