



**PUBLIC TRUSTEE
AND GUARDIAN**

CLIENT SERVICE CHARTER

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1. OUR COMMITMENT

- 1.1 The Public Trustee and Guardian (PTG) support people in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) who need help with personal, financial or legal decision-making.
- 1.2 We act under ACT law and must respect, protect and promote human rights. This Charter explains what you can expect from us and what we ask from you when working together.

2. OUR ROLE AND PURPOSE

- 2.1 The Public Trustee and Guardian is a statutory office. We are independent and act in accordance with ACT law.
- 2.2 Our role may include acting as:
- a guardian, making decisions about personal, health, legal or lifestyle matters
 - a manager, managing money and property
 - a trustee, executor or administrator of estates
- 2.3 Our purpose is to:
- protect the rights of people who are vulnerable or at risk
 - support people to make their own decisions wherever possible
 - act in people's interests in accordance with our legal duties, including considering people's wishes, rights and wellbeing when decisions need to be made on their behalf
 - promote dignity, independence and participation in the community

3. WHO WE WORK WITH

- 3.1 We work with:
- people we are appointed to support
 - families, carers and supporters
 - attorneys appointed under powers of attorney
 - health and community service providers
 - courts and tribunals, including the ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal (ACAT)
- 3.2 We recognise that relationships and circumstances vary, and we approach each matter individually.

4. OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU

- 4.1 When you work with us, you can expect that we will:

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Treat you with respect

- treat you with dignity, courtesy and fairness
- respect your culture, identity, beliefs and personal history
- listen to your views and concerns

Support your decision-making

- presume you can make your own decisions unless appropriate medical evidence or the law says otherwise
- support you to understand information and express your wishes
- involve you as much as possible in decisions that affect you

Act lawfully and in your interests

- act within our legal powers and duties
- promote your wellbeing, safety and financial security
- use the least restrictive options available

Communicate clearly

- explain decisions and processes in plain language
- tell you who your contact officer or team is
- respond to enquiries as promptly as reasonably possible

Be open and accountable

- explain our decisions and actions
- provide information about fees, reporting and reviews
- be transparent about how to raise concerns or complaints

5. YOUR ROLE WHEN WORKING WITH US

5.1 We ask that clients, beneficiaries, representatives and supporters:

- treat our staff with respect and courtesy
- provide accurate and timely information
- tell us about any changes to circumstances
- ask questions if something is unclear
- work with us cooperatively and honestly

6. DECISION-MAKING PRINCIPLES

6.1 When making decisions, we must follow the principles set out in ACT law. This means we:

- support people to participate in their own decision-making

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- give effect to a person's wishes wherever possible
- balance wishes with protection from serious harm where required
- interfere with a person's life as little as possible
- encourage independence and community participation
- consult carers, relevant people and qualified professionals, unless doing so would cause harm

6.2 We also have a legal duty to act consistently with human rights, including equality, dignity, privacy and participation.

7. COMMUNICATION AND ACCESSIBILITY

7.1 We aim to make our services accessible. We can:

- provide information in alternative formats where reasonable
- use interpreters or communication supports
- work with advocates, supporters or nominated representatives

7.2 Please tell us what support you need so we can communicate effectively with you.

8. FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINTS

8.1 We welcome feedback about our services through Client Satisfaction Survey. Feedback helps us improve the services we provide to the ACT community.

8.2 You have the right to complain if you are unhappy with our service, actions or decisions. You can make a complaint:

- by phone: (02) 6207 9800
- by email: ptg@act.gov.au
- by post: Feedback and Complaints, GPO Box 239, Canberra ACT2601
- in person: Level 2, 5 Fussell Lane, Gungahlin ACT 2912

8.3 We will:

- listen respectfully and take your concerns seriously
- acknowledge written complaints within **5 business days**
- aim to resolve complaints within **10 business days**, where possible
- keep you informed if your complaint is complex or needs more time
- explain the outcome and next steps clearly

8.4 If you are not satisfied with the response, you can:

- request an internal review
- contact the ACT Ombudsman

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- contact the ACT Human Rights Commission
- apply to the ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal (ACAT), where relevant

8.5 You may withdraw a complaint at any time.

9. INFORMATION AND PRIVACY

9.1 We are required by law to protect your personal and financial information. We will only share information where authorised by law, or where it is necessary to carry out our functions.

9.2 This means we may not always be able to share information with family members or third parties, even where they have an interest in your wellbeing.