

Contact

Compliments and Complaints Policy and Procedure

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1. Policy statement

- 1.1 Contact strives for high standards in service delivery, operations and fundraising. It welcomes feedback from individuals, intermediaries, charities and anyone who works with us, on all aspects of our services and operation. Such feedback is invaluable in helping us evaluate and improve our work.
- 1.2 The objectives of the Contact Compliments and Complaints Policy are to:
 - ensure everyone knows how to provide feedback and how a complaint will be handled
 - ensure that complaints are dealt with consistently, fairly and sensitively within clear timeframes
 - provide stakeholders with a fair and effective way to complain about our work
 - ensure that compliments and complaints are monitored and used to improve our services.
 - ensure that stakeholders who have experienced unsatisfactory service from Contact receive an appropriate level of remedy or compensation
 - ensure that all insured losses are effectively handled by and recovered from Contact's insurers
- 1.3 Contact will ensure that we:
 - listen carefully to complaints and treat complaints as confidential, where possible
 - record, store and manage all complaints accurately and in accordance with UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA)
 - investigate the complaint fully, objectively and within the stated timeframe
 - notify the complainant of the results of the investigation and any right of appeal
 - inform the complainant of any action that will be implemented in order to ensure that there is no re-occurrence
 - notify the complainant of relevant regulatory bodies if they wish to refer the complaint to an external body
 - offer an appropriate level of redress to anyone who has received inadequate level of service from Contact
 - report, on a quarterly basis to the Trustee Board.

2. Definition of a complaint

- 2.1 A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction by a stakeholder, whether justified or not. A person may make a complaint if they feel Contact has:
- failed to provide a service or an acceptable standard of service
 - delayed in providing a service
 - made a mistake in the way it has provided a service
 - failed to act in a proper way
 - provided an unfair service.
- 2.2 This policy and procedure relate only to complaints received about Contact. Individuals who make complaints about partner organisations will be notified in writing within three working days that they need to complain to the organisation against which they have the complaint; and will be provided with contact details, where possible.
- 2.3 The paragraph above applies to Parent Carer Forums, as they are independent organisations. Any concerns regarding the conduct of Parent Carer Forums or their members should be raised under the individual forum's complaints policy. However, this policy does cover complaints and compliments in relation to Contact's service to Forums and the conduct of our staff. In addition, if there is a concern about a forum's use of the Department for Education's parent carer participation grant, we will look into specific allegations of misappropriation of funds.

3. Compliments and Complaints Procedure

3.1 Compliments

Any verbal or written compliments will be recorded by the member of staff receiving the compliment and be passed to the PA to the Chief Executive for recording on the Compliments Register. Any member of staff identified as being the subject or contributing to any matter giving rise to the compliment will be notified as soon as possible.

3.2 Complaints

There are 3 stages to the complaints procedure:

- Stage One - Complaint
- Stage Two - Appeal
- Stage Three - Independent Review

Stage One

- 3.3 Contact aims to settle complaints quickly and satisfactorily by the member of staff who provides the service or the relevant manager. The complaint may be resolved informally by way of an apology, by providing the service required or an appropriate offer of redress or by providing an explanation to the user.
- 3.4 If the complaint involves financial loss or the risk of compensation the matter will be passed to Contact's insurers who will take over all communication with the complainant.
- 3.5 Individuals wishing to make a complaint should contact the person who provided the service, or their manager. Alternatively they can complete the feedback form on our website <https://contact.org.uk/about-contact/contact-us/feedback>. Or write to: The Chief Executive, Contact, 209-211 City Road, London EC1V 1JN.
- 3.6 On occasions a compliment or complaint may need to be made on behalf of another person e.g. due to illness or incapacity. You will need to indicate whether the person on

whose behalf you are acting is aware you are making a complaint or compliment on their behalf.

- 3.7 If the user prefers to make a verbal complaint, then the person receiving the call will enter details on the feedback form . If the user is willing to/or asks to submit a written complaint, the form will be sent to them on the same day, or the individual can follow the link in 3.5 to our website.
- 3.8 On receipt, each complaint will be allocated a Unique Reference Number (URN) and logged on the Complaints Register. The URN is allocated by the PA to the CEO who then records the nature of the complaint against this number on to the Complaints Register. The Complaints Register is maintained by the PA to the CEO. Details of the complaint will be sent immediately to the senior manager within the department concerned. This manager will then appoint an appropriate person to investigate the complaint. This will normally be the line manager of the person against whom the complaint is made. If the complaint is against a senior manager then the organisations Chief Executive will appoint an investigator. If the complaint is against the Chief Executive Officer the organisations chair of trustees will choose an investigator.
- 3.10 Complaints will be acknowledged within 3 working days. The complaints will be fully investigated and a written response provided to the complainant within 20 working days by the Investigator.
- 3.11 If your complaint is about fundraising, a member of the team will respond to the complaint by the end of the following working day by phone or email or will send a letter within two working days. We will always attempt to talk to the person by phone about their complaint if we have been given a telephone number. In some cases a complaint may take longer to investigate or resolve. If this is the case we will contact the complainant within the time frame specified above to let them know what we are doing and when we expect to contact them again. If the complaint relates to a fundraiser engaged on behalf of Contact via a fundraising agency the agency is required to investigate and provide feedback to Contact within 48 hours.
- 3.12 The Complaints Register will be updated by the PA to the CEO and any pending complaints flagged so they are followed up.
- 3.13 Individuals will be advised that if they are not satisfied with the response to their complaint, they may appeal within 10 working days and progress to Stage Two.

