



JUSTICE BEHIND BARS



Complaints about Queensland Corrective Services

This fact sheet provides information about some of the different agencies that will accept complaints about Queensland Corrective Services (QCS) and what types of matters they can investigate.

By complaining to the most suitable agency from the outset, a faster outcome may be achieved. Some agencies will not accept complaints unless it can be shown that a prisoner has tried to address the problem with QCS first. Some agencies are part of QCS and others are independent.

General Manager

- The General Manager can receive complaints about anything that is happening in the prison they manage through the 'blue letter' mail system.
- Any prisoner who asks for a blue envelope should be given one.
- Any letter sent to the General Manager in a blue envelope is privileged mail. This means, it should not be opened by other correctional staff.

Official Visitors

- The Official Visitor Scheme provides a mechanism for prisoner complaint resolution within correctional centres.
- Official visitors have specific investigatory powers in prisons under the *Corrective Services Act 2006*, including the power to view the mail search registers to identify why any searches of mail have occurred.
- Prisoners can access a confidential and free telephone service to lodge complaints to Official Visitors through the prison Arunta telephone system.
- It is also possible request to speak to an Official Visitor face to face through shop front or by writing to the General Manager.
- Any request made to QCS to see an Official Visitor must be recorded in register and passed on to the Official Visitor when they visit the centre. Prisoners are not required to advise QCS staff why they wish to speak to an Official Visitor.

Prisoners' Legal Service Inc.

Postal Address: GPO Box 257 BRISBANE QLD 4001

ABN: 15 677 129 750

Web: www.plsqld.com

Justice Behind Bars

Telephone: 07 3846 5074

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A free service providing assistance to prisoners with parole applications, prison law matters and financial counselling



PLS respectfully acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional owners and custodians of this land and acknowledges their Elders, past, present and emerging



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Ethical Standards Unit

- The Ethical Standards Unit (ESU) of QCS can investigate the behavior of QCS staff to make sure they are following the officers Code of Conduct.
- The ESU can investigate issues such as inappropriate conduct in an official capacity (such as officer on prisoner assaults) or inappropriate conduct in a private capacity that reflects seriously and adversely on the Queensland public service.
- The ESU can also investigate any inappropriate conduct by a public official that is related to the performance of their duties and amounts to a criminal offence or would warrant dismissal.

Complaints to the ESU can be sent to:

Ethical Standards Unit
Queensland Corrective Services
GPO Box 1054
Brisbane QLD 4001

Crime and Corruption Commission

- The Crime and Corruption Commission (CCC) was set up to combat and reduce major crime and corruption in the public sector in Queensland, including within QCS.
- The CCC will only investigate complaints that involve suspected serious and/or systemic corruption. For example, criminal offences involving abuse of office or the administration of justice, or involvement of police officers with drugs or criminals/organised crime.
- Other complaints received by the CCC may be referred to the Ethical Standards Unit or to the Queensland Police Service to action. Sometimes, the CCC will monitor an investigation of another agency. The CCC can take over an investigation being conducted by another agency if it considers it is not being dealt with appropriately.

Prisoners can ring the CCC for free on the prison Arunta telephone system or send a written complaint to:

Crime and Corruption Commission
GPO Box 3123
Brisbane QLD 4001



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Queensland Police

- There are two different ways prisoners can contact Queensland Police if they want to report a crime.
- 1. Prisoners can write to the Corrective Services Investigation Unit (CSIU). The CSIU are Queensland Police officers who investigate illegal behaviour and activities within prisons, including the actions of correctional staff.

Complaints can be sent to:

Corrective Services Investigation Unit
GPO Box 1054
Brisbane, Qld 4001

- 2. Prisoners who do not want to send a letter can also ring the CCC for free on the prison Arunta telephone system. They can ask the CCC to investigate a crime, however the CCC can also make a referral to the Queensland Police to investigate the matter.

Queensland Ombudsman

- The Queensland Ombudsman are an independent agency that can investigate unfair procedures, or an unfair decision made by QCS.
- Before investigating a complaint, the Ombudsman will generally ask that prisoners try and resolve the problem with QCS first. However, if it is not appropriate to raise a complaint with QCS directly, prisoners can contact the Ombudsman and explain why they did not wish to raise their complaint with QCS.
- Complaints to the Ombudsman should be made within 12 months of the issue being complained about.

Prisoners can contact the Ombudsman for free on the Arunta telephone system or by writing to them at:

Queensland Ombudsman
QPO Box 3314
Brisbane Qld 4001



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Discrimination Complaints

- If you would like to make a complaint about discrimination, there are special laws and procedures you need to follow.
- If you would like information about making a discrimination complaint, please ask PLS for a copy of our discrimination factsheet.
- You can also contact Legal Aid Queensland (LAQ) for specialist advice about discrimination. LAQ can be contacted for free on the Arunta telephone system (number 4).

Need advice?

- If you need legal advice about making complaints, you can call PLS for free on the prison Arunta telephone system on **Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9am to 1pm**.
- You can also write to us at:
Prisoners' Legal Service, GPO Box 257, Brisbane, QLD, 4001.