

CUSTOMER COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Document History

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Revision History

Version number	Revision date	Previous revision date	Summary of changes	Changes marked
1	26/04/16	-	New Procedure	
2	April 2020	18/04/18		
3	April 2022	April 2020	Nil Changes	

Approvals

Name	Signature	Responsibility	Date of issue	Version
Board		DOCS	26/05/16	1.0
Board		Board	25/06/2020	2.0
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Name	Responsibility	Date of issue	Method of Issue	Version
Staff	DOCS	26/05/16	Email	1.0
Staff	HROM	25/08/2020	Email	2.0
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1. Introduction

In addition to our Customer Charter, it is important that staff are aware of how to progress a complaint from the Public. We aim to deliver the best possible service to the Public. If a member of the Public is dissatisfied with the quality of service they have received, they have the right to complain.

The recommendation in the Customer Charter is that they discuss the matter initially with their usual contact within the Agency; however, if the matter cannot be resolved at the point of contact there is a process in place to progress a complaint to the next stage.

All complaints received must be acknowledged within **5** working days and processed within **20** working days.

The Agency retains a record of all complaints received and the action taken. The complaints register is updated by the HR/Office Manager.

2. How to handle complaints

There are several key stages when handling a complaint. When a call, visit or email is received with complaint content, the complainant should be responded to at the earliest opportunity.

- a) Thank the customer for complaining - We should consider the complaint an opportunity to improve instead of thinking of it as a wholly negative impact.
- b) Respond that you are sorry that the issue has arisen - This is NOT an admission of guilt on your part, it's just good manners.
- c) Put yourself in the place of the customer - This will instantly give you an advantage, as you will not only have more empathy with the client and as you should know our business better than the client you can hopefully find a solution quicker.
- d) Start with the view that the client has a valid point. By accepting that the customer may have a point, this may well trigger off ideas to enable you to provide an acceptable resolution - even if this is just to escalate it up the line.
- e) Get all the facts first, letting the customer give you all the information helps you fully understand the situation and if they are emotional, will give them time to calm down.
- f) If you are able to offer a solution to the problem proceed. Report the complaint to the Customer Services Co-Ordinator (Director of Corporate Services) so as the issue can be reviewed to ensure that it does not arise again.
- g) If you are fixing the problem ensure that your definition of the right fix is the same as the customers.
- h) Learn from every complaint, wherever possible let the complaining client know that they have helped you resolve a problem.
- i) If a complainant wants to escalate the complaint to The Northern Ireland Commissioner for Complaints/ ombudsman and gives us notice, it should be referred to the Board in advance of this happening if possible.

If the problem cannot be resolved at the point of contact, the complaint should be referred to the Customer Service Co-ordinator (contact details below)

Customer Service Co-ordinator

Director of Corporate Services
The Corn Exchange
31 Gordon Street
Belfast
BT 1 2LG

Email: kstewart@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk
Telephone: (028) 9023 1113

In the case of the complaint being in reference to the Customer Services Co-ordinator or associated role the complaint should be escalated to the HR/Office Manager, details below:

Ms Lorna Elliott
HR/Office Manager
The Corn Exchange
31 Gordon Street
Belfast
BT 1 2LG

Email: lelliott@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk
Telephone: (028) 9026 1988