

Children and young people matters

QCAT takes a new look at some decisions made about you, as a child or young person by the Department of Communities - Child Safety services.

If you feel the decision is wrong talk to the department about your concerns and ask why they made the decision. You may be able to work things out.

If you still feel the decision is wrong you can apply to QCAT for a review of the decision.

When looking at a decision again, QCAT will make sure that your welfare and interests are considered.

The following decisions made by the department can be looked at again by QCAT:

- deciding who will care for you
- not informing your parents of who is caring for you and where you are living
- refusing to allow contact between you and your parents or a member of your family
- restricting or imposing conditions on the contact between you and your parents or a member of your family
- removing you from a carer.

It's important to have the letter from the department outlining the decision affecting you

Make sure you keep the original letter from the department telling you about their decision.

The letter will outline the reasons for the decision and the findings that led to the decision, including the evidence or other material that was considered.

If you have not been given the decision, you must ask for a copy of it by writing to the department within 14 days after the decision was made. The department must provide you with a copy of the letter within a reasonable time, or within 28 days after receiving your request.

Can someone apply for a review of a decision on my behalf?

Another person can apply to QCAT for a review of a decision on your behalf for example, another family member.

QCAT will consider what is in your best interests when looking at any application made by someone on your behalf.

QCAT can make a decision to prohibit a person from entering a school or state institution.

QCAT can also review decisions about:

- people who have applied to adopt a child
- people who are not allowed to work with children because of their criminal history
- licensing a childcare centre
- prohibiting a person from entering a school or state instructional institution.

Visit QCAT's website or contact the QCAT registry for more information.

Who can help me?

A number of people can help you work out what to do when you are thinking about having a decision made by the department looked at again.

For general questions and completing the application form you can talk to:

- QCAT staff who will explain how everything works, what you can expect and answer questions about the process. They cannot give legal advice.
- Legal Aid Queensland about legal advice and representation
- a private lawyer
- other agencies such as Foster Care Queensland who will discuss your concerns, and help you complete the application form and other paper work.

Time limits

Generally you need to apply to QCAT for a review of a decision within 28 days of the date you were notified of the decision.

Applying for a review of a decision

Complete and lodge Form 17 - Application to review a decision – childrens matters.

You can find and lodge this application form at QCAT's Brisbane office or at your local Magistrates Court (excluding the Brisbane Magistrates Court). The form and other information is also available on QCAT's website.

When you apply for a review of the decision you can also apply for a stay of the decision. A stay temporarily stops the decision being carried out until QCAT makes a decision about your application.

A stay will only be agreed to in special circumstances and may not be granted.

What happens next?

Once your application has been received QCAT will review the information you provided. You will then be contacted by QCAT about the next steps that will happen in relation to your case.

Contact information

QCAT

Address: Level 9, Bank of Queensland Centre,
259 Queen Street, Brisbane, 4000
Post: GPO Box 1639, Brisbane Qld 4001
Phone: 1300 753 228
Email: enquiries@qcat.qld.gov.au
Website: www.qcat.qld.gov.au

Contact details for **local Magistrates Courts** are available in the phone book or at www.courts.qld.gov.au.

Department of Communities – Child Safety services

Phone: 07 3224 8045
Website: www.childsafety.qld.gov.au

Department of Education

Phone: 07 3237 0111
Website: www.education.qld.gov.au

Foster Care Queensland

Phone: 07 3268 5955
Website: www.fcq.com.au

Legal Aid Queensland

Phone: 1300 65 11 88
Website: www.legalaid.qld.gov.au

Youth Advocacy Centre

Phone: 07 3356 1002
Website: www.yac.net.au