



# Recovery Partners Complaints Procedure

It is our policy to welcome complaints and look upon them as an opportunity to learn, adapt, improve and provide better services. If a client, their relative or carer wishes to make a complaint or register a concern they should find it easy to do so. This policy is intended to ensure that complaints are dealt with properly and that all complaints or comments by clients, their relatives and carers are taken seriously.

We are committed to providing a high-quality service to all our clients. When something goes wrong, we need people to tell us about it. This will help us to improve our standards.

We hope that most complaints, if dealt with early, openly and honestly, can be resolved at a local level between just the complainant and the manager, staff member or volunteer concerned. If this fails due to either the organisation or the complainant being dissatisfied with the result the complaint will be referred to our organisation for their view.

The goals of the complaints procedure are to ensure that:

- clients, carers, and their representatives are aware of how to complain, and that we provide easy to use opportunities for them to register their complaints
- a named person will be responsible for the administration of the procedure
- every written complaint is acknowledged within two working days
- investigations into written complaints are held within 20 working days
- all complaints are responded to in writing
- complaints are dealt with promptly, fairly and sensitively with due regard to the upset and worry that they can cause to both staff and clients.

## Verbal Complaints

All verbal complaints, no matter how seemingly unimportant, should be taken seriously. There is nothing to be gained by staff adopting a defensive or aggressive attitude.

Front line staff members who receive verbal complaints should seek to solve the problem immediately if possible. If the problem cannot be solved immediately they should offer to get the manager to deal with the concern.

All contact with the complainant should be polite, courteous and sympathetic. At all times staff should remain calm and respectful. Staff should not accept blame, make excuses or blame other staff.



If the complaint is being made on behalf of the client by an advocate it must first be verified that the person has permission to speak for the client, especially if confidential information is involved. It is very easy to assume that the advocate has the right or power to act for the service user when they may not. If in doubt it should be assumed that the client's explicit permission is needed prior to discussing the complaint with the advocate.

After talking the problem through, each manager or the member of staff dealing with the complaint should suggest a course of action to resolve the complaint. If this course of action is acceptable then the member of staff should clarify the agreement with the complainant and agree a way in which the results of the complaint will be communicated to the complainant (ie through another meeting or by letter).

If the suggested plan of action is not acceptable to the complainant then the member of staff or manager should ask the complainant to put their complaint in writing to the establishment and give them a copy of the complaints procedure.

In both cases details of the complaints should be recorded on a complaints form and handed to the complaints manager.

## **Written Complaints**

When a complaint is received in writing it should be passed immediately to the co-ordinator who will record it and send an acknowledgment letter within five working days. On receipt of the complaint, the co-ordinator should immediately inform the project manager to discuss next steps. The co-ordinator or manager will be the named person who deals with the complaint through the process.

If the complaint is against the co-ordinator, then a senior manager will deal with the complaint.

If necessary, further details should be obtained from the complainant. If the complaint is not made by the client but on the client's behalf, then consent of the client, preferably in writing, must be obtained from the complainant.

Information detailing the complaints procedure should be forwarded to the complainant.

Immediately on receipt of the complaint the manager will launch an investigation and as soon as possible should be in a position to provide a full explanation to the complainant, either in writing or by arranging a meeting with the individuals concerned.

If the issues are too complex to complete the investigation within 20 days, the complainant should be informed of any delays and a new timescale agreed.



If the complaint raises potentially serious matters, advice should be sought from a legal advisor. If legal action is taken at this stage any investigation by the manager under the complaints procedure should cease immediately.

If the complainant is not prepared to have the investigation conducted by the manager he or she should be advised to contact the commissioning body for the service provided.

If a meeting is arranged the complainant should be advised that they may, if they wish, bring a friend or relative or a representative such as an advocate.

At the meeting a detailed explanation of the findings and outcome of the investigation should be given and also an apology if it is deemed appropriate (apologising for what has happened need not be an admission of liability). Such a meeting gives the organisation the opportunity to show the complainant that the matter has been taken seriously and has been thoroughly investigated.

After the meeting, or if the complainant does not want a meeting, a written account of the investigation should be sent to the complainant. This should include details of how to appeal if the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome.

At this stage, if the complainant is still not satisfied, they should contact us again and we will arrange for someone unconnected with the matter to review the decision.

The outcomes of the investigation and the meeting should be recorded on appropriate documentation and any shortcomings in the organisation procedures should be identified and acted upon.

The senior managers will discuss any complaints and their outcome at a formal business meeting.

### **Anonymous complaints**

We understand that at times a client, relative or carer may not wish to have their name mentioned with regard to a complaint. In such cases the complaint may be made by an advocate or by another organisation on behalf of the person concerned. The organisation will consider how best to take forward such complaints, recognising that without specific details there are a number of factors that might make it difficult to resolve.

### **Who to contact**

In the first instance please contact the local coordinator.



If your complaint or concern relates to a Coordinator please contact our Operations Manager:

**Anna Stratford**  
**Operations Manager**  
**07976 628737**  
[a.stratford@recovery-partners.org.uk](mailto:a.stratford@recovery-partners.org.uk)

If your complaint relates to the Operations Manager please contact:

**Trustee Chair**  
[complaints@recovery-partners.org.uk](mailto:complaints@recovery-partners.org.uk)

Alternatively if you would like to make a complaint in writing, please send your complaint to:

**The Complaints Manager**  
**Recovery Partners**  
**18 Wyde Feld**  
**Bognor Regis**  
**West Sussex**  
**PO21 3DH**  
[complaints@recovery-partners.org.uk](mailto:complaints@recovery-partners.org.uk)