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# COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS POLICY

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**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 and compliments made by clients of YMCA Norfolk, from other individuals, external organisations and from the local community.
- 1.4 Complaints when logged on INFORM will be categorised into the following areas:
  - Neighbour/general public complaint
  - Complaint by client about another client
  - Complaint by client about a member of staff
  - Complaint by client about service provided
  - Complaint by client about maintenance and accommodation
  - Complaint about equality and diversity issue
  - Complaint by external agent about service
  - Complaint by external agent about staff
  - Complaint by external agent about client
- 1.5 There is then another categorisation of the main area of the complaint, which are:
  - Alcohol and substance misuse
  - Communal area misuse
  - Criminal behaviour
  - Damage to property
  - Domestic violence
  - Drugs
  - Food
  - Harassment
  - Intimidation
  - Noise
  - Nuisance
  - Nuisance from business use
  - Quality of support
  - Racial harassment
  - Rent
  - Repairs
  - Verbal abuse
  - Violent behaviour
  - Other
- 1.6 Compliments are categorised into the following areas:
  - Compliment by client about a member of staff
  - Compliment by client about service/accommodation
  - Compliment by external agent about service/accommodation

- Compliment by external agent about staff
  - Compliment by external agent about client
  - Neighbour/general public compliment
- 1.7 This categorisation is to ensure that the complaint and compliments are received and responded appropriately by addressing the main area of concern. Also, the categorisation is for reporting and monitoring.

## 2. PURPOSE

2.1 The aims of the Complaints and Compliments Policy are:

- To provide a consistent and positive approach to complaints and compliments handling;
- To deliver satisfaction to the client or members of the community and for others who may complain and/or compliment;
- To use the experience as an aid to improve service delivery.

## 3. SCOPE & IMPLEMENTATION

- 3.1 This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, contractors or any person delivering services for YMCA Norfolk at all times.
- 3.2 This policy covers complaints and compliments made by service users of YMCA Norfolk, other individuals, external organisations or groups and from members of the local community.
- 3.3 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 complaints and compliments must be logged on INFORM; their outcomes must also be recorded there also.
- 4.2 The procedure for making a complaint and/or compliment should be clearly outlined and promoted across all services.
- 4.3 Complaints will be responded to using a 4-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. The stages are outlined below:
- **Stage 1** - on receiving and logging a complaint, the relevant manager will ensure the complaint is acknowledged within 2 working days. The manager will investigate the matter and make a considered response to the complainant within 5 working days.

- **Stage 2** – if the complaint cannot be satisfactorily resolved at Stage 1 and is escalated, the matter will be passed to a Head of Service or a member of the Executive Team for further consideration. The Head of Service or Executive Team member will notify the complainant of the outcome within a further 5 working days.
  - **Stage 3** - the next stage of 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 10 working days from the date of the appeal.
  - **Stage 4** - the final internal appeal is to the Board of Trustees who will endeavour to make a decision on the complaint and notify the complainant following the meeting of the Board.
- 4.4 If a complaint is made directly about a service manager, this will be escalated for the relevant Director or Head of Service above them to handle.
- 4.5 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, which YMCA Norfolk is registered to.
- 4.6 Each complaint will be made using an approved Complaints form or method, such as email.
- 4.7 Compliments must be logged on INFORM and the relevant manager, Head of Service or Director must respond to the person making the compliment with a thank you letter that will be provided on INFORM.
- 4.8 Data on complaints and their outcomes will be regularly monitored and reported by the Finance and Performance team. This will also include whether the complaints have been fully inputted and responded to in the correct timeframes.
- 4.9 An analysis of complaints and compliments handling performance will be reported to the Performance & Monitoring Committee on a regular basis.
- 4.10 YMCA Norfolk accepts complaints from advocates of a service user or member of the public making a complaint, including friends and family members of a complainant.

## 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 resident’s 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 Norfolk staff in the Grievance Policy and Procedure. The Whistleblowing Policy is also for staff complaints.
- 5.5 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 and compliments process and complaints and compliments handling performance will take place as a part of the quality assurance and compliance function.
- 6.2 An analysis of complaints and compliments received and complaints and compliments 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 and compliments handling performance and will make the reports available to service users and others who may have an interest.
- 6.4 Responsibility for monitoring and reviewing the policy and its implementation will be carried out by the Performance and Finance team. The policy will be reviewed bi-annually or when required by changes in the Law.

## **7. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS**

- YMCA Norfolk Equality & Diversity Policy
- YMCA Norfolk Data Protection Policy
- YMCA Subject Access Request Policy
- YMCA Norfolk Client Appeals Policy
- YMCA Norfolk Staff Grievance Procedure