SESTA complaints process

Caregiver/Complainant
- All SESTA caregivers and schools are supplied with a copy of the current complaints protocol, along with direct contact details of their Transport Service Provider, Service Agent and Ministry of Education.
- All involved parties have access to all information throughout the complaints process. Confidentiality is maintained throughout the process.
- Caregivers are encouraged to provide feedback on all SESTA transport.
- If a complainant feels their needs are not being addressed, are not satisfied with the proposed resolution or feel the issue is of a more serious nature, they can take it directly to the escalated level – this could be the Transport Service Provider, the Service Agent or the Ministry of Education.

Minor Issue
These are issues that:
- can be approached and resolved by the Transport Service Provider, the school and the complainant.
- It is immediately addressed and resolved with continuous communication between all relevant parties, throughout the entire complaints process.

School
- The school acknowledges the issue within 24 hours of receiving it.
- The issue is logged and processed within the school before being reported to the Transport Service Provider.
- Serious or escalated issues are reported directly to the Service Agent.

Transport Service Provider
- In the first instance attempts are made to resolve issues informally.
- Each issue is considered a priority until it has been properly investigated and a resolution has been reached.
- An acknowledgement response is given to the complainant within 24 hours of receiving the issue. Regular contact with the school and complainant is maintained throughout the process, by the Transport Service Provider.
- Monthly summary reports of all issues are sent from the Transport Service Provider to the Service Agent, including both minor and escalated issues.
- All issues are logged into the complaints register and categorised into one of the following:
  - Minor Issue
  - Serious or Escalated Issue

Service Agent
- All serious or escalated issues are immediately brought to the attention of the Service Agent by the school or Transport Service Provider. The Service Agent will attend to the escalated issue within 24 hours.
- All complaints are logged in the Service Agent complaints register and investigated.
- Contact between the Service Agent, Transport Service Provider, school and caregiver is maintained until a solution can be reached. If a solution that satisfies all parties is not obtained the issue is immediately reported to the Ministry.
- The Special Education Regional District Manager at the Ministry of Education is alerted to the situation and kept informed of all potential solutions and outcomes.

Ministry of Education
- Escalated issues are reported from the Service Agents to the Ministry and logged in the Ministry’s complaints register at the National Office (SESTA).
- If a resolution has not been reached by the Service Agents and Transport Service Providers the Ministry will investigate and address immediately.
- The local Ministry office and the National Office work together throughout the process.
- The Ministry contacts all complainants directly, and relevant parties, within the first 24 hours of receiving the escalated issue. This contact is maintained throughout the process until a solution is established. Follow up contact will be made by the Ministry to the complainant, following the implementation of the resolution.
- A situation may require the expert opinion of an outside party. This will not effect the confidentiality of the issue.
- A register of complaints is held at the Ministry of Education. This includes the serious and escalated issues dealt with by the Ministry, along with a collaboration of all minor issues as updated regularly by the Transport Service Providers and Service Agents.

Further information is available on the Ministry of Education website [www.minedu.govt.nz/sesta](http://www.minedu.govt.nz/sesta)