

Complaints Policy and Procedure

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Policy history

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1. The Policy

This policy is not part of the employees' contractual term and conditions and as such changes may be made without consultation.

This policy and procedure identifies the process of making a complaint and the roles and responsibilities of those involved in dealing with complaints. It is written in line with the relevant national guidance and legislation.

The policy applies to all groups of staff and anyone using the Associations services.

2. The Purpose

The Association is committed to providing a quality service and working in an open and accountable way that builds the trust and respect of all our stakeholders.

One of the ways in which we can continue to improve our service is by listening and responding to the views of our stakeholders, and in particular by responding positively to complaints regarding employees or services, and finding suitable resolutions.

3. The Process

This process aims to ensure that:

- Making a complaint is as easy as possible
- We treat a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with our service 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 taken if appropriate etc
- We learn from complaints, use them to improve our service, and review annually our complaints policy and procedures

We recognise that many concerns will be raised informally, and dealt with quickly. Our aim is to:

- Resolve concerns quickly
- Keep matters as low-key as possible

However complaints differ widely both in nature and complexity and sometimes needs to be dealt with formally. So to help us deal with your complaint more effectively you will need to write to us to let us know:

4. What we need to know

- Exactly what the problem is and how it has occurred. Give as much information as possible
- How it has affected you
- What you consider should be done to put the matter right
- All complaints should be marked Private and Confidential and should be addressed to the Personal Assistant to the Chief Executive, MND Association, David Niven House, 10-15 Notre Dame Mews, Northampton, NN1 2BG

5. How we will deal with your complaint

Stage one – Complaint

We will acknowledge your complaint within seven working days of receipt and provide you with the name and contact details of the person responsible for investigating the matter on your behalf.

Stage two – Investigation

The person responsible for the investigation will write to you with their findings and resolution as soon as possible.

Stage three – Appeal

If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation you may seek an appeal to the appropriate person, usually the Team Director or the Chief Executive if the Team Director has been previously involved. Letters of appeal must be received within **10 working days** from the date on the letter notifying you of the outcome of the previous investigation (these will always be sent by first class post or email).

Timescale

Any such appeal will result in the details of the investigation being reviewed by the appropriate person and you should be informed of the outcome (i.e. whether your appeal has been upheld or rejected) within 10 working days.

If more time is required before such a review can be finalised you will be kept informed of progress and given a date when you should expect a full response.

**Some more complex complaints may take longer to investigate. Where this is the case, you will be kept informed of progress at agreed intervals and a full response will be sent to you as soon as possible.*

6. Responsibility

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for ensuring that complaints about employees and services are handled appropriately.

Complaints against employees

Complaints about staff behaviour or attitude will be handled by the appropriate line manager and will be dealt with in accordance with the Association's Disciplinary Procedure.

In the instance of a complaint against an employee you will not be given details of the actions we have taken as this information is covered by our data protection and confidentiality policy. But please be assured we take these complaints very seriously indeed and will ensure that appropriate action is taken.

Complaints against the Chief Executive and Directors of the Association

Where a complaint is made against a Director of the Association the first stage will be managed by the Chief Executive and any appeal will be managed by the Chair of Trustees.

Complaints against the Chief Executive should be addressed to the Chair of Trustees, who will manage the process along with other members of the Board. Any complaints against the Chief Executive should be marked **Private and Confidential** and should be addressed to The Chair of Trustees, MND Association, PO box 246, Northampton, NN1 2PR.

Complaints about a service or financial support

Where a complaint is made about a service or about a request for financial support, the first stage will be managed by the team manager responsible for the service. You will be notified of their details and any appeal will be managed by an appropriate Director or Chief Executive.

Complaints about the services of a branch or group

All of the Associations Branches and Groups follow the same complaints procedure but the contact point for this in the first instance is the Branch Chair or Group Chair, or the nominated member responsible for complaints.

All branch and group appeals will be heard by members of the Board of Trustees and should be marked **Private and Confidential** and should be addressed to The Chair of Trustees, MND Association, PO box 246, Northampton, NN1 2PR.

Any such appeal will result in the details of the investigation being reviewed by nominated member and you should be informed of the outcome (i.e. whether your appeal has been upheld or rejected) within 10 working days.

7. Confidentiality

Your complaint will be treated in the strictest confidence and only those investigating it will have access to the details. Naturally, in the course of any investigation, the details of the complaint may need to be discussed with the relevant individuals concerned but your personal details will not be disclosed without your prior approval.

8. Anonymous complaints

If you wish to make a complaint anonymously, then we will treat this as a comment, as we will be unable to advise you of the outcome of the investigation.

9. Vexatious complaints

The Association reserves the right to take appropriate action with what it considers to be vexatious complaints.