

Human Rights

The Public Trustee has been embedding human rights understanding across our organisation before and since the commencement of the *Human Rights Act 2019* (Human Rights Act) on 1 January 2020.

We are committed to:

- building a culture that respects and promotes human rights
- protecting and promoting human rights
- promoting a dialogue about the nature, meaning and scope of human rights
- placing the human rights of individuals, especially the most vulnerable, at the forefront of our service delivery.

To further the objectives of the Human Rights Act,

- we have embedded human rights into our Strategic Plan 2020–2024
- all new staff are enrolled in the mandatory self-paced online course on the Human Rights Act
- we incorporate awareness of the Human Rights Act and its application into our corporate orientation for new employees
- new and existing staff can access a range of resources and guides on taking action or making a decision that is compatible with human rights. This includes case studies illustrating actions and decision-making that are compatible with human rights and which put the customer at the forefront of our service delivery
- the consideration of human rights in all decision-making by frontline employees is being measured as part of the quarterly quality assurance program, which examines the quality of evidencing of decisions, and provides for systems review, training opportunities and trend analysis
- all programs are required to consider human rights and the Human Rights Act when developing, implementing and reviewing their policy documents to ensure that the Public Trustee acts compatibly with human rights when taking an action or making a decision.

Human rights complaints

The Public Trustee has reviewed its Complaints Management Framework to ensure that:

- human rights complaints are identified at the point of receipt
- the complaints process is compatible with human rights, the principles of natural justice and incorporates the complaints resolution process available under the Human Rights Act.

The Public Trustee has advised its customers of the availability of making a human rights complaint and the complaints process through:

- our website - www.pt.qld.gov.au/contact/contact-us/how-we-manage-complaints/
- our Complaints Management Policy - www.pt.qld.gov.au/media/1948/complaints-management-policy.pdf
- our leaflet called 'Your Complaints Journey' - www.pt.qld.gov.au/media/1947/your-complaints-journey.pdf

During 2020-21, the Public Trustee received 20 customer complaints that were assessed as human rights complaints:

- 13 complaints were identified by the complainant as human rights related
- seven complaints were assessed by the Public Trustee as being human rights related.

Most of the complaints were resolved by the Public Trustee providing an explanation to the customers or the customers' support network about the decision that was made, or the action that was taken.

The Public Trustee found that in four cases, it had not acted compatibly with human rights and in line with its obligations under the Human Rights Act.

In these cases, the Public Trustee provided an apology to the customers and their support network and took steps to:

- investigate the cause
- take corrective action including reviewing policies and procedures
- conduct further training with staff.

During 2020-21, the Public Trustee received one complaint under the Human Rights Act from a staff member. The complaint was resolved by conciliation through the Human Rights Commission.