

Complaints policy and procedure

Your complaints policy makes it clear to service-users and members of the public what they need to do if they want to give you feedback or have any concerns.

Below are two templates. The first is very simple, the second is slightly more complex. We recommend taking a look at both and thinking which approach will suit your organisation best. If your organisation is run entirely by volunteers then the simpler version is probably more suitable, but if you start to employ staff you will need to review your system to include them in the procedure.

The aim is to have a process that is a good balance between your time and effort and the need to take complaints seriously. All formal complaints, whatever the result, must be reported to your committee or Board so that they can oversee how they are handled and use them to plan improvements.

This policy should link up with your staff disciplinary policy or complaints policy. This will ensure that you know what to do if a serious complaint (for example sexual harassment) is made.

Adapting the templates

For both templates, please complete the **RED** section with your organisation's name and details; and choose the options coloured **GREEN** that best reflect how your policy will work and who will deal with it at each stage. It's best to encourage people to first address their issue directly with the person or people "on the ground" who are the source of the problem.

However, if the complaint becomes formal then it needs to be clear that it will be dealt with by a different and more senior person. Someone who is the subject of a complaint must never be responsible for investigating, or able to unduly influence the outcome

Simple template policy

YOUR ORGANISATION – Complaints Procedure

YOUR ORGANISATION aims to provide high quality services which meet your needs. We believe we achieve this most of the time: if we are not getting it right please let us know.

In order to ensure our services remain at a high and improving standard, we have a procedure that you can use to let us know of any reason you are not happy with **YOUR ORGANISATION**

If you are unhappy about any of **YOUR ORGANISATION'S** services, please speak to the relevant **volunteer/staff member/manager**. If you are unhappy with an individual in **YOUR ORGANISATION** sometimes it is best to tell him or her directly. If you feel this is difficult or inappropriate, then speak to a **committee member/manager/Trustee** via the contact details below.

Often, we will be able to give you a response straight away. When the matter is more complicated, we will give you an initial response within five working days.

Making a written complaint

If you are not satisfied with our response or wish to raise the matter more formally, please write to the **Manager/Director/Trustee/Chief Executive**. (If your complaint is about the **Director/Chief Executive**, please write to the **Chair**.) All written complaints will be logged. You will receive a written acknowledgement within three working days.

The aim is to investigate your complaint properly and give you a reply within ten working days, setting out how the problem will be dealt with. If this is not possible, an interim response will be made informing you of the action taken to date or being considered.

If after we have responded you are not satisfied, please write to the Chair who will report the matter to the next meeting of the **Board/Committee/Trustees**, which will decide on any further steps to resolve the situation.

Finally, please also let us know if you are happy with **YOUR ORGANISATION'S** services.

YOUR ORGANISATION'S contact details when making a complaint are;

Phone number, email, address

More detailed template policy

OUR ORGANISATION – Complaints Procedure We aim to give everyone who uses our services the best possible help. For us to achieve this, we need to know if things have gone wrong. Complaints will help us identify problems and put them right, so we welcome your views.

Most complaints can be dealt with informally by talking to the person most concerned - the person or people you usually deal with. They will listen to your views, make a record of what happened and make appropriate changes where possible.

If you feel that your concern cannot be dealt with in this way, for example if your complaint is about the person you would normally talk to, we also have a formal complaints procedure. A manager/senior manager/Trustee/Director will carry out a detailed investigation and meet the person or people that you have raised a concern about.

Whatever you decide:

- We are happy to talk to you about what has happened.
- We will always make sure that your complaint or concern is treated confidentially.
- You can tell us everything that happened.
- We will get back to you in a set time-scale so that you always know what's happening and can feel sure that we are treating your concern or complaint seriously.
- You will get an open and fair response.
- You will always be treated with respect, and we'll do all that we can to help find a way forward.

If you want to make a complaint about our services or activities, there are several ways you can do this:

In writing to this address



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By completing [this online form](#).

By phone to

You can ask someone to help you make a complaint and to act on your behalf if you want.

What happens next?

We will contact you to tell you that we have your complaint within five working days of receipt.

We will let you know if we need to contact you, so it's important to give us all your contact details and the best way to reach you.

We will get back to you in an agreed time to let you know the outcome. Please be aware that it takes longer to manage a formal complaint because we will hold a full investigation. We aim to finish our investigation within 30 working days of receipt and will then contact you in writing.

We will explain the result of our discussions or investigation and let you know what we'll do to improve our services going forward.

If you're not happy with the result of a complaint you can ask for the decision and process to be looked at again through our appeals process.

How to appeal following a formal complaint

You can contact us in the same way as before to let us know that you want to appeal the decision.

A member of our [senior management team/Committee/Board](#) will then investigate your complaint and how it was managed to ensure that the process and decisions were fair.

Decisions made as a result of the appeal are final.

Voscur is a council for voluntary service and a development agency for the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector in Bristol.

We deliver **training** on different aspects of running a VCSE organisation. Follow this link to our VCSE Academy to look for upcoming courses: <https://www.vcseacademy.org/courses/> We can also offer bespoke training for your organisation, so do get in touch to discuss your training needs.

Voscur is here to **support** VCSE organisations. For support, advice and guidance on how to apply this information in your particular circumstances, please contact us: info@voscur.org 0117 909 9949

