

S A M P L E

Procedure for handling complaints from a large charity

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE (NAME OF CHARITY)

Introduction

We aim to maintain high standards of service for our trustees, staff and volunteers carrying out their duties and intentions.

<<name of charity> views a complaint as an opportunity to get things right for the person making the complaint, to learn [activities] [benefits] that <<name of charity> would not be able to do so or learn for the future if we did not. We value and take seriously any feedback.

Generally, the purpose of this Complaints Procedure is to resolve disputes without resorting to formal investigation. We will try to explore every reasonable option to resolve the complaint to agree an outcome.

Whether your complaint is justified or not, we will describe the action we have taken to investigate the complaint, the outcome of the investigation, and any action we have taken.

We will ensure that all information received in connection with a complaint is treated as confidential and handled in accordance with data protection requirements. Only those who need to know will have access to that information, and all data protection requirements are met.

[Whether or not a complaint is resolved, the details of the complaint will be passed (within [one week] of acknowledgment) to [one of our trustees][our Administrator][Chairman] for all complaints and reporting on the annual report.

[If a complaint results in disciplinary action, this will follow the staff disciplinary procedure.]

The information below outlines the Complaints Procedure.

Complaint

A 'complaint' in this Procedure means any expression of dissatisfaction in relation to <<name of charity> or any of its services that requires a response from <<name of charity>.

Where complaints may come from

Complaints may come from [users of <<name of charity>'s services] [those involved in <<name of charity>'s activities] [beneficiaries] [members] [donors] [fundraisers] [supporters] [members of the public] [any other person or organisation who has a legitimate interest in <<name of charity>].

[users of <<name of charity>'s services] [those involved in <<name of charity>'s activities] but recognise that <<name of charity> may be wrong, despite their best intentions.

<<name of charity> values feedback as well as a chance, to put things right, to improve [put right] the [service] [activities] [benefits] that <<name of charity> would not be able to do so or learn for the future if we did not. Therefore we value and take seriously any feedback.

The purpose of this Complaints Procedure is to resolve disputes informally without resorting to formal investigation. We will try to explore every reasonable option to resolve the complaint to agree an outcome.

Whether your complaint is justified or not, we will describe the action we have taken to investigate the complaint, the outcome of the investigation, and any action we have taken as a result of your complaint.

We will ensure that all information received in connection with a complaint is treated as confidential and handled in accordance with data protection requirements. Only those who need to know will have access to that information, and all data protection requirements are met.

Whether or not a complaint is resolved, the details of the complaint will be passed (within [one week] of acknowledgment) to [one of our trustees][our Administrator][Chairman] for all complaints and reporting on the annual report.

[If a complaint results in disciplinary action, this will follow the staff disciplinary procedure.]


The

information below outlines the Complaints Procedure. A 'complaint' in this Procedure means any expression of dissatisfaction in relation to <<name of charity> or any of its services that requires a response from <<name of charity>.

Complaints may come from [users of <<name of charity>'s services] [those involved in <<name of charity>'s activities] [beneficiaries] [members] [donors] [fundraisers] [supporters] [members of the public] [any other person or organisation who has a legitimate interest in <<name of charity>].

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Individuals or organisations
staff, volunteers, trustees,
name of charity>'s Grievance

by phone, email, letter [or by

ask you to provide us with as

- g about happened
)
are not obliged to resolve the
me telephone number and/or

pend on how you to decide to
about. We have indicated

n person to us in any of the

leader] of the [particular] [local]
e people who [work in that
plaint is about any aspect of
ady have his/her phone
n us. Alternatively, you can

][team leader], you can phone
r of the [senior] [management

team][or][any of the trustees]. He
phone that number and ask to be
Service][Administrator][Charity Secretary]
make your complaint, if that person
the complaint, they will arrange to
Alternatively, you can speak (or

If you do not feel that you can approach
your complaint to the [Chair of trustees]
[him/her][his/her/their P.A.] on <

If your complaint is about the [Chair of trustees]
including the Chair or Vice Chair
to the person we have designated
to you about it", and they will deal

Complaints in writing

If you would prefer to write to us, the process
follows. It would be helpful if you could
made under the Complaints Procedure

