

SYD CABS

COMPLAINT HANDLING POLICY

This policy sets out how SYD CABS receives, investigates and resolves complaints about our taxi service, and the action we take where a complaint is upheld. It applies to complaints from passengers, from drivers and operators, and from any other person affected by our service.

It is published for passengers, drivers and operators, and is available at www.sydcabs.au.

1 Our commitment

SYD CABS is an authorised Taxi and booking service provider in New South Wales. We take every complaint seriously, investigate it on the evidence, and act consistently.

We commit to:

- acknowledging every complaint promptly, and telling the complainant what happens next;
- investigating on the evidence available, including trip data and camera footage where relevant;
- giving any driver or operator who is the subject of a complaint the opportunity to respond before a decision is made;
- applying consequences consistently, according to the scale in section 7;
- telling the complainant the outcome; and
- telling anyone who is dissatisfied with our handling that they may take the matter to the Point to Point Transport Commissioner.

2 How to make a complaint

A complaint may be made:

- online at www.sydcabs.au, through the Taxi Fare Complaint and Feedback form;
- by email to incident@sydcabs.au;
- by telephone on 1300 926 117; or
- through the Point to Point Transport Commissioner's Industry Portal.

It helps if a complaint includes the date and time of the trip, where it started and ended, the taxi registration or number, and the amount charged. A complaint will still be investigated without these, but they make it faster.

Every complaint is given a reference number, and every incident report is given its own. Fare complaints begin with SC, incident reports with SI. The reference is shown on screen when the form is submitted and repeated in the acknowledgement email.

3 Tracking your complaint

A complaint can be tracked at any time at www.sydcabs.au, using the reference number and the email address it was submitted with. There is no account to create and no password to remember.

Status	What it means
Received	The complaint has reached us and has a reference number
Under review	We are investigating, and may be waiting on trip data, camera footage or a response from the driver or operator

Status	What it means
Further information needed	We have asked the complainant for something we cannot proceed without
Investigation complete	The investigation has finished and the outcome is being communicated

The tracking page shows progress, not the outcome. Where a complaint has been investigated, the outcome is given by an email, rather than appearing as a status on a screen. That is deliberate.

4 What happens when we receive a complaint

Stage	What happens	Timeframe
1	We acknowledge the complaint and give a reference number	Within 24–48 hours
2	We secure any relevant camera footage, and ask the driver or operator for their version of events	Within 48 hours of acknowledgement
3	We investigate, including trip data and footage where relevant	Ordinarily 5 business days
4	We tell the complainant the outcome	Within 5 business days of the investigation closing
5	Any refund is paid	Within 14 business days of the outcome

Where an investigation will take longer than the timeframe above, we tell the complainant why and give a revised date.

5 The driver's or operator's response

Before any finding is made, the driver or operator concerned is told what has been alleged and given the opportunity to respond. A response may be submitted through the Incident Report form at www.sydcabs.au, driver's version or in writing to incident@sydcabs.au.

A response should be provided within 3 business days. Where no response is received within that time, we may proceed to a decision on the evidence available, and we will say so in the request.

Where a complaint is serious, or where the safety of passengers or other road users may be at risk, SYD CABS may **suspend access to the dispatch system** while the investigation is carried out. A suspension of this kind is a precaution and is not a finding of fault.

6 How we investigate

What we examine depends on the complaint.

- (a) Fare disputes — we check the trip record, GPS and route data, meter logs and the fare charged against the applicable tariff.
- (b) Driver conduct — we review the driver's account, the complainant's history, and camera footage where it is available and lawfully accessible.
- (c) Trip refusal — we assess whether a refusal was justified, and check the driver's other trips around the same time.
- (d) Assistance animal refusal — refusing a passenger with an assistance animal is unlawful. We investigate every such complaint and require disability awareness training where it is upheld.
- (e) Meter and equipment — we check whether the meter was in use, whether the correct tariff applied, and whether the equipment was connected and functioning.

Where camera footage is required, the driver may be asked to attend our base so that it can be downloaded. Footage is handled in accordance with the Point to Point Transport (Taxis and Hire Vehicles) Regulation and is not used for any purpose other than the investigation. On receiving a complaint SYD CABS secures the footage relevant to the trip straight away, and keeps it until the complaint and any review of it have been finally determined. Footage that has not been secured is not available after 90 days, which is why a complaint made late in that period is acted on immediately.

