

COM13	ADOPTED: 28.8.93	REVIEWED: 26.3.97; 29.3.00, 27.2.02; 26.5.04; 22.2.06; 28.2.07; 27.01.10
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COMPLAINTS POLICY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 We will ensure that appropriate arrangements exist so that a tenant, applicant or member of the public who is unhappy about the standards of service provided or the conduct of any staff or Committee Member, may make a complaint and have this investigated.
- 1.2 This policy describes how we will deal with and respond to any complaints received, the appeals process, and any sources of independent advice available to complainants.
- 1.3 This policy is supported by detailed procedures, is based on the Raising Standards chapter on Customer Complaints and complies with Performance Standard GS3.3 on complaints and appeals.

GS3.3 Complaints and appeals: We deal fairly and effectively with anyone wanting to appeal against, or complain about, any of our decisions or activities. We make it clear that they can complain about us to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.

- 1.4 This policy does not cover neighbour complaints or whistleblowing. These issues are dealt with under separate policies.

2.0 INFORMAL COMPLAINTS

- 2.1 Informal complaints are matters which an individual wishes to bring to the attention of an appropriate staff member, where the individual is not seeking e.g. a formal apology, reversal of a decision or possible compensation, but where they are mainly seeking an assurance that the matter will be looked into and, if necessary, dealt with appropriately.
- 2.2 Informal complaints may cover issues relating to repairs, performance of maintenance contractors, delays in responding to requests for information, or compensation claims.
- 2.3 Informal complaints will be 'logged' to allow us to gain valuable feedback and help us improve the service we offer. Informal complaints will not be subject to specific timescales for responses.

- 2.4 If agreed at the time of speaking to the complainant, the staff member will advise them either verbally or in writing when the matter has been investigated and, if appropriate, give details of any action taken or proposed.

For details on how informal complaints will be dealt with, see the Complaints Procedure.

- 2.5 At any appropriate time in dealing with an informal complaint, or if the complainant states they are not satisfied with the results of the investigation, they will be offered the opportunity to make a formal complaint.

3.0 FORMAL COMPLAINTS

- 3.1 When an individual states that they wish to make a formal complaint, they will be provided with a copy of the information leaflet entitled "Your Right to Complain" (Appendix I).

- 3.2 The leaflet will advise that the complaint should be addressed to the Director (or if the complaint is about the Director, to the Chairperson) and be made within 28 days of the event giving rise to the complaint.

- 3.3 If the complainant requires assistance, the investigating officer will write out the complaint details and ensure that the complainant understands and agrees with the written version. To comply with our Equalities & Diversity policy we may also arrange for an interpreter or translation facilities if required.

The complainant will sign and date any statement written out on their behalf.

- 3.4 The Director will investigate the complaint or delegate the investigation to a Manager. If the complaint is about the Director, the Chairperson will nominate a Manager to assist in the investigation.

- 3.5 A formal complaint will be acknowledged within 2 working days of receipt.

- 3.6 Following investigation, the Director (or Chairperson) will send a written response to the complainant within 20 working days of receipt. The response will detail the results of the investigation, whether the complaint was wholly, partly or not upheld, and where appropriate, any action taken or proposed.

The complainant will also be advised how to submit an appeal, if they are dissatisfied with the response.

- 3.7 If the complaint is an exceptionally serious or complicated one which requires more than 20 working days to investigate, an interim reply will be sent within 20 days to report on progress and give an estimate of when the final reply will be sent.

- 3.8 For further details of how formal complaints will be dealt with, see the Complaints Procedure.

4.0 INDEPENDENT ADVICE

- 4.1 A complainant may wish to obtain independent advice from an appropriate agency and/or a solicitor regarding their complaint.

- 4.2 We will make available on request details of independent advice agencies, and will consider the comments made by any agency and/or a solicitor on behalf of a complainant.

5.0 APPEALS

- 5.1 If the complainant is not satisfied with the response, they may appeal to the Management Committee within 28 days of receiving the response letter, stating why they are not satisfied and requesting reconsideration of their complaint.
- 5.2 The appeal will be in writing, addressed to the Director, and will be acknowledged in writing within 2 working days. If the complainant requires assistance in writing their appeal this will be provided as described in para. 3.4. If it will take longer than 20 working days to hear or respond to the appeal, e.g. because of the date of the next Management Committee meeting, details of the timescale will be given in the acknowledgement letter.
- 5.3 The arrangements for holding an appeal are described in the Complaints Procedure. The complainant may ask or be asked to attend the Committee meeting to put their complaint in person and answer any questions. The complainant will have the right to be accompanied or represented at the meeting.
- 5.4 The Director (or Chairperson, as appropriate) will advise the complainant in writing of the Committee’s decision within 5 working days of the date of the meeting, unless there is a need for further investigation, in which case an interim reply will be sent within 5 working days.

6.0 OMBUDSMAN

- 6.1 If an individual has exhausted our own complaints procedures and is still not satisfied with the outcome, they may be able to have their complaint investigated by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. Details of how to contact the Ombudsman will be provided with our written response following an appeal.

7.0 IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

- 7.1 The Director is responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented by all staff and by the Management Committee when required.
- 7.2 The Depute Director will submit 6 monthly reports to the Management Committee on formal complaints received.

Each report will contain brief details of the complaint, the outcome of the investigation, the time taken to respond, and whether or not the complainant was satisfied, if known (see Appendix 2).
- 7.3 The Director will ensure that this policy is reviewed at least every 3 years by the Management Committee.

Review approved by the Management Committee on 27 January 2010

Next review due by January 2013.

SignedDate
(Chairperson)

APPENDIX 1

Insert "Your Right to Complain" Leaflet

COMPLAINTS - SUMMARY REPORT FOR THE PERIOD

No.	Date		Details	Action Taken	Outcome	Reply Date	No of Days	Satisfied? (Yes/No)
	Rec'd	Ack'd						