

## **FPA external complaints policy and procedure**

We recognise that there may be occasions when people using or working with FPA may not be satisfied with the service they receive. FPA is committed to putting service users first and we strive to be an organisation that provides quality services. If you were not satisfied with your experience and would like to complain please use the following procedure.

### **Aims of the procedure**

The FPA complaints procedure is designed to:

1. Ensure that service users are satisfied with the service they receive and feel that their views on the service are respected.
2. Enable continuous improvements in our services through feedback and improved staff supervision and training.
3. Provide clear guidance for investigations and ensure fair and honest resolution of complaints.
4. To encourage participation of our service users and make FPA accountable.

### **How to make a complaint**

Complaints should usually be made within six weeks of the incident that caused the problem. Complaints may be investigated outside these time limits at the discretion of the Chief Executive. Investigation of complaints will be carried out in a fair, polite, impartial and confidential way. The aim is to solve problems at the earliest stage possible.

### **Complaints may be either:**

- Informal (oral)
- Formal (written)

## **Informal complaint**

Most complaints are likely to be raised verbally with a member of staff and often can be dealt with immediately, either with an explanation or an apology. A co-operative problem-solving approach should mean that most complaints are effectively dealt with in this way.

If the initial conversation with the member of staff does not seem to resolve the issue on the day then you can ask to speak to the Manager of the relevant area or, in their absence, the department head on the day that you wish to make a complaint.

If neither are available we will make arrangements to call you back. If you wish to speak to the manager or department head after the day of the incident then it is best that you call our main phone number, 020 7608 5240, (in Northern Ireland phone 028 90 316100) and ask to speak to the manager of the area you wish to complain about.

We would prefer to speak to you directly if possible but, if you wish, the call can be made by someone else on your behalf if you are happy with this. You can make your call through Typetalk if you are deaf or hard of hearing.

The manager will listen to your complaint, talk to you about it and make a record of the conversation. It may be possible to deal with the complaint during this conversation, however it may be necessary for the complaint to be investigated further, including talking to other members of staff and management. If we will need to get back to you to explain the outcome of your complaint it will be necessary for us to have some way of contacting you. We will agree with you at the time how we contact you.

## **Formal complaint**

If you are unhappy with the informal response you have had, or if you want to put your complaint to us formally, you can do this by writing to us at the addresses below. Please mark your letter Private and Confidential, Complaint.

### **If writing from England, Scotland or Wales please send your letter to:**

Head of Communications  
FPA, 23-28 Penn Street, London N1 5DL

### **If writing from Northern Ireland please send your letter to:**

Director of Northern Ireland  
FPA, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Ascot House, 24–31 Shaftesbury Square, Belfast BT2 7DB

### **If you wish to send your complaint by email then please send it to:**

[feedback@fpa.org.uk](mailto:feedback@fpa.org.uk)

We will acknowledge your letter or email within five working days of receiving it.

## **How will a complaint be investigated?**

Your letter will be passed on to the relevant manager who will:

- Look at the situation surrounding your complaint and speak to staff and the relevant director if necessary.
- Share their findings with the appropriate director.
- Write down what they found and what action they are now going to take.

Within four weeks you will be contacted by letter (or telephone if this has been agreed previously) by the manager who will explain what action is to be taken as a result of your complaint. You can then decide if you wish to take the complaint further.

## **Taking the complaint further**

If you are not satisfied with the response you receive you can take the complaint further. This should be done within four weeks of you receiving the reply to your original complaint. If your complaint is received after four weeks we may not be able to investigate it. If this is the case we will let you know.

If you wish to take the complaint further you need to explain why you are not satisfied in writing to:

Chief Executive  
FPA, 23-28 Penn Street, London N1 5DL

Please mark your envelope, Private and Confidential. Complaint.

The Chief Executive will investigate the complaint further, record what they have found and send you a reply within four weeks. This will tell you what action, if any is to be taken as a result of the complaint.

The final decision lies with the Chief Executive.

If there are any delays in the procedure at any stage we will contact you and let you know. If you make a complaint you can expect:

- to be treated fairly and with respect
- the complaint to be taken seriously and be handled according to the procedures
- information only to be shared with the management and staff who need to be involved in the complaint
- information to be filed securely and destroyed after one year (unless it forms part of a legal investigation)

- FPA to use what we learn from the complaint to improve the service.

FPA will also review all complaints in order to note any need for change in policy or practice.

The FPA complaints procedure is publicised on our website and made available to all service users.