

Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman's Assistance Charter

We recognise that owning and leading a small or family business is a big responsibility and deep personal commitment, by people who make a vital contribution to Australia's prosperity, wellbeing and the communities they live in. We can't guarantee that every business will be successful, but it is our mission to make sure no one fails because they didn't know about available information and resources that may help them to start, grow and transform a small business and family enterprise.

Our Charter aligns with our [Guiding Principles](#) and sets out our commitment to empowering small businesses with information, tools and assistance to start, grow and transform. The Charter outlines our rights, obligations and explains what we can both expect in our dealings with each other.

1. Our aim is to provide the information you need and recommend ways to resolve disputes and get back to business. In doing this, we will:
 - 1.1. treat you with courtesy, while respecting and taking your individual circumstances into account
 - 1.2. provide assistance and information that is tailored to your matter, explains our approach, and get back to you in a timely manner
 - 1.3. help you with disputes to achieve best practice dispute resolution processes that are fair, impartial, objective, affordable, timely and outcome-oriented
 - 1.4. act impartially and treat all parties as being honest, giving opportunities to explain any inconsistencies or differences
 - 1.5. respect your privacy and keep your personal information confidential, subject to you providing consent to disclose or as otherwise authorised by the *Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman Act 2015*
 - 1.6. in accordance with our legislation, we will not duplicate the work of another state or commonwealth government agency and will refer your matter to the most appropriate agency to assist you.
2. In return, we ask when interacting with us that you please:
 - 2.1. treat us with the same courtesy, consideration and respect that we provide you, remembering that we are here to help with your dispute and we are not its cause
 - 2.2. undertake all appropriate actions that you are personally able to do to resolve your dispute (including following the tips and steps outlined on our website) before lodging your matter with us
 - 2.3. provide us with all relevant facts and circumstances and respond in a timely way to our requests for additional information so that we can determine whether and how we are best able to help you
 - 2.4. understand that, if your dispute is better assisted by another agency (or is already active with it), we will not duplicate their services and will refer you there as required by our legislation
 - 2.5. recognise that we assist with approaches that help manage and resolve your dispute, we do not provide legal advice or enforceable decision like a court.
3. If you have any feedback, compliments or complaints about how we are meeting our commitments under this Charter, please contact:

Dr Craig Latham, Executive Director, Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman

By email: craig.latham@asbfeo.gov.au

By telephone: 0439 452 559

By post: GPO Box 1791 CANBERRA ACT 2601.

If we have any feedback on how you are meeting our engagement guidelines in this Charter, we will also provide this to you in a timely manner.