

If you are still not satisfied...

If, following a review under section 113 of the *Adoption Act 1994*, you are still not satisfied with the decision of the Committee; you may appeal to the Family Court of Western Australia. Such an appeal can only be made in relation to the procedure by which the Committee reached its decision.

You may also apply for leave from the Court to appeal to the Supreme Court on an error of law under section 118 of the *Adoption Act 1994*.

Find out more...

The Adoption Applications Team within the Family Information and Adoption Services unit can help you with advice and information about adoption complaints, reviews and appeals.

Contact the team by calling free call **1800 622 258** or via email at adoptions@dcp.wa.gov.au.

For information about general complaints, read the Department's *Resolving Your Complaints* brochure, available at the Department for Child Protection's website at: www.childprotection.wa.gov.au or by calling (08) 9222 2594.



Government of Western Australia
Department for Child Protection

Complaints, review and appeal processes for adoption services

Department for Child Protection
Telephone: (08) 9222 2555
Country free call: 1800 622 258
Web: www.childprotection.wa.gov.au

Family Information and Adoption Services

The Department for Child Protection's Family Information and Adoption Services unit is responsible for arranging all adoptions in Western Australia. The unit coordinates and manages adoptions services for local, intercountry and past adoptions.

The unit provides advice to birth parents considering relinquishment of children for adoption, assessment of adoptive parents, supervision and placement support, as well as counselling and mediation services. In addition, the unit works with overseas countries with which Australia has adoption agreements.

The Department is committed to improving services through the impartial resolution of complaints and review of decisions. The Department recognises that you may need support and guidance through complaints and/or review processes to achieve a resolution.

What is a complaint?

A complaint is a formal way of telling the Department that you are dissatisfied or concerned with a service it has provided. While most complaints are resolved informally, the formal complaints system begins when a departmental team leader, senior officer or director uses formal procedures to try to resolve a problem.

The Department's formal complaints process can address the following:

- A complaint about a service that you believe is reasonable to expect from the Department, including adoption services.
- A complaint about a decision that the Department has made, policies of the Department that have affected you, or a complaint about a particular officer or agent of the Department.

The Department's formal complaints process cannot address the following:

- Matters that have other formal review mechanisms, including the adoption application process.
- For example, you may wish to seek a review or appeal about a decision of the Adoption Applications Committee about your suitability or approval to adopt a child. There are legislated steps through the *Adoption Act 1994* that need to be followed and, therefore, cannot be dealt with under the Department's regular complaints process.

What if I am unhappy about the Adoption Applications Committee's decision on my suitability to adopt?

1. If your adoption application is not approved, or if you are approved but not happy with the conditions of your approval, you can ask the Adoption Applications Committee to review its decision under section 42(1) of the *Adoption Act 1994*. Any new information must be provided to the Committee within 90 days of its decision regarding your application. The Committee will then decide whether to review its decision.
2. If you believe that the Committee has not followed the correct procedure in reaching its decision, you can write to the Chief Executive Officer of the Department for Child Protection at:

Director General
Department for Child Protection
189 Royal Street
EAST PERTH WA 6004

If the procedure is found to be unsatisfactory, the Director General can direct the Adoption Applications Committee to review the procedure under section 113 of the *Adoption Act 1994*.

Following the review, the Director General will send you a letter explaining the decision.