

Complaints Policy for Service Users

Beyond the Streets aims to deliver an excellent service by listening to and resolving complaints from service users quickly, fairly and effectively.

You should complain if you feel you:

- Have received an inadequate service
- Have been treated unfairly
- Have been discriminated against.

We will:

- Show clearly how a complaint can be made;
- Respond promptly and politely to a complaint by emailing or writing to you;
- Look into your complaint thoroughly and do all can to resolve the situation
- Explain, apologize or let you know what we have done where we need to;
- Take complaints seriously and use them to help us do things better;
- Record your complaint;
- Review our complaints policy each year

If you want to make a complaint, the first step is to talk it over with a project employee as soon as possible. Many problems can be resolved informally this way.

If however, you are not satisfied that the problem has been properly dealt with, or you feel that the problem is too serious to be dealt with like this, you should make a formal complaint. Please follow the steps below

Stage 1

- Write to the manager of the member of staff concerned. Please put on the letter, the date you wrote it and your name and address/email address.
- In your letter you should put as much detail as possible, including the date the incident happened, and the names of anyone involved.
- If you feel unable, or cannot make the complaint yourself ask an advisor, helper or the Citizens Advice Bureau to do it for you. You must still sign the letter yourself or we will not be able to investigate the complaint for you.
- Your complaint must be made within 28 days of the event occurring or you realizing that you have something to complain about.

Beyond the Streets promises to acknowledge your letter within 10 working days of receiving it. We will then send a response and an explanation within 20 working days. This response will also let you know that you have 28 days to ask for the

complaint and response to be reviewed (stage2) if you are unhappy with the response.

*Beyond the Streets asks anyone making a complaint to recognize that some circumstances may be beyond the control of Beyond the Streets.

Stage 2

- If you are unhappy with the stage 1 response to your complaint then you can write to the Director to let them know why you are dissatisfied and asking them to look at it again.

Beyond the Streets promises again to acknowledge your letter and to explain the process of the complaint investigation within 10 working days of receiving it.

Within 20 working days the Director of Beyond the Streets will then carry out a stage 2 investigation and send you a full written response which will include details of your right to appeal if necessary.

If the matter needs detailed investigation, which could take longer than 20 days, you will receive details of what is being done and when you can expect a full reply.

Stage 3

- If you are still not satisfied with the response from stage 2, you can write to the Chair of the Board of Trustees of Beyond the Streets to ask for a review of your complaint. You must send this letter within 10 days of receiving your full written response from stage 2.
- Your letter must say why you are dissatisfied with the outcome.

The Chair of the Board of Trustees of Beyond the Streets will normally respond within 10 working days to let you know what action will now be taken to investigate further, and to tell you how long this is expected to take. If you are complaining about the Director, then the Chair and one other Trustee will handle this final appeal stage.

- You may be invited to come to a meeting if it is appropriate, so you can discuss the detail of your complaint. This will happen within 6 weeks of your complaint being received. You can bring a supporter with you to this meeting if you wish.

Beyond the Streets will write to you to let you know the outcome of stage 3, including any actions taken and how long this will take. The Board of Trustees will receive a copy of this letter.

- If you are still unhappy with the outcome you have the right to seek legal advice.

Beyond the Streets staff concerned must report back to the Director within 10 days of receiving the outcome of stage 3, explaining how they have acted on the recommendations given them.

Monitoring and Reporting: Trustees of Beyond the Streets will receive regular and anonymous reports of any complaints made and action taken and the Director will be able to read relevant information at any stage.

Confidentiality: Your complaint will only be heard by the people involved and anyone who needs to be consulted in order for the complaint to be resolved.

Principles of the Complaints Policy:

- If at any time during the investigation of a complaint matters arise that warrant investigation under disciplinary proceedings, or through a criminal investigation, the complaints procedure should be suspended until those investigations are concluded;
- The complaints procedure should be suspended also if a service user is actively seeking legal redress
- Where a complaint is against a member of staff they should be made aware of the support services available to them;
- The Beyond the Streets Director should be informed of the receipt of a Stage 1 formal complaint.
- A complete record of the entire process should be kept, and copied, along with transcripts of interviews and other relevant information.
- Beyond the Streets may, at any stage of the formal complaints procedure, review a complaint and give a decision, without a formal investigation, where the management deem the complaint to be deliberately repetitive or vexatious (eg. unsubstantiated or repetitive complaints against an individual or where a complaint has previously been investigated and acted upon appropriately).
- When appealing against a previous decision, the service user will be asked to state why they are dissatisfied with how their complaint was handled.

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