Stage Two

- 3.13 Contact's Chief Executive Officer will appoint a manager to investigate the matter independently and communicate the outcome and any action(s) to the complainant within 20 working days, in writing. This person may need to contact the complainant, and others to clarify the issues, conduct the investigation and explore resolution.
- 3.14 If the complaint is about fundraising activity Contact's Chief Executive Officer will ask the Director of Income Generation to investigate the complaint.
- 3.15 Occasionally, investigations may take longer, particularly if the complaint is complex. Should this be the case a holding letter will be sent within 20 working days and a final date given for a conclusion being reached.
- 3.16 If an individual remains dissatisfied with the outcome from Stage Two they can request an Independent Review within 10 working days and progress to Stage Three.

Stage Three

3.16 The Contact Chief Executive in conjunction with the Chair of Trustees will review the Stage Two investigation and recommend one of the following actions, within 20 working days:

- No further action is taken by Contact
- Changes to the Stage Two recommendations/actions.

3.17 If the complaint is about fundraising and the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation carried out by Contact, they are notified that they can contact the Fundraising Regulator and lodge a complaint via their website – <https://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/complaints/make-complaint> - or via telephone 0300 999 3407. Full details of their complaints procedure can be found on their website.

3.18 Once a stage three response has been made by Contact we will not be able to continue to respond to ongoing communications on the matter, as we will have reached the end of the process.

4. Anonymous Compliments and Complaints

4.1. Compliments and complaints received anonymously will be recorded and considered, but action may be limited if further information is required to ensure a full and fair investigation.

5. Respect and fair treatment

5.1 We expect staff who are subject to, or investigating, complaints to work in accordance with Contact's values, be non-judgemental and treat people with dignity and respect. We recognise that complaints can be emotive in some cases, however we expect the same courtesy to be displayed to our staff in communications with them. We do not tolerate abuse or harassment of our employees, and we reserve the right to cease correspondence with anyone who sends repeated abusive or discourteous communications. For more information please read our [unreasonable and persistent complainants policy](#).

6. English as a second language

- 6.1 If the complainant does not speak English as a first language, has Welsh as a preferred first language or has difficulties with written English we can arrange for an interpreter to talk to the complainant through the use of Language Line.
- 6.2 The line manager responsible for the person against whom a complaint is being made, will be responsible for making a written record of the complaint as given via Language Line. They will then explain to the complainant what the next stages of the procedure and the timescales involved are.

7. Data Protection

7.1 To process a complaint, Contact will hold personal data about the complainant, which the individual provides and which other people give in response to investigating the complaint. Contact will hold this data securely and only use it to help address the complaint. The identity of the person making the complaint will only be made known to those who need to consider the complaint and will not be revealed to other people or made public by Contact. However, it may not be possible to preserve confidentiality in

some circumstances, for example, where relevant legislation applies or allegations are made which involve the conduct of third parties. Our response to a complaint will not include third party personal data unless consent has been given.

Under the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) Contact strives not to keep personal data longer than is necessary. The complaints register, a copy of the complaint and Contact's response will be held for seven years.

8. Recording

- 8.1 A complainant will receive confirmation in the form of a letter of the outcome of any investigation and any recommendations/remedies made, such as, staff development and training, reviewing of policies or appropriate improvement to Contact services. A copy of this confirmation is sent to the PA to the CEO who updates the Complaint Register accordingly.

9. Monitoring

- 9.1 Compliments and complaints are an important tool which, alongside data provided by exit surveys, user feedback and focus groups, allow Contact to learn about the services we provide. They provide a useful source of information about how users and stakeholders see our services and how we are serving our users. To ensure Contact can learn from compliments and complaints, the following data will be collected:

Compliments:

- Name and address
- Nature of the compliment
- Date of compliment
- Action(s) taken/recommendations made in response to the compliment.

Complaints:

- Name and address
- Name of person dealing with the complaint
- Date of complaint and response date
- Nature of complaint
- Action(s) taken/recommendations made in response to the complaint
- Lessons learnt.

- 9.2 Compliments and complaints information will be considered on a regular basis by the Contact Management Team and reported quarterly to the Contact Trustee Board.

10. Third party complaints handling quality assurance

- 10.1 Where the nature of a complaint is covered by the regulations of a third party which offers accreditation for the service provided and which may exert requirements on the nature and delivery of the complaints policy Contact will endeavