

General complaints handling procedures:

1. Receiving and Recording

There are several ways you can register a complaint:

- Send a letter to Supporter Relations Unit:

Address: Oxfam House
John Smith Drive
Supporter Relations Unit
Cowley Business Park
Oxford
OX4 2JY

- Contact Supporter Relations Unit 0300 200 1300 during office hours from 9.00am – 5.00pm Mon to Fri OR
- Send an email to feedback@oxfam.org.uk

We record the following information on receipt, to ensure complaints are responded to promptly and that relevant information is captured to assist with business improvement.

- the supporter's contact details
- a copy of the letter and/or documentation received
- specific issues complained about
- any action requested
- date the complaint was received
- the person assigned who will prepare the response
- any immediate action to taken
- It will be possible to track the complaint through the practice, and for updates to be provided on request, or at pre-determined times.

2. Acknowledgement

Within 14 working days of receiving a complaint we will send you either:

- a) A final response which adequately addresses the complaint; or
- b) A response which:
 - Explains why we are still not in a position to make a final response, giving reasons for the further delay and indicating when we expect to be able to provide a final response; and
 - informs you that you may refer the handling of the complaint to another organisation or Oxfam contact if you are dissatisfied with the delay.

All complaints will be recorded promptly on our internal database system. A record of complaints is maintained:

- to monitor the progress of a complaint
- to provide evidence that the complaint was considered and of the outcome
- to identify trends or recurring themes in complaints cases
- to compile reports on complaints.

Prompt recording ensures that reports can be created from the system and sent to senior managers which are accurate and reflect the real-time position. Accurate and prompt recording also helps us to comply with certain obligations and requirements.

3. Assessing the Complaint

- Assess and Assign
 - We will assess your complaint to determine the best way to deal with it.
 - We will assign a specific individual to be responsible for dealing with your complaint.
 - We will identify the issues to be investigated.
- Investigate
 - We will work with you to understand the cause of the complaint you have raised.
 - We may need to contact you during this time and your cooperation will be important in order to complete the investigation.

4. Taking Action

The action taken will depend on the outcome of the assessment stage. Once the decision has been made to investigate the complaint, an investigation plan would be agreed and implemented.

- Gathering evidence
 - Establish and document the facts;
- Timeframes
 - The complaint's complexity will drive the required time for investigating a complaint.
- Recording & Storing information
 - Document any steps taken to investigate the complaint
 - A copy of any documents relied upon for resolving the complaint

5. Resolving the Complaint

- Resolving complaints informally
 - Speaking directly to the Supporter:

The objective of an informal approach is to resolve the matter with a minimum of conflict or distress.

- Resolving complaints formally
 - Options
 - an apology where the complaint is justified
 - fixing the specific problem
 - improving the aspect of service that led to the problem

6. Providing feedback

- Responding to the complaint
 - A detailed written response describing the details of the complaint
 - Comments addressing each of the violations alleged in the complaint
 - Outline the investigations undertaken to consider the complaint
 - Stating the findings resulting from the investigation
 - An admission or denial of the allegations
 - Justification or rationale for our actions
 - Explain any improvements made as a result of the complaint

7. Closing the complaint

Where the proposed decision or action is accepted by the supporter, then the decision or actions will be carried out and recorded.

8. Dealing with Unresolved complaints

If you are not satisfied with the response, you can request escalation of the complaint to senior management. This notification should be made in writing.

Details required in the notification are:

- Your name and contact details
- a short summary of the issue and actions relevant to the complaint;
- staff members involved in the issue;
- The action that you are seeking to resolve the complaint. It is essential the desired outcome is clearly stated to ensure there are no misunderstandings regarding expectations

9. Appeal Process

If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the decisions regarding your complaint, you can request an internal review of a complaint decision.

- Internal Appeal
 - The complaint/appeal should be made in writing.
 - The written complaint should set out briefly: the nature of the complaint/appeal, the steps already taken; details of the response received; and a statement as to why you remain dissatisfied and; without prejudice to any remedy which you are still seeking.
 - The person conducting the appeal will be more senior than the person who conducted the first investigation.
 - The internal reviewer will receive all of the complaint and investigation material, and any representations from you on why the initial decision was incorrect.
 - The reviewer will conduct further investigations if they consider that the initial investigation was insufficient.
 - You will be sent a further acknowledgement letter giving:
 - the contact details of the reviewer
 - the process to be followed
 - timeframes for the appeal

Once the internal review is complete, you will be informed what the decision is and what the external appeal options are.

10. Monitoring and Evaluation

- As part of our drive for continuous improvement, we review our complaints management process regularly to identify trends in complaints and areas of service needing improvement.
- We record relevant complaints centrally to enable effective monitoring and evaluation
- Written records of the outcome of complaints and appeals are retained as appropriate, in order to provide a report on the handling of such matters and any common themes arising
- Where this is the case, these will be implemented in order to improve the service and may be shared across service areas where there is benefit in doing so.
- The implementation of lessons learnt will be monitored to ensure that opportunities for improvement are not missed.
- It is important to ensure data protection requirements are adhered to and therefore care will be taken to ensure sensitive details are not recorded.