

Complaint Handling Policy

Whilst aaNet hopes that its customers (former, current and potential) will not have cause to be dissatisfied, we absolutely acknowledge the right for our customers to make a complaint and for it to be resolved in an objective, efficient and fair manner. aaNet complaint handling process meets the following broad principles:

- (a) it is accessible, transparent and easily understood; and
- (b) it is free of charge, other than in limited circumstances; and
- (c) it provides for the courteous, timely and fair resolution of complaints.

Making a Complaint

You can contact aaNet via the following methods:

- **Phone:** 1300 665 076 (Monday to Friday 8am – 7pm AEST/AESDT)
- **Mail:** aaNet PO Box 631, Collins St WEST MELBOURNE, VIC 8007
- **Email:** complaints@aanet.com.au

In very extreme circumstances, such as where aaNet needs to access information which was collected more than 2 years prior to the date of request we may need to levy a charge to recover such information in order to cover our costs, however we will notify you before proceeding.

☑ Another Person Acting on your Behalf You may wish for someone else to deal with us on your behalf. This might be a family member, friend, your carer or your advocate. If so, you need to let our Customer Service Team know who that person is, so that we can add them to your account as an 'authorised representative'. Contact the Customer Service Team using the details listed above.

☑ Customers with Hearing or Speech Impairments If you are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment and/or you use a text phone (TTY) or a computer with a modem, you can contact us by using the National Relay Service (NRS). You can use the NRS for no additional charge. Contact the NRS using a modem or TTY by dialling 133 677 and quoting the relevant aaNet telephone number (listed above).



Complaint Reference

When you make a complaint, you will be allocated a unique reference number. This will be provided:

- immediately if you have made your complaint by telephone and had direct contact with our customer service staff; or

- within two working days of receipt if you have made your complaint by:

- Email
- The aaNet website
- Post; or
- Telephone and a message is recorded without direct contact with our customer service staff.

Complaint Handling

Where possible, we will endeavour to resolve your complaint at the first instance as this is in everybody's interests.

When making a complaint that involves the disputation of charges, you will need to specify the amount or the nature of the charges that you are disputing. We will not take any further Credit Management action in relation to a specified disputed amount whilst the complaint remains unresolved and continues to be investigated by either aaNet, the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman (TIO) or another recognised external dispute body.

Credit Management action in this case refers to the process by which we manage credit risk and/or the collection of outstanding debts from current and former customers.

We will delay the commencement of any legal proceedings while your complaint is being handled internally and for 7 Working Days after you are advised of the outcome of the complaint.

Internal Escalation

In some cases, either upon your request or upon the discretion of our customer service staff, the complaint may need to be referred to a Team Manager. The Team Manager may then need to call upon the authority or expertise of staff in other departments or relevant third parties. In this instance a 'first-contact' resolution may not be possible however you will receive a complaint reference and we will endeavour to resolve your complaint within our resolution timeframes.

Resolution

If your complaint is not resolved at first contact, we will advise you of our proposed resolution of your complaint as soon as possible following the completion of our investigation but in any event:

- a) within 15 Working Days from the date the complaint is received by us; or
- b) if we do not believe the complaint can be resolved within 15 Working Days we will advise you before Working Day 15 of:

- The reasons for the delay;
 - The specific timeframe for completion of the resolution;
- and
- If the anticipated delay is a further 10 Working Days or more (and is not the result of a mass services disruption), we will advise you of your options for external dispute resolution including the TIO.

At all times we will advise you of any delays in the proposed timeframes.

You can monitor your complaint by any of the methods available to make an initial complaint using your unique reference number.

Our proposed resolution must be accepted by you before we are *required* to implement the solution, however we can choose implement a solution to your benefit without your prior approval.

Following your acceptance of the proposed resolution or earlier if we choose, we will complete all the necessary actions to deliver the resolution offered within 10 Working Days of providing that resolution unless:

- a) both parties agree otherwise; or
- b) the actions are contingent on your actions that have not been completed;

Provided we have either:

- a) obtained your consent;
- b) responded to any dissatisfaction you have told us you are experiencing with the progress of your complaint or the outcome/ resolution of your complaint by providing information regarding our internal escalation process and the options for external dispute resolution including the TIO; or
- c) first attempted to make contact with you to discuss your complaint or advise of the progress of the proposed resolution and following this have written to you at your last known address, stating that we were unable to contact you, providing details of the contact attempts and an invitation to contact us within a specific timeframe of no less than 10 Working Days but we have not had a response from you;

we can close your complaint. Where a complaint is closed with your consent, you can request written confirmation of the resolution which will be sent to you within 5 Working Days.

Urgent Complaints

We understand that all customers would consider their complaint in some way 'urgent' and desire a speedy resolution in all cases. However, some complaints by definition are more urgent than others as they may involve the customer being in a vulnerable position until the complaint issue is resolved. For these complaints, there needs to be a process of escalation that is respected by us and in turn all of our customers. These involve complaints where:

- (a) the complaint is made by a customer who has applied for or has been accepted as being in Financial Hardship under our Financial Hardship policy and where the subject matter of the complaint can reasonably be presumed to directly contribute to or aggravate the Financial Hardship of that customer;

(b) disconnection of a service is imminent or has occurred and where due process has not been followed.

For urgent complaints, we will provide confirmation of the proposed resolution of the urgent aspects of the complaint and, if accepted by the complaint, implement the urgent aspects of the resolution within 2 Working Days after the date the complaint is received.

Vexatious or Frivolous Complaints

In very rare cases we sometimes may encounter complaints that are frivolous or vexatious or behaviour from complainants that is in our reasonable opinion, fraudulent, racist, threatening or abusive.

We will not conclude that a complaint is frivolous or vexatious unless we have given the matter careful consideration and it has been appropriately escalated within our internal channels. After this, if we can do nothing more to assist the complainant or, in view of the complainant's behaviour, we choose not to deal with the complainant any further, we will inform the complainant in writing of the reasons and tell them about the options for external dispute resolution including the TIO. We are not then required to accept any further complaints from that complainant on the same or similar issues other than in the course of an external dispute resolution process.

Escalation

If, *after* the internal escalation and complaint handling process has concluded, you are still not satisfied with the outcome or resolution of your complaint you are entitled to refer your complaint to the TIO.

The Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman is a free and independent alternative dispute resolution scheme for small business and residential consumers in Australia with unresolved complaints about their telephone or internet services. Click here <http://www.tio.com.au/about-us/contact-us> for the TIO's contact details.

