
COMPLAINTS POLICY

Document Control

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1 POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 YMCA Norfolk aims to provide a good standard of services for its clients and for others with whom it may come into contact.
- 1.2 YMCA Norfolk recognises the need for a fair, accessible, open and accountable process that encourages clients and others to make their views known, to make complaints which will be taken seriously and for a process that facilitates a timely response leading wherever possible to a satisfactory resolution.
- 1.3 This policy covers complaints made by clients of YMCA Norfolk, from other individuals, external organisations and from the local community.
- 1.4 For the purposes of enabling monitoring, reporting and evaluation of complaints received, complaints are divided into seven main categories:-
 - Housing Management;
 - Support Services;
 - Maintenance Issues;
 - Health & Safety Issues;
 - Lettings & Allocations;
 - Personal Issues and Well-being;
 - Community and External Issues.

2 PURPOSE

- 2.1 The Complaints Policy aims to provide a consistent and positive approach to complaints handling;
- 2.2 To deliver satisfaction to the client or members of the community and for others who may complain;
- 2.3 To use the experience as an aid to improve service delivery.

3 SCOPE & IMPLEMENTATION

- 3.1 This policy covers complaints made by clients of YMCA Norfolk, other individuals, external organisations or groups and from members of the local community.
- 3.2 The policy applies to all YMCA Norfolk services and activities. It is the duty of YMCA Norfolk managers and staff to ensure the policy is implemented and followed.

4 POLICY DETAILS

- 4.1 All formal complaints must be written, recorded and kept on file; their outcomes must also be recorded.
- 4.2 The procedure for making a complaint should be clearly outlined and promoted across all services.
- 4.3 Complaints will be responded to using a 3-stage process. This allows for appeals against decisions or outcomes if the complainant is not satisfied. This is achieved by a process of escalation once the relevant stage in the procedure has been exhausted.
- 4.4 **Stage 1** - on receiving and logging a formal complaint, the relevant manager will ensure the complaint is acknowledged within 24 hours. The manager will investigate the matter and make a considered response to the complainant within 7 days.
- 4.5 **Stage 2** – if the complaint cannot be satisfactorily resolved at Stage 1 and is escalated, the matter will be passed to a member of the Executive Team for further consideration. The Executive Team member will notify the complainant of the outcome within a further 7 days.
- 4.6 **Stage 3** - the final internal appeal is to YMCA Norfolk's Chief Executive Officer who will endeavour to make a decision on the complaint and notify the complainant within 14 days from the date of the appeal.
- 4.7 Once all internal complaints processes have been exhausted and the complaint is not resolved, a complaint that relates to housing management or lettings and allocations may be submitted to the Housing Ombudsman
- 4.8 Each complaint will be recorded using an approved Complaints form. This will include as a minimum the following:
 - a) Date complaint received;
 - b) Name of manager or staff member receiving and logging the complaint;
 - c) Complainants name, address and contact number/email;
 - d) Complain category i.e. Housing Management, Health & Safety, Maintenance, etc. - see Section 5.3 below);
 - e) A summary of the complaint;
 - f) A list of follow-up actions
 - g) Date of response/feedback given to complainant;
 - h) Whether the complaint has been resolved satisfactorily at Stage 1, 2 or 3;
 - i) Whether the complaint being escalated to the next stage? (Yes/No);
 - j) Summary of lessons learned;

- k) Action taken or proposed;
 - l) Management sign off.
- 4.9 Data on complaints and their outcomes will be regularly reported to the Quality Assurance & Compliance team
- 4.10 An analysis of complaints and complaints handling performance will be reported to the Performance & Monitoring Committee on a regular basis.

5 DEFINITIONS

5.1 A complaint is defined as:

“..any expression of dissatisfaction, whether oral or written, and whether justified or not, from or on behalf of a YMCA Norfolk client, member of the public or local community, external organisation or group or other interested party and related to YMCA Norfolk’s service provision or other YMCA Norfolk activity, the management of its premises or its clients..”

5.2 Feedback from non-formal complaints is captured via client surveys, exit surveys, regular residents meetings and through client focus groups.

5.3 A complainant is anyone who makes a complaint. This applies to individuals, organisations or groups. Complaints may be internal or external.

5.4 There is a separate policy and procedure for complaints or grievances for YMCA staff.

5.5 The seven main complaints categories would include the following:

5.6 **Housing Management**

- Management of the accommodation;
- Resident consultation (accommodation issues only);
- Lodgings Providers (Supported Lodgings scheme only);
- Rent collection, rent arrears and welfare benefits;
- Resident disputes;
- Budgeting issues;
- YMCA housing staff;
- YMCA Reception staff;
- Supply of utilities (water, light, heat, etc.);
- Cleaning;
- Furniture & equipment;

- Communal areas.

5.7 **Support Services**

- The move-on process, support plans, assessments and reviews;
- YMCA Support staff;
- Social skills & behaviour management;
- Setting up a new home;
- Advice, advocacy and liaison;
- Managing finances and benefit claims;
- Counselling & advice;
- Access to other services;

5.8 **Maintenance Issues**

- Condition of accommodation (decoration, furniture and fittings);
- Communications: quality, timing or manner;
- Condition of communal areas (decoration, furniture and fittings);
- Condition of laundry room(s) (fittings and equipment);
- Loss or malfunction of basic utilities ((water, light, heat, etc.) ;
- Condition/functionality of toilets, showers, baths, etc.;
- Condition/functionality of doors, locks, windows, etc.;
- Maintenance response times, etc.
- Implementation of YMCA Norfolk's Maintenance policy;
- YMCA Maintenance staff.
- Needs assessments;
- Operation of waiting list (if applicable);
- Priority for accommodation given, etc.
- Implementation of YMCA Norfolk's Equal Opportunities policy;
- Implementation of YMCA Norfolk's Lettings & Allocation policy.

5.9 **Personal Issues and Well-being**

- General security of the premises;
- Food and catering

- Security of individual's accommodation;
- YMCA Duty/security staff;
- Other residents and/or service users;
- Implementation of YMCA Norfolk's 'Safeguarding Young People and Children' policy;
- Implementation of YMCA Norfolk's Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults and Non-Vulnerable Adults Policies;
- Visitors and other residents' guests;
- Discriminatory issues, harassment, etc.
- Implementation of YMCA Norfolk's Drugs Policy.

5.10 **Community & External Issues**

- Antisocial behaviour outside YMCA premises;
- Excess noise;
- General neighbourhood issue;
- Security Issues, etc.

5.11 The above list is not intended to be exhaustive but is illustrative only.

6 MONITORING, EVALUATION & REVIEW

- 6.1 Periodic auditing of the organisation's complaints process and complaints handling performance will take place as a part of the quality assurance and compliance function.
- 6.2 An analysis of complaints received and complaints resolved will be compiled and regularly reported to YMCA Norfolk's Performance and Monitoring Committee.
- 6.3 As a part of its annual reporting, YMCA Norfolk will publish the results of complaints handling performance and will make the reports available to service users and others who may have an interest.
- 6.4 This policy will be reviewed on a bi-annual basis.

7 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- YMCA Norfolk Freedom of Information Policy
- YMCA Norfolk Equality & Diversity Policy
- YMCA Norfolk Data Protection Policy
- YMCA Norfolk Client Appeals Policy
- YMCA Norfolk Staff Grievance Procedure