The [Administrator][Charity Secretary]
Executive]
<<name of charity>>
<<address of main office of charity>>
or by email to him/her at
<<email address>>

[Alternatively, please complete our complaint form
[or] ask us to post to you a hard copy of the form
post it back to us at <<address of charity>>]

Whoever initially receives any complaint from a
trustee, it will normally be dealt with by

Who the complaint is about

[A member of non-management staff][or][volunteer]

[A manager][supervisor][team leader]
[management team]

[A member of the [[senior] management team]
team][or][Charity Secretary]

[The Chief Executive] or [a trustee]

[The Chair of trustees]

re who to speak to, you can get more information
and speak to someone to
person to speak to you about
n to speak to you on the phone.
son to the appropriate person.

for any reason, you can make a complaint
[alternative], by speaking to

Secretary][[or] [any trustee(s)]
of your complaint we will pass it to the person
investigate, deal with, and respond

complaint by letter addressed as follows:
letter *"This is a complaint*

of trustees][the Chief Executive]

n [via our website] [or][print out] the form
then please complete it and return it to us.

ber of staff, volunteer, or trustee. The following
ows:

investigate, deal with, and respond to the complaint
it.

ager][supervisor][team leader]

ember of the [senior management team]

xecutive]

f trustees]

Vice Chair of trustees]

Timescales for all First Stage

We will try to resolve the problem as quickly as possible. For example, if we need to investigate the problem, we will acknowledge receipt of your complaint and we will deal with the following timescale:

- By phone or in person, if you phone us or contact us by email or you use our on-line complaint form, we will contact you by letter [or hard copy complaint form] on the same day if you
- By email, within [5] working days by email or you use our on-line complaint form, we will contact us by letter [or hard copy complaint form] within [5] working days
- By letter, within [10] working days

Our acknowledgement will inform you of the proposed resolution or update. If you are not happy with the trustee dealing with your complaint, you can refer the complaint to or another person to deal with your complaint.

They will investigate and deal with your complaint. You should receive that definitive reply within [5] working days. If this is not possible, a progress report will be sent with an indication of when you will receive the definitive reply.

Second stage

If, for any reason, you are not happy with our response under the First Stage procedure outlined above, you can refer your complaint to the Second Stage procedure as follows.

Please address a letter to:

<<contact title or name, e.g. Chair of trustees>>
<<name of charity>>
<<address of main office of charity>>

Alternatively, please email <<contact title or name, e.g. Chair of trustees>> or P.A to Chief Executive or Chair of trustees>>

Please set out clearly the details of your complaint and why you were not satisfied with our response under the First Stage procedure. You should like us to do to put things right.

The <<contact title or name, e.g. Chair of trustees>> will send a letter to a suitably senior person to investigate and respond with a definitive reply within a further [10] working days. If you will [generally] be someone who initially did so under the First Stage.]

Third stage

Second stage

If, for any reason, you are not happy with our response under the First Stage procedure outlined above, you can refer your complaint to the Second Stage procedure as follows.

Please address a letter to:

<<contact title or name, e.g. Chair of trustees>>
<<name of charity>>
<<address of main office of charity>>

Alternatively, please email <<contact title or name, e.g. Chair of trustees>> or P.A to Chief Executive or Chair of trustees>>

Please set out clearly the details of your complaint and why you were not satisfied with our response under the First Stage procedure. You should like us to do to put things right.

The <<contact title or name, e.g. Chair of trustees>> will send a letter to a suitably senior person to investigate and respond with a definitive reply within a further [10] working days. If you will [generally] be someone who initially did so under the First Stage.]

Alternatively, please email <<contact title or name, e.g. Chair of trustees>> or P.A to Chief Executive or Chair of trustees>>

Please set out clearly the details of your complaint and why you were not satisfied with our response under the First Stage procedure. You should like us to do to put things right.

The <<contact title or name, e.g. Chair of trustees>> will send a letter to a suitably senior person to investigate and respond with a definitive reply within a further [10] working days. If you will [generally] be someone who initially did so under the First Stage.]

Alternatively, please email <<contact title or name, e.g. Chair of trustees>> or P.A to Chief Executive or Chair of trustees>>

If you are still not satisfied with our response, please inform <<contact title or name>> [Secretary/Administrator/ P.A to Chief Executive or Chair of trustees]>> to take your complaint further, moving our reply under the Second Stage. Please contact him/her by the method specified for the Second Stage (as above).

