

## **Comments, Compliments and Complaints Policy and Procedure**

### **Overview**

YMCA North Tyneside is committed to providing a quality service and working in an open and accountable way that builds trust and respect. One of the ways in which we can continue to improve our services is by listening and responding to the views of our service users, clients and stakeholders, and in particular by responding positively to complaints, and by putting mistakes right.

We are always glad to hear from people who are satisfied with the services and products we offer. All compliments are recorded, acknowledged, and a copy is sent to the relevant service manager to provide feedback to the member of staff or service.

The formal complaints procedure is intended to ensure that all complaints are handled fairly, consistently and wherever possible resolved to the complainant's satisfaction.

### **Our Aims**

We aim to ensure that:

- Informal complaints are resolved quickly
- Making a formal compliment or complaint is as easy as possible
- Enable mediation between the complainant and the individual to whom the complaint has been referred
- We welcome comments, compliments, feedback and suggestions
- We treat a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with our service or products which calls for an immediate response
- We deal with it promptly, politely and, when appropriate, confidentially
- We respond in the right way - for example, with an explanation, or an apology where we have got things wrong, or information on any action that has been taken (this is not an exhaustive list)
- We learn from complaints, use them to improve our services or products, and review this policy annually

We recognise that many concerns will be raised informally, and dealt with quickly.

This policy ensures that we welcome compliments and provide guidelines for dealing with complaints from members of the public about our services, products, facilities, service users, staff and volunteers.

### **Definitions**

A compliment is an expression of satisfaction about the standard of service or products we provide.

A complaint is defined as any expression of dissatisfaction, however, it is expressed. This would include a complaint expressed face to face, via telephone, in writing, or email.

## **Responsibilities**

YMCA North Tyneside's responsibility will be to:

- Acknowledge the formal complaint in writing;
- Respond within a stated period of time;
- Deal reasonably and sensitively with the complaint; and
- Take action where appropriate.

A complainant's responsibility is to:

- Raise concerns promptly and directly with a member of staff in the area/department in which the complaint originates;
- Bring their complaint, in writing, to our Human Resources Department attention normally within 8 weeks of the issue arising;
- Explain the problem as clearly and as fully as possible, including any action taken to date;
- Allow YMCA North Tyneside a reasonable time to deal with the matter; and
- Recognise that some circumstances may be beyond YMCA North Tyneside's control.

## **Confidentiality**

Except in exceptional circumstances, every attempt will be made to ensure that both the complainant and YMCA North Tyneside maintain confidentiality. However the circumstances giving rise to the complaint may be such that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality (with each complaint judged on its own facts). Should this be the case, the situation will be explained to the complainant.

## **Complaints Procedure**

Written records must be made by the individual handling the complaint on behalf of YMCA North Tyneside at each stage of the procedure.

### **Stage 1**

In the first instance, staff member(s) must establish the seriousness of the complaint, when unsure, the staff member must consult with their line manager. An informal approach is appropriate when it can be achieved. But if concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, then the formal complaints procedure should be followed.

### **Stage 2**

If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, the member of the public or service user should be advised that a formal complaint may be made and the following procedure should be explained to them. It may sometimes be

appropriate for a different member of staff, preferably a member of the management team, to make this explanation.

A formal complaint can be made either verbally or in writing. If in writing the attached form should be used. If verbally, a statement should be taken by a member of the management team, supervisor or staff member.

In all cases, the complaint must be passed on to the Human Resources Department. In the event of a complaint about the Human Resources Department the complaint should be passed to a member of the Executive Leadership Team, and if the complaint is about the Executive Leadership Team this must be passed on to another relevant member of the Executive Leadership Team or the Chair of the Trustee Board.

The Human Resources Team or others listed above, depending on the nature of the complaint, must acknowledge the complaint in writing within one week of receiving it.

One of the above will investigate the complaint. Any conclusions reached should be discussed with the staff member involved **and** their line manager.

The person making the complaint will receive a response based on the investigation within four weeks of the complaint being received. If this is not possible then a letter must be sent explaining why and providing further details.

### **Stage 3**

If the complainant is not satisfied with the above decision then a member of the Appeal Committee or a sub-group of the Trustee Board will be convened.

The Appeal Committee or Sub-Group will examine the complaint and may wish to carry out further interviews, examine files/notes, review evidence etc. They will respond within four weeks in writing. Their decision will be final.

## Complaints Form

We would prefer you to complete our electronic form which helps us monitor any comments, compliments or complaints received across the organisation.

### [Comment, Compliment & Complaint Form](#)

However, you may also use this form below (a duplicate of our electronic form) to make a comment, compliment or suggestion or to make a complaint about YMCA North Tyneside.

We would like you to return this form as soon as possible.

<b>Your name:</b>	
<b>Your address:</b>	
<b>Your phone number:</b>	
<b>Your email address:</b>	

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<b>Date of incident:</b>	
<b>Approximate time:</b>	
<b>Individuals involved:</b>	

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<b>Suggestions/Complaint:</b>
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<b>What action would you like to be taken?</b>
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**What times are convenient for you to have an appointment to discuss this?**