**DCO Client Service Charter**

**About the Defence Community Organisation**

On behalf of Command, the Defence Community Organisation (DCO) provides a broad range of individual and program related services to the ADF community. These services aim to support ADF families to balance the demands of military service with personal and family commitments.

DCO also provides assistance in the case of accident, illness, hospitalisation or other family crises; and in the event of a casualty deliver bereavement support and assist with progressing administrative issues associated with the deceased member’s death and related estate.

DCO provides a comprehensive transition support services for all separating ADF members and their families, including permanent ADF members leaving for medical reasons, and members of the reserves on continuous full time service.

The DCO works within a framework that honours the Australian Defence Force Family Covenant and provides services to meet its immediate needs –

**Australian Defence Force**

**FAMILY COVENANT:**

We recognise the significant contribution of ADF families to operational effectiveness

We pay tribute to the commitment and sacrifice of ADF families in support of Australia

We acknowledge the unique nature of family and community life in the ADF

We honour the inherent strength and capacity of ADF families

We pledge to work in partnership with ADF families to enhance their self reliance

We commit to listening to ADF families and responding effectively to their emerging needs

**Quality of services:**

Our team provides a quality service based on best practice guidelines. We strive to continually improve our services through review processes, research and evaluation.

**You can expect us to:**

- Be courteous and honest in our dealings with you.
- Respect your privacy, meeting our obligations under the Privacy Act.
- Provide accurate information.
- Be sensitive to issues of cultural diversity, disability and other special needs.
- Act on your request in a professional and courteous manner.
- Respond to phone calls, faxes or emails within 24 hours or by close of business the next working day.
- Reply to correspondence within 15 working days.

**We support your right to:**

- Bring a friend or advocate with you to your appointments.
- Discuss with a DCO Manager if, for any reason, you want to change your DCO worker.
- Ask to access information held by the DCO about you in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

**You can help us by:**

- Treating our staff with courtesy.
- Giving us sufficient and accurate information to enable us to assist you properly.
- Providing feedback and comments on our performance.
If you are satisfied:

We would like to hear from you if you are happy with the service you have received. This allows recognition of good service by our staff. To provide positive feedback there are four avenues of communication available, these are:

- the Defence Family Helpline.
- a DCO Area Office

If you are not satisfied:

The DCO recognises that at times people may feel that the service they have received from the DCO has not met their expectations.

The DCO also recognises that people may wish to use an advocate to lodge a complaint on their behalf. It is requested that in these cases, written consent from the person concerned please be attached.

There are four avenues of communication for you to lodge a complaint, these are through:

- the Defence Family Helpline.
- a DCO Area Office

ADF members can refer their complaint through normal command channels. This may include the submission of a Redress of Grievance (ROG) to the member’s Commanding Officer (CO).

Upon receipt of your complaint DCO will formally acknowledge this within two (2) business days.

A senior DCO staff member will manage your complaint, and if required, contact you to discuss any related issues. The senior DCO staff member will ensure that all avenues of recourse are exhausted to mediate and resolve your complaint.

Complaints specific to alleged breaches of Privacy will be reported to the Directorate of Complaints Resolution at: Defence.Privacy@defence.gov.au

If you are not satisfied with the response you receive, you also have the option of lodging your complaint directly with the Head People Capability.

You also have the right to contact the Commonwealth and Defence Force Ombudsman on 1300 362 072.

Contact the Defence Community Organisation

The DCO consists of the DCO Headquarters and the DCO Area Offices across Australia. Their telephone numbers are on the DCO website at:


The Defence Family Helpline can be contacted 24 hours a day 7 days a week on 1800 624 608 and at: defencefamilyhelpline@defence.gov.au

Your local DCO Office can be contacted on: