



# First Nations Connect

## Connecting Telstra First Nations customers so they can thrive

### First Nations Connect Complaint Handling System

#### Overview

First Nations customers may have unique servicing requirements due to cultural and geographic considerations. Whilst we strive to deliver a premium service, we recognise that sometimes things go wrong. Considerations, including *gratuitous concurrence* and living in remote communities can complicate the effective resolution of complaints which may require a different approach to general complaint management. Telstra will seek to apply the complaint handling system outlined in this document where it receives a complaint in relation to its engagement with First Nations customers.

#### What is a complaint?

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction or grievance made to us about any of our products and services, or the way we've managed a complaint. We don't treat the first time you contact us to request information, support or report a fault of service difficulty as a complaint, unless you ask us to. We recognise that cultural nuances exist. If we're unsure if you want to make a complaint, we'll ask you. If you or your representative contacts us and are not satisfied with our products or service, we will ask if you want to have your concern managed as a complaint.

#### Types of complaints

Whilst we try to resolve all complaints in a timely manner, we recognise that some take precedence over others. Complaints are classified into different categories, and we handle some complaints as urgent, which means they will be resolved within two working days. If an urgent complaint cannot be resolved within two working days, Telstra will advise a new timeframe.

Urgent Complaints include:

- a) Customers who fall under our financial hardship policy where the issue relating to the complaint might contribute to that customer's financial hardship
- b) The disconnection or imminent disconnection of a customer's Telstra service, where we haven't followed the right process in disconnecting their service; and
- c) The service of our Priority Assist customers

We also identify, record and analyse customer complaints to determine the reason a complaint was raised in the first place. To facilitate this process, we classify complaints in a manner that will allow for reporting and analysis of complaint data.

#### Who can make a complaint?

Anyone has the right to make a complaint, and we ensure that all complaints are dealt with efficiently, objectively, and fairly. A dedicated service has been established for customers who identify as First Nations. A range of services are available, and this includes the ability to lodge a complaint verbally. Additionally, a

dedicated email channel has been established to lodge complaints directly with the First Nations Connect team: [firstnationsconnectcomplaints@team.telstra.com](mailto:firstnationsconnectcomplaints@team.telstra.com)

We will not charge you to make a complaint.

We will also provide this assistance to consumers with accessibility requirements or disabilities. Other people can also make a complaint on your behalf. Please contact the First Nations Connect team for assistance.

### **We're committed to acknowledging complaints and resolving them as soon as possible**

This means, that when you make a complaint over the phone, or in-store we'll immediately acknowledge the complaint and give you:

- a) A unique reference number so you can identify and follow up on your complaint.
- b) An estimated timeframe for when we'll resolve your complaint; and
- c) Details on how you can get information about our complaint handling process
- d) Instructions about how to monitor the complaint

Where a complaint is made by email, through one of our websites, by post, fax, or via the My Telstra App, we will ensure we get this information to you within one working day of receiving your complaint.

We can also inform you about Telstra's internal prioritisation process, and internal escalation options. In addition, we will inform you of any external dispute resolution options available to you.

### **How you can monitor your complaint**

While your complaint is being investigated, we'll provide you with progress updates, so you know what's happening. You can also contact us to check the progress of your complaint using the unique complaint reference number that we provide you when your complaint is acknowledged.

We'll try to resolve your complaint at the time it's raised. However, if we need to investigate it further, we'll aim to resolve it, or tell you what we're doing to resolve it, within ten working days. Sometimes, we might not be able to resolve a complaint within this timeframe. If that's the case, we'll contact you and explain the reason for the delay and give you a new timeframe for resolution.

When it comes to urgent complaints, we aim to resolve them within two working days of being received.

The time we spend investigating a complaint is determined by its seriousness and complexity, and we're committed to resolving complaints as soon as possible. Our investigation process begins as soon as we become aware of your complaint.

We will contact you or your representative regarding your complaint. We will make multiple attempts on consecutive days to contact you. Once we make contact, we will propose a resolution to your complaint.

If we cannot contact you or your representative, we will write (or e-mail) you stating we were not able to contact you, provide details of those attempts and invite you to contact us to discuss the complaint within a specific timeframe no less than ten working days from the date of the correspondence. If no response is received from you or your representative after ten working days of the date of the correspondence the complaint will be closed.

If you contact us within six months after closure of the complaint (where we have been unable to contact you), we will reopen the complaint and continue our investigation.

Should you wish to accept our resolution, we will aim to complete all steps to implement that resolution within 10 working days or two working days for urgent complaints. We will only implement the resolution once it has been accepted by you.

The only cases where this may differ, is when you agree to a different timeframe for resolution, or we need you to do something to resolve the complaint.

We will close your complaint or implement a solution when you have agreed to that solution.

Sometimes, we might not be able to resolve a complaint within the timeframes set out above. If that's the case, we'll contact you and explain the reason for the delay and give you a new timeframe for resolution and avenues for external dispute resolution, if the expected delay will be longer than 10 working days.

We will provide written confirmation of the resolution of a complaint within five working days if you ask us.

### **What happens if you're not happy with the outcome?**

If you're not happy with how your complaint has been resolved, you have several options.

You can ask for us to escalate the complaint and review the resolution you were offered. This may involve an escalation to the next level of management, or the appointment of a case manager in one of our specialised teams. We will escalate your complaint if you request it to be escalated, if you ask to speak with a Manager, if we are not sure how to resolve the complaint or if we become aware that you aren't satisfied with the outcome of your complaint.

If you are dissatisfied with the progress or outcome of your complaint or enquire about your options to pursue a complaint further, we will advise you of Telstra's internal escalation process and external dispute resolution options available to you within five working days. If you request that your complaint be managed as a priority or be escalated, we will assess the request and prioritise or escalate where appropriate, within five working days.

There are also some external dispute resolutions available to you. This includes making a complaint to the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman ([TIO](#)).

We will not cancel your service for the sole reason that you were unable to resolve the complaint directly with us and pursue options for external dispute resolution.

For broader telecommunications issues that may be outside the jurisdiction of the TIO, you can also contact the Australian Communication & Media Authority (ACMA) or, for trade practices issues, the Australian Consumers Competition Commission (ACCC).

### **Frivolous or vexatious complaints**

Telstra will not dismiss complaints as frivolous or vexatious without exhausting all possible options to resolve and escalating in accordance with our processes. Telstra will inform you of the decision not to investigate and your external dispute resolution options within five working days of making such a decision and advise you of the reasons for our decision and options for external dispute resolution, including the TIO.

### **How to make a complaint or check the progress of a complaint**

**Face to Face:** Telstra is committed to engaging First Nations Communities where they live. Telstra regularly visits Indigenous communities where customers can lodge complaints directly with a company representative.

**Phone:** If you need to make a complaint or would like to check the progress of a complaint, please contact First Nations Connect on 1800 444 403. This number is available between 9am and 5 pm on weekdays, excluding national public holidays.

**Email:** [firstnationsconnectcomplaints@team.telstra.com](mailto:firstnationsconnectcomplaints@team.telstra.com)

**Mail:** Telstra First Nations Connect, Locked Bag 20026, Melbourne VIC 3001

**Store:** You can also make a complaint at any of our stores. You can find our stores, and their opening hours, by using our store locator [www.telstra.com.au/store-locator](http://www.telstra.com.au/store-locator)

### **Disability services**

If you have a disability and need help making a complaint or understanding our complaint handling process, you can also contact us using one of the following options.

**Online:** <https://www.telstra.com.au/aboutus/community-environment/community-programs/disability/disability-products-services>

**Relay Service:** You can contact us through the National Relay Service on 13 3677 or by using the Internet Relay Service [www.relayservice.com.au/](http://www.relayservice.com.au/)

**Translating and interpreting services**

If you need assistance speaking to us in an Indigenous language, including translating our complaints form, the First Nations Connect team may speak your language. If not, the team will engage an interpreter on your behalf.

You can phone us in your language during Business Hours.