



4.13 Complaints Policy

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1. STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Adventure Service Ltd believes that if an Adventurer or other interested party wishes to make a complaint or register a concern, they should find it easy to do so. It is The Adventure Service Ltd.'s policy to welcome complaints and look upon them as an opportunity to learn, adapt, improve and provide better services. This policy is intended to ensure that complaints are dealt with properly and that all complaints or comments by clients and their relatives/carers, or professionals, are taken seriously.

The policy is not designed to apportion blame, to consider the possibility of negligence or to provide compensation. It is NOT part of The Adventure Service Ltd.'s disciplinary policy.

The Adventure Service Ltd believes that failure to listen to or acknowledge complaints will lead to an aggravation of problems, Adventurer dissatisfaction and possible litigation. The Adventure Service Ltd supports the concept that most complaints, if dealt with early, openly and honestly, can be sorted out at a local level between just the complainant and The Service. If this fails due to either The Adventure Service Ltd or the complainant being dissatisfied with the result, the complaint will be referred to the relevant Social Care Team and legal advice will be taken as necessary.

2. GOALS OF THE COMPLAINTS POLICY

The aim of The Adventure Service Ltd is to ensure that its complaints procedure is properly and effectively implemented, and that clients feel confident that their complaints are listened to and acted upon promptly and fairly.

The goals of The Adventure Service Ltd are to ensure that:

- Clients, carers, users and their representatives are aware of how to complain, and that it provides easy to use opportunities for them to register their complaints.
- A named person will be responsible for the administration of the procedure.
- Every written complaint is acknowledged within two working days.
- Investigations into written complaints are held within 28 days.
- All complaints are responded to in writing.

- Complaints are dealt with promptly, fairly and sensitively with due regard to the upset and worry that they can cause to both staff and clients.

The named complaints manager with responsibility for following through complaints is Terry Harris-Ellis/Helen Harris-Ellis(whichever is relevant).

3. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

3.1 Verbal Complaints

- All verbal complaints, no matter how seemingly unimportant, should be taken seriously. There is nothing to be gained by staff adopting a defensive or aggressive attitude.
- Support staff who receive a verbal complaint should seek to solve the problem immediately if possible.
- If staff cannot solve the problem immediately, they should offer to get the manager to deal with the problem.
- All contact with the complainant should be polite, courteous, and sympathetic.
- At all times staff should remain calm and respectful.
- Staff should not accept blame, make excuses, or blame other staff.
- If the complaint is being made on behalf of the Client by an advocate it must first be verified that the person has permission to speak for the client, especially if confidential information is involved. It is very easy to assume that the advocate has the right or power to act for the client when they may not. If in doubt, it should be assumed that the client's explicit permission is needed prior to discussing the complaint with the advocate.
- After talking the problem through, each manager or the member of staff dealing with the complaint should suggest a course of action to resolve the complaint. If this course of action is acceptable then the member of staff should clarify the agreement with the complainant and agree a way in which the results of the complaint will be communicated to the complainant (i.e. through another meeting or by letter).
- If the suggested plan of action is not acceptable to the complainant, then the member of staff or manager should ask the complainant to put their complaint in writing to The Adventure Service Ltd and give them a copy of the complaint's procedure and form for completion.
- In both cases, details of the complaints should be recorded on a complaints form and handed to the Manager.

3.2 Written Complaints

- When a complaint is received in writing it should be passed on to the named complaints manager who should record it in the complaints file and send an acknowledgment letter within two working days. The complaints manager will be the named person who deals with the complaint through the process.
- If necessary, further details should be obtained from the complainant. If the complaint is not made by the client but on the client's behalf, then consent of the client, preferably in writing, must be obtained from the complainant.
- A copy of the Complaints Procedure should be forwarded to the complainant.
- If the complaint raises potentially serious matters, advice should be sought from a legal advisor to The Adventure Service. If legal action is taken at this stage any investigation by The Adventure Service Ltd under the complaints procedure should cease immediately.

- If the complainant is not prepared to have the investigation conducted by The Adventure Service Ltd he or she should be advised to contact the relevant Social Care Team and be given the contact details.
- Immediately on receipt of the complaint The Adventure Service Ltd should launch an investigation and within 28 days should be in a position to provide a full explanation to the complainant, either in writing or by arranging a meeting with the individuals concerned.
- If the issues are too complex to complete the investigation within 28 days, the complainant should be given an alternative timeframe.
- If a meeting is arranged, the complainant should be advised that they may, if they wish, bring a friend or relative or a representative such as an advocate.
- At the meeting, a detailed explanation of the results of the investigation should be given and also an apology if it is deemed appropriate (apologising for what has happened need not be an admission of liability).
- Such a meeting gives The Adventure Service Ltd the opportunity to show the complainant that the matter has been taken seriously and has been thoroughly investigated.
- After the meeting, or if the complainant does not want a meeting, a written account of the investigation should be sent to the complainant. This should include details of how to approach the relevant Social Care Team, if the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome.
- The outcomes of the investigation and the meeting should be recorded on appropriate documentation and any shortcomings in The Adventure Service Ltd.'s procedures should be identified and acted upon
- The Adventure Service Ltd should discuss all complaints and their outcome at a formal business meeting and The Adventure Service Ltd.'s complaints procedure should be audited by the manager every 12 months.

4. TRAINING

The Manager is responsible for organising and co-ordination training. All staff should be trained in dealing with, and responding to, complaints. Complaints policy training should be included in the induction training for all new staff and in-house training sessions on handling complaints should be conducted at least annually and all relevant staff should attend.

5. VERSION CONTROL

Amendment	Name	Date
Formatting	R Baxter-Smith	26 September 2014
Checked	H Harris-Ellis	12 November 2014
Checked	T Harris-Ellis	04 th July 2017
Reviewed and updated	Terry Harris-Ellis	25/05/21
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