

Approved Building Surveyors Pty Ltd

Complaints Handling Policy (CHP)

As established and adopted 1st July 2026 in accordance with the Building Surveyors Code of Conduct – Victoria

Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation.

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Document Manifest

Director of company and Registered Practitioner: Lloyd Llewellyn, Lewis

Responsible officer (implementation of CHP): Lloyd Llewellyn, Lewis

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Relevant Legislation:

Building Act 1993 (Vic)

Building Regulations 2018 (Vic)

Related policies:

Building Plumbing Commission (Vic) – Building surveyors code of conduct

Australian Institute of Building Surveyors – Code of Professional Conduct 2019

Australian Institute of Building Surveyors – Professional Practice Standards 2025

Australian Institute of Building Surveyors – Professional Standards Scheme 2026

Approved Building Surveyors Pty Ltd – Approved Privacy policy

Approved Building Surveyors Pty Ltd – Approved General Terms and Conditions

Standards Australia – AS 10002:2022, Guidelines for complaint management in organisations

Variations and Revisions:

Revision 01 – dated 01st July 2026

Introduction

Any person, organization or their representative (Including clients, consumers, service users, and customers) has a right to lodge a complaint in accordance with this policy.

Approved Building Surveyors Pty Ltd operates as a professional building surveying and consultancy company. We aim to provide the best service possible when undertaking our practice.

In recognition of our commitment to continual professional development Approved Building Surveyors Pty Ltd is committed to Enabling, managing, developing and learning from our complaints handling process.

This policy includes documented procedures on how complaints can be made, how complaints are managed, and what responsibilities and obligations Approved Building Surveyors Pty Ltd is subject to.

This policy is formatted in accordance with guidance documentation published by several organisations including, the BPC, AIBS, Standards Australia and the Victorian Ombudsman.

Objectives

This policy aims to:

1. put in place an open and transparent complaint handling system
2. specify the key performance indicators to which we will hold ourselves accountable
3. establish our timeframes for resolving complaints
4. clarify the roles and responsibilities of organisation staff
5. ensure staff handle complaints fairly and objectively
6. set out how staff record and analyse complaint data to identify where we can improve our services.

Guiding principles

This policy is based on seven principles.

1. **Commitment**
We are committed to resolving valid and relevant 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 the community and improving service delivery.
2. **Accessibility**
People with a range of needs can easily complain and staff actively assist them to navigate the complaints process.
3. **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.

4. Objectivity and fairness

Complaints are dealt with courteously, impartially, within established timeframes and are assessed on merit.

5. Privacy

Complaint information is handled according to privacy laws and other relevant legislation. We provide clear information about how we handle personal information. Complaint data is de-identified if reported on more widely.

6. 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.

7. Continuous improvement

Acting on, learning from and using complaint data helps us identify problems and improve services.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff employed by Approved Building Surveyors Pty Ltd. It also applies to third party contractors carrying out services on behalf of Approved Building Surveyors Pty Ltd.

Definitions

In this policy-

comments means a verbal or written remark expressing an opinion or reaction;

complaint means an expression of dissatisfaction with the quality of an action taken, decision made, or service provided by an organisation or its contractor, or a delay or failure in providing a service, taking an action, or making a decision by an organisation or its contractor;

complainant means person, organization or their representative (including clients, consumers, service users, and customers) making a complaint;

characteristics means feature or quality belonging to a person, place, or thing, which serves to identify them;

complaint management system encompasses all aspects of the policies, procedures, practices, staff, hardware and software used by an organization for the management of complaints;

demographics means statistical data relating to the population and particular groups within it, including socio-economic information expressed statistically, such as employment, education, income and other factors;

disputes means unresolved complaints escalated internally or externally, or both;

feedback means any opinions, comments and expressions of interest or concern, made directly or indirectly, explicitly or implicitly to or about the organization, its products, services, staff or its handling of a complaint;

governing body means the person or group of persons that has the ultimate responsibility and authority for an organization's activities, governance and policies to which top management reports and by which top management is held accountable;

service request means an expression of dissatisfaction about poor service, quality, unacceptable behaviour, or unresolved issues;

social media means any online social networks used to disseminate information through online social interaction;

unreasonable conduct means any behaviour by a person which because of its nature or frequency, raises substantial health, safety, resource or equity issues for the people involved in the complaint process;

vulnerability means a state of being especially susceptible to detriment due to circumstances including disability, age, literacy levels, gender, trauma, and stress.

