

Complaints Policy and Procedure

Introduction

To ensure accountability and transparency, housing associations should adopt clear procedures on processing complaints and appeals procedures from tenants. It is recommended that the Management board agree and adopt a complaints policy and procedure and agree a review date once implemented.

Guidance on developing a complaints procedure

Receiving complaints

A person can make a complaint:

- Verbally, in person or by phone
- In writing by fax, email, letter or by submitting a complaint form (all complaints should be recorded on a complaint form)

How would a complaints procedure work?

Stage 1:

The first line of communication is between the individual and the Housing Association. When a complaint is received, particularly by telephone, the Housing Association should try to resolve it immediately by providing the required information or taking appropriate action to the satisfaction of the individual. This should be achievable for routine complaints about repairs / rent etc. The individual should be asked whether he/she is satisfied with the response.

Stage 2:

If the complaint cannot be resolved immediately, the individual should receive an acknowledgement of their complaint within 10 working days; and they should be advised that they can expect a full response in a reasonable timeframe (e.g. within 20 working days) and the name of the person they can contact about the complaint.

Stage 3:

If the complaint has not been resolved to the individual's satisfaction, a further investigation into the complaint should be undertaken and they should receive a written response from an authorised person in the Housing Association.

Information about complaints should be collated from the complaint forms and reported to the Management Board.

Good practice for Housing Associations in dealing with complaints

- Try to resolve complaints at the earliest stage.

- Ensure the individual is kept informed of progress and has a point of contact with whom they can liaise in relation to their complaint.
- Ensure staff / Board Members adopt a complaints procedure and are fully briefed on this.
- Ensure people from more vulnerable groups (e.g. people with dementia or people from minority groups) receive appropriate support to complain with someone to advocate on their behalf.

Dealing with a complaint from a third party

Housing Associations should have a clear procedure in dealing with information referred to it by an individual concerning the manner in which the organisation is run. This information should be recorded, examined to ensure its authenticity and investigated thoroughly.

What if the complaint is anonymous?

Anonymous complaints can be difficult to deal with but should not be ignored and a policy should be put in place especially if there is a concern about the running of an Association.

A complaints policy is an important tool for a Housing Association as part of providing a good customer service to tenants.

Policy Title:	Complaints
Date policy discussed and agreed by Board:	
Review Date:	
Signed by Chairperson on behalf of the Board:	

..... Housing Association is committed to providing an efficient and courteous service to all its tenants however where a complaint is made, the following procedure will be adhered to.

Receiving complaints

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- Verbally, in person or by phone
- In writing by fax, email, letter or by submitting a complaint form (all complaints will be recorded on a complaint form)

Stage 1:

When a complaint is received, particularly by telephone,Housing

Association will try to resolve it immediately by providing the required information or taking appropriate action to the satisfaction of the individual. This should be achievable for routine complaints about repairs / rent etc. The individual will be asked whether he/she is satisfied with the response.

Stage 2:

If the complaint cannot be sorted out immediately, the individual should receive a prompt acknowledgement of their complaint within 10 working days, they will be advised that they can expect a full response in a reasonable timeframe (e.g. within 20 working days) and the name of the person they can contact about the complaint.

Stage 3

If the complaint has not been resolved to the individual's satisfaction, a further investigation into the complaint should be undertaken and they should receive a written response from an authorised person in the Housing Association.

Information about complaints will be collated from the complaint forms and reported to the Management Board.

..... Housing Association will endeavour to:

- Resolve complaints at the earliest stage.
- Ensure the individual is kept informed of progress and has a point of contact with whom they can liaise in relation to their complaint.
- Ensure people from more vulnerable groups (e.g. people with dementia or people from minority groups) receive appropriate support to complain with
- Someone to advocate on their behalf.