

Having Mind Complaints Procedure

What is a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, either written or spoken. A complaint can be made by an individual or a group. You may wish to complain if you are not satisfied with the way you have been treated or by the service you have received from Having Mind.

Principles of Having Mind's complaints procedure

- Having Mind recognises that complaints are an important part of feedback.
- All complaints will be investigated fully and fairly.
- Complaints will be dealt with in confidence. The only exception to this is when others could be put at risk by matters referred to in the complaint.
- If the complainant is not happy with the response to the complaint, they will have the right to appeal

Having Mind is committed to ensuring that its services are of the highest quality. The complaints procedure enables Having Mind to respond clearly and properly to complaints and to know when and why people are not satisfied with its services, so that it can improve them.

Complaints about Having Mind

If your complaint is about Having Mind, including staff or volunteers, then there are three stages that you can go through to try and resolve the problem. You may wish to involve an advocate, friend or someone else to support you at any stage. If you need a sign language or community language interpreter, please let the person dealing with the complaint know and every reasonable effort will be made to provide it.

The Three stages are:

Stage One (Informal)

Speak to the individual(s) concerned or their line manager and try to resolve the complaint informally. The individual concerned is required to tell you their name and who their line manager is if you ask them.

Stage Two (Formally registering a complaint)

If you are not satisfied with the response you have received at stage one (informal) you should then use stage two of this procedure.

1. Outline the details of your complaint by letter, fax, email, or audio format and send it to the Chief Executive (CEO), Havering Mind, Harrow Lodge House, Harrow Lodge Park, Hornchurch Road, Hornchurch, Essex RM11 1JU.

If your complaint is about the CEO then you need to address it to the Chair of Havering Mind (marked private and confidential) who is ultimately responsible as a trustee of the organisation.

Your complaint will be acknowledged by letter within seven working days from the date it is received. The letter will contain the following information:

- Name, address and telephone number of the person who will investigate the complaint.
 - The date the investigation will start.
 - What support you can receive during the process of the complaint, e.g. in terms of making information accessible, using interpreters etc.
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2. You will receive a full response to your complaint within twenty-one working days from the start of the investigation, in writing, from the person appointed to investigate the complaint. The response will include the following information:
 - Details of the investigation.
 - A decision about whether the complaint was upheld or not.
 - The reason for the decision.
 - The redress, if appropriate, which will be offered to you e.g. an apology, additional help or directing you to other sources of advice or support.
 - Any other action that may be taken in light of the complaint.
 - If it is not possible to provide a full answer to your complaint within twenty-one working days, the letter will outline reasons why and give a date by which a full answer may be expected

Stage Three (Appeal)

1. If you are not satisfied with the response to your complaint then outline the reasons for your dissatisfaction by letter, fax, email, or audio format within seven working days of receiving it to the CEO (or the Chair of Havering Mind if it is about the CEO).
2. An Appeals Panel normally of three members, including a trustee, will be convened to consider your appeal. The CEO (or the Chair if it is about the CEO) will be responsible for ensuring the panel is appropriately representative. Panel membership will be restricted to people who have had no previous involvement in the complaint.

3. Members of the Appeals Panel will:

- Read through the necessary papers.
- Speak to the relevant individuals involved with the complaint.
- Make a final decision.

4. The chair of the Appeals Panel will write to you within twenty-eight working days of receiving your appeal, to confirm:

- The final decision about the complaint.
- The reason for the decision.
- The redress, if appropriate, which will be offered to you e.g. an apology, additional help or directing you to other sources of advice or support.
- Any action that may be taken in light of the complaint.

Time limits

In circumstances where time limits cannot be met due to unforeseen circumstances, complainants will be notified in writing. The reasons for the delay together with adjusted timescales, will be supplied by the person responsible for handling the complaint.

Passed at: Committee 16th April 2013

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