Roles and responsibilities of agency staff and contractors

Frontline staff

Frontline staff are to provide support to *complainants* in the making of *complaints*, address *complaints* within their capacity and capability, and formalise the collection of information related to the *complaint*, including its *characteristics* and *feedback* given by the complainant.

Where frontline staff are not able to resolve the *complaint* themselves. They may refer the *complainant* to manager or director staff to resolve the *complaint*.

Responsibilities of the frontline staff:

1. Immediately resolve *complaints* within their skillset and capabilities;
2. Receive *complaint* and identify *complainants* intention;
3. Help complainants in the submission of the *complaint to our office*;
4. If necessary advise *complainants* where a *complaint* likely falls outside of the responsibility or purview of Approved Building Surveyors Pty Ltd; and
5. Where necessary direct the *complainant* to the relevant statutory authorities or the like in relation to the *complaint* and subsequently forward the received advice to the *complainant*.

Managers and directors

Director staff are to investigate the *complaint*, request further information, make determinations and recommendations, or undertake statutory action to address the complaint. Where appropriate

director staff shall respond to all written *complaints* by identifying a decision made by themselves and advising the recipient of a suitable resolution pathway or pathways available.

Responsibilities of managers and directors:

1. Investigate a *complaint* or matter brought to their attention;
2. Assess written statement or account made by *complainant*;
3. Provide sufficient response and pathway to resolution or present options for alternative resolutions pathways;
4. Undertake any enforcement action to either mitigate non compliance or address the *complainants complaint*.
5. Notify third party contractors where a *complaint* is made related to their conduct.
6. Make a determination regarding the continued use of third-party contractors and respond to *complaints* made related to third-party contractors.

Third party contractors

Third party contractors are required to undertake their role and statutory functions in accordance with the *complaints* handling policy and adhere to the guiding principles.

External Review (Independent Surveyor or Statutory authority)

Where a *complainant* remains dissatisfied with a resolution pathway or resolution pathway options, director staff or the *complainant* may seek third party review of the *complaints* handling process. Any suitably qualified professional or relevant statutory authority can make representations on behalf of the *complainant* in this regard.

How to make a complaint

A person can make a complaint in a number of ways.

Mail: PO Box 250, Noble Park Vic 3174

Telephone: 03 9794 8810

Email: Admin@approved.net.au / Lloyd@approved.net.au

In person: 8 Stevenson Avenue, Dandenong North Vic 3175

NOTE: all complaints should be made through written statement. This reduces doubt and helps us to address specific issues the complainant may have. Where written statement is not possible complaints may still be addressed however sufficient outcome may not be guaranteed.

Accessibility

Anyone who has been affected by a decision or action (including a failure to make a decision or take action) can make a *complaint*.

We accept and respond to anonymous *complaints*, provided we have received enough information to do so. Where there is insufficient information to make a determination we may request further information be provided.

Complaint handling procedure

Overview

We take a four-tiered approach to *complaint* handling, as follows:

1. Frontline resolution: frontline staff receive the *complaint*, assess it, and resolve it immediately, if possible.
2. Investigation, if required: if frontline staff cannot resolve the *complaint*, they will refer it to an officer for investigation.
3. Internal review: if the *complainant* is aggrieved with the process or outcome of the frontline resolution/investigation, they can request an internal review by directors or managers.
4. Access to external review: if the *complainant* is aggrieved with the process or outcome of the internal review, we may inform them of any available external review options.