Your case will then be passed to <<contact title or name>> [our [panel of trustees][trustee] nominated for the purpose] [or] [our [panel of trustees][trustee] or [Chief Executive] who will further investigate your complaint] [or] [our [panel of trustees][trustee] or senior individuals we nominate to deal with the Third Stage] [or] [our [panel of trustees][trustee] or senior individuals we nominate to deal with the Third Stage] [his][her][their] conclusions and recommendations.

You can expect this to take a further 10 working days from the date on which we receive your letter or email.

Follow up

In order for us to make improvements to our [activities], we may wish to contact you. Your response will be used to check that you were satisfied with our response and to help us improve our [activities]. Any information you give will only be used to make improvements to our [activities].

Taking your complaint outside <<contact title or name>> [Secretary/Administrator/ P.A to Chief Executive or Chair of trustees]>>

The Fundraising Standards Board

[If your complaint is about our fundraising standards, you are entitled to take your complaint to the Fundraising Standards Board. This is the self-regulatory scheme that works to ensure that charities raising money from the public do so honestly and properly. We are committed to abiding by the standards of the Fundraising Standards Board, and we will refer any complaints that are escalated to them. Their contact details are as follows:

Fundraising Standards Board, 6th Floor, 100 Broad Street, London, E1 6AA
Tel: 0333 321 8803
Email: info@frsb.org.uk
Website: www.frsb.org.uk/complaints

Charity Commission

If your complaint is about any [other] [type of] [fundraising work or activities], you should contact the Charity Commission rather than us. However, we suggest that, before you contact the Commission rather than us, you should first seek guidance on its website as to whether your complaint is about a charity and not to the Commission. Their contact details are as follows:

Charity Commission Direct, PO Box 907, London, E3 9UG
Tel: 0845 300 0218
Website: www.charitycommission.gov.uk/
and

take your complaint further, moving our reply under the Second Stage. Please contact him/her by the method specified for the Second Stage (as above).

our [panel of trustees][trustee] nominated for the purpose] [or] [our [panel of trustees][trustee] or [Chief Executive] who will further investigate your complaint] [or] [our [panel of trustees][trustee] or senior individuals we nominate to deal with the Third Stage] [or] [our [panel of trustees][trustee] or senior individuals we nominate to deal with the Third Stage] [his][her][their] conclusions and recommendations.

from the date on which we receive your letter or email.

ity> [and its [services] of your complaint being dealt with. Any information you give will only be used to make improvements to our [activities] of charity> [and its [services] of your complaint being dealt with. Any information you give will only be used to make improvements to our [activities]

es and you are not satisfied with our response, you are entitled to take your complaint to the Fundraising Standards Board. This is the self-regulatory scheme that works to ensure that charities raising money from the public do so honestly and properly. We are committed to abiding by the standards of the Fundraising Standards Board, and we will refer any complaints that are escalated to them. Their contact details are as follows:

on, E1 6AA

able work [other than our fundraising work or activities], you should contact the Charity Commission. However, we suggest that, before you contact the Commission rather than us, you should first seek guidance on its website as to whether your complaint is about a charity and not to the Commission. Their contact details are as follows:

3UG

www.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity

[Other Authorities]

[The Charity Commission guidance states that:

- if you believe there is criminal activity, you should inform the police
- if you suspect fraud connect with the Action Fraud Online Reporting Service or call 0300 123 2040
- if you have information about a criminal activity connected to a charity, you should report it to the police

[If a complaint relates to the conduct of a charity, it may be appropriate to contact the Office of the Information Commissioner.]

[A complaint could be directed to a regulatory body if it properly falls under its jurisdiction or remit. For example, a complaint about an advertisement made to the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) where the charity is registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) a complaint about the CQC if the complaint relates to social care provided by the charity.]

www.charitycommission.gov.uk/charities/report-a-concern-about-a-charity

that:

charity, you should inform the

should report it using the Action Fraud Online Reporting Service onfraud.police.uk/report_fraud

activity connected to a charity, 0800 789 321.]

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