7 Consequences where a complaint is upheld

Where a complaint is upheld, SYD CABS applies the following scale, called the Complaint Scale. Each upheld complaint moves the driver or operator one step along it. The Complaint Scale is not the same as the Operator Rules Scale in section 11 of the SYD CABS Operator Rules of Operation, and the two use different step numbers for different consequences — so a step is always named with the scale it belongs to. Where the same facts amount to both an upheld complaint and a breach of the Rules, each is dealt with on its own scale.

Step	Consequence
1	First warning, in writing
2	Final warning, and training where relevant
3	Suspension from the dispatch system for up to 2 days
4	Suspension from the dispatch system for up to 7 days
5	Suspension for 3 months
6	Removal from the SYD CABS network for 12 months
7	Permanent removal from the SYD CABS network

Where no further complaint is upheld within 12 months, the Complaint Scale resets to Step 1.

Certain matters start higher on the Complaint Scale, or outside it:

- Sexual assault, or any conduct amounting to a serious criminal offence — **permanent removal**. SYD CABS will report the matter to police and, where it is a notifiable occurrence, to the Point to Point Transport Commissioner.
- Refusing a passenger with an assistance animal — mandatory disability awareness training on a first occasion, and the Complaint Scale applies from Step 3 thereafter.
- Operating without displaying a valid driver identification — final warning and mandatory training on a first occasion, and the Complaint Scale applies from Step 3 thereafter.
- Interfering with the meter, the camera, the tracking device or any other in-vehicle equipment — the Complaint Scale applies from Step 4.
- Interfering with, disabling or obstructing the duress alarm — dealt with outside the Complaint Scale as a safety matter, and may result in immediate removal from the SYD CABS network.
- Aggressive, abusive or discriminatory conduct — final warning on a first occasion, and the Complaint Scale applies from Step 3 thereafter.
- Presentation and vehicle cleanliness — training and warning on a first occasion, and the Complaint Scale applies from Step 3 thereafter.

8 Suspended vehicles

Where SYD CABS suspends a vehicle, we notify the operator of that vehicle as well as the driver.

The operator must recover the vehicle from the driver and confirm to SYD CABS that they have done so. If a suspended vehicle continues to operate under SYD CABS livery, the operator is responsible for any refund arising from a trip taken during the suspension.

9 Refunds

Where a complaint about a fare is upheld, SYD CABS arranges a full or partial refund to the passenger, depending on the amount overcharged.

A refund is paid to the passenger regardless of whether SYD CABS has recovered the amount from the driver or operator. Recovery is a separate matter between SYD CABS and the person concerned, dealt with under clause 12C of the Operator Agreement or section 7 of the Driver Service Agreement. It does not delay or reduce the refund, and it does not matter which payment terminal was used to take the fare.

Refunds are paid within 14 business days of the outcome being communicated.

10 Records

SYD CABS keeps a record of every complaint, including what was alleged, the evidence considered, the response given by the driver or operator, the outcome, any action taken, and any refund paid.

Records are kept for not less than seven years. Access is limited to staff who need it to handle complaints or to meet a legal obligation.

11 Privacy

Complaints contain personal information about passengers, drivers and operators. SYD CABS handles that information in accordance with the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth).

Camera footage is accessed only where it is relevant to an investigation, is not retained longer than required, and is not disclosed except as permitted or required by law. Personal information about a driver is not disclosed to a complainant, and personal information about a complainant is not disclosed to a driver, beyond what is necessary for the driver to respond to the allegation.

12 If you are not satisfied

If you are not satisfied with how SYD CABS has handled your complaint, or with the outcome, you may ask for it to be reviewed by a manager who was not involved in the original decision. A request for review should be made within 14 days of the outcome.

You may also take the matter to the Point to Point Transport Commissioner at any time, whether or not you have asked us to review it.

Point to Point Transport Commissioner — www.pointtopoint.nsw.gov.au — 131 727

13 Continuous improvement

SYD CABS reviews complaint data regularly to identify recurring issues. Findings are used in monthly driver and operator training, covering customer service, fare compliance, assistance animal obligations and safe driving.

This policy is reviewed at least annually, and sooner if the law changes or if a review of complaint data indicates it is needed.