Procedures

Frontline resolution

1. We will acknowledge all *complaints* within 14 Business days of receipt.
2. Frontline staff will receive the *complaint*.
3. Frontline staff will clarify the *complaint* and the outcome the *complainant* is seeking.
4. Frontline staff will assess the *complaint* to determine how it should be dealt with. [Consider including the criteria upon which *complaints* will be assessed]
5. If the organisation is not the right organisation to respond to the *complaint*, frontline staff may advise the *complainant* of an organisation that may be able to help.

Investigation

1. If frontline staff cannot resolve the *complaint*, it will be assigned to a manager or director for investigation.
2. The manager or director handling the *complaint* will advise the *complainant* who the contact person is and how long it will take to respond to the *complaint*.
3. *Complaint* handling staff will aim to resolve all *complaints* within 28 Business days.
4. If it takes longer than 28 Business days to resolve a *complaint*, the contact person will contact the *complainant* prior to or at this time and explain why.
5. *Complaints* that are not resolved within 28 Business days may be escalated if necessary to ensure that a resolution is expedited.

6. The officer responsible for handling the *complaint* will respond to the *complainant* to advise them of the outcome. The outcome response will contain reasons for the decision made and the contact information for the responsible officer.
7. The officer handling the *complaint* may contact the *complainant* to discuss the outcome of their *complaint* prior to providing the outcome response.

Internal review

Internal review will be conducted by manager or director staff. Manager or director staff will catalogue the *complaint* timeline and any service requests. After reviewing the *complaint* manager or director staff will provide a response to the *complainant* accordingly.

The outcome response will advise the *complainant* of any avenues of external review available in relation to the matter, such as the Victorian Ombudsman, Building Plumbing Commission or Independent Building Surveyor.

Complaints about contractors

We recognise a level of responsibility for services carried out by contractors on our behalf.

Contractors will be notified by manager and director staff when a complaint is made and is related to their services, behaviour or functions. Contractors will be able to respond to the notification provided. The response of the Contractor will be assessed by staff as appropriate and formalise a response to the *complainant* accordingly regarding the contractors conduct.

Complaints about specific matters – alternative procedures

Complaints about allegations of corrupt conduct

Where a *complaint* involves allegations of corrupt conduct, we will provide response to the *complainant*. Due to the limited size of our company it may be that manager or director staff refers the *complainant* to external review as a more appropriate method of addressing the *complaint*.

Remedies

Where we have found that we have made an error, we will take steps to redress the situation.

Possible remedies include, but are not limited to

1. an explanation of why the error occurred, and the steps taken to prevent it happening again
2. a reversal of a decision
3. disciplinary action taken against a staff member
4. providing the means of redress requested by the *complainant*.

Where we identify an error, we will consider offering a genuine apology to the *complainant*, in addition to any other remedies offered, irrespective of whether the *complainant* specifically requests this.

Privacy

When gathering information to respond to a *complaint*, we will only:

1. use it to deal with the *complaint* or to address systemic issues arising from the *complaint*
2. disclose it in a de-identified format when disclosing data to the public
3. share it with staff or clients on a need to know basis.
4. Handle all personal information in accordance with the relevant policies identified.

Recording complaints

All complaints are recorded in our project documentation held within our office.

We record the following information for each *complaint*:

1. the *complainant's* details
2. how the *complaint* was received
3. a description of the *complaint*
4. the *complainant's* desired outcome (if known)
5. the agency officer responsible for handling the *complaint*
6. any action taken, including contact with the *complainant*, response times and the outcome
7. when the *complaint* was finalised
8. relevant demographic information that could help improve services
9. any recommendations for improvement, and who is responsible for implementing them.

Any queries regarding the recording of *complaints* should be directed to Lloyd Llewellyn, Lewis.

Continual Development and limitations

This policy is subject to annual review. Every revision reconfirmation. The applicable review date will be nominated in the relevant section.

This policy is not intended to replace or contradict any statutory requirements. Any discrepancy should be read to amend the policy as far as practicable to demonstrate accordance with relevant Commonwealth and State legislation.

Yours Faithfully

Approved Building Surveyors and Staff