

Complaints Procedure

Introduction

When a client wishes to complain about Age UK Barrow and District's I & A service they should be given a copy of the complaints leaflet and on request or as appropriate have the procedure explained to them orally.

Professional Indemnity

If a complaint could lead to a claim against Age UK Barrow and District (for example where a client complains that they have suffered financial loss because of incorrect advice) the Chief Officer should be notified as soon as this becomes apparent. The Chief Officer will report this immediately to Age UK's insurance and legal coordinator based in Tavis House to ensure compliance with requirements for professional indemnity cover.

Making a Complaint – Stage 1

The complainant should be invited to speak to the relevant person to discuss the complaint with them. This can be done in person or by phone and a record of the conversation should be entered on the complaints monitoring sheet.

At this stage all possible attempts should be made to resolve the complaint on the same day and in any event as soon as practicable after the complaint is made. The outcome can be given either verbally or in writing as appropriate. The complainant should be informed of the next stage of the complaints procedure should they remain dissatisfied.

Stage 1 should be completed within five working days of receiving the complaint.

Making a Further Complaint – Stage 2

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of their initial complaint they can ask for a review within ten working days. This will be carried out by the I & A Supervisor. If the I & A supervisor is part of the complaint it will be carried out by the chief officer. The outcome will be provided in writing and verbally (if appropriate).

Stage 2 should be completed within five working days of the request for the review.

Complaint to the board Complaints Panel – Stage 3

If the client is unhappy with the outcome at stage 2 they can appeal to the board complaints panel. The panel consists of two board members convened as and when necessary.

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The panel will notify the complainant in writing that they are dealing with the matter. The panel will review the events in Stage 1 and Stage 2 and may seek further clarification from any of the parties involved. This may include interviewing the complainant if necessary.

The panel will notify the complainant of their decision and reasons for the decision within 15 days of having received the complaint – unless they notify the complainant of a reason for delay.

The panel will report their findings and decision to the next meeting of the Board.

Final Appeal to the Board Chair

If the complainant remains unsatisfied, they should contact the Chair who will investigate the complaints procedure and report to the complainant within 15 days of having received the appeal. The Chair's decision is final.

Recording and Monitoring Complaints

All complaints will be recorded and kept in the Complaints file. The Supervisor will make a report once a year to the Board summarising the nature of complaints received and how they were resolved.

Procedure agreed: July 2017

Review due: July 2019

Signed off by: Information & Advice Supervisor