## Complaints Handling Guidance

**Community Sponsorship Scheme**

**[Sponsoring organisation name] Complaints policy and procedures template** [Sponsoring organisation name] views complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the individuals that has made the complaint.

## What is this policy for?

Our policy is:

* + - To make it easy for a resettled refugee to report a complaint
		- To provide a fair and timely complaints procedure
		- To make sure everyone providing resettlement support knows what to do if a complaint is received
		- To make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired
		- To gather information which helps us to improve on the services provided as part of the sponsorship agreement

## What is a complaint?

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of care provided as part of the sponsorship agreement.

This will include complaints about:

* + - The people who are responsible for providing direct support to the family placed in the care of [Sponsoring organisation name]
		- The quality of the support received
		- Other service providers (e.g. relating to accommodation, interpreters, medical or English Language tuition providers)
		- This will exclude complaints made by:
		- Volunteers
		- Other service providers
		- Members of the public

(These are the subject of a separate policy)

It does not include complaints by members of the resettled family about other members of their family, which would be dealt with through the safeguarding Policy.

## Who can make a complaint?

Complaints may come from any member of the resettled family placed in the care of the sponsoring group. A complaint can be received verbally, by phone, by email or in writing. This policy is strictly for complaints from members of a resettled family and does not cover complaints from volunteers or staff providing resettlement care.

## How are details of a complaint handled?

All complaint information will be handled sensitively and with care and confidentiality, telling only those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements.

# Complaints Procedure

## How should a complaint be made?

*Verbal Complaint*

A verbal complaint should be made at the earliest opportunity to [insert the name of the nominated complaints officer].

If this is not possible or is inappropriate to do so due to the nature of the complaint, the complainant should contact [insert the name of the Lead Sponsor].

*Telephone Complaint*

A telephone complaint should be made at the earliest opportunity by calling [insert name of the nominated complaints officer] on [insert phone number]. These details are also included in the family Welcome Pack.

If this is not possible or is inappropriate to do so due to the nature of the complaint, the complainant should contact [insert the name of the Lead Sponsor] on [insert number].

*Written Complaint*

A complaint should be made in writing, at the earliest opportunity via email to [insert email address] or by letter to the following address:

[insert address here]

## How should a complaint be responded to?

Complaints received verbally or by telephone should be written down immediately, and a secure record kept. The person receiving the complaint should:

* + - Record the complainant’s name, address and contact telephone number
		- Write down the facts of the complaint
		- Remind the complainant of the complaints procedure
		- Advise the complainant what will happen next and give an idea of timescales
		- If possible, and where appropriate, ask the complainant to follow up by providing a written account of the complaint in their own words

Complaints will receive an initial response by telephone within 24 hours or by the next working day. This should be followed by a written response, including all the above as well as the name and contact details of the person assigned to handle the complaint**.**

## Resolving a complaint

1. In many cases, a complaint is best resolved by the person responsible for the issue being complained about. If the person receiving the complaint feels they may be able to resolve the complaint swiftly they should do so if possible and appropriate.
2. Whether or not the complaint has been resolved, the complaint information should be passed to [state who complaints should go to] within 48 hours.
3. On receiving the complaint, [person who complaints go to] records it in the complaints log. If it has not already been resolved, they will delegate an appropriate person to investigate it and to take appropriate action.
4. Complaints should be acknowledged by the person handling the complaint within 48 hours. The acknowledgement should say who is dealing with the complaint and when the person complaining can expect a reply. A copy of this complaints procedure should be attached
5. If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a fair and timely opportunity to respond as part of any investigation.
6. Ideally complainants should receive a definitive written reply within 10 working days.

If this is not possible because for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.

1. Whether the complaint is justified or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.
2. If the complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved, they can ask for the complaint to be escalated

## Responding to an escalated complaint

If the complainant feels their complaint has not been satisfactorily resolved following the initial investigation, they can request it is escalated. At this stage, the complaint will be passed to [state who will be responsible for handling escalated complaints].

The request for escalation [how should this be made and to whom] should be acknowledged within 48 hours of receiving it.

The designated person should acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing and advise the complainant how their appeal will be handled.

The designated person may investigate the facts of the case themselves or delegate a suitably senior person to do so. This may involve reviewing the paperwork of the case and speaking with the person who dealt with the initial complaint.

The same process outlined in v) – vii) above should be followed.

Any individuals who dealt with the original complaint should be kept informed and given ample opportunity to explain the reasons for the original decision.

The decision taken at this stage is final, unless it is appropriate to seek external assistance with resolution. [State who may make this decision for external resolution and from whom resolution will be sought]

## Variation of the Complaints Procedure

The Lead Sponsor [insert name] may vary the procedure for good reason. This may be necessary to avoid a conflict of interest, for example, a complaint about a person who is responsible for reviewing a complaint.

## Monitoring and Learning from Complaints

Complaints are reviewed [state frequency] to identify any trends which may indicate a need to take further action.

## Language Translation

A copy of this complaints policy is made available to the resettled family in their own first language. This will be included as part of their welcome pack provided on their arrival at their new home.

Translation into the appropriate language is also provided, as necessary, both for the complaint itself and for subsequent communications during the complaint process, including the final response.

## Who is responsible for this policy?

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the lead sponsor [insert name].

Policy Approved by:

Lead Sponsor of [insert organisation name] Date of Approval:

This policy is reviewed regularly and updated as required. Policy Review Date:

Appendix A – Complaint Process

In person/telephone

No

Issue a written acknowledgment within 48 hours

Has the complaint been resolved in person?

Person receiving the complaint should:

* Record the complainants

personal details

* Gather all the facts from the complainant

Pass the complaint information to [insert name] to record in the complaints log

In writing or email

Member of the resettled family makes a complaint

Yes

No

Yes

Complainant wishes to escalate the complaint

Original complaint and subsequent investigation fully reviewed

Issue a written acknowledgment within 48 hours

Written response issued to the complainant

No

Holding response issued to the complainant

Yes

Has the complaint been concluded within the specified timescale?

Complaint will be

fully investigated

Complaint is reviewed and lessons learnt shared with relevant group members

Written response issued to the complainant

Appendix B – Complaint form

You are more than welcome to make the complaint in Arabic if this makes it easier for you. This form is to help you and us have a record of what the problem is and when it happened.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name of person(s) making the Complaint | Date of complaint |
| Reason for complaint (please be as detailed as possible, bullet point each issue if possible) |
| Below to be filled in by [sponsor organisation] member resolving the complaint |
| Person(s) receiving complaint | Date Complaint received |
| Steps taken to resolve the complaint, time frame, feedback and learnings, give copy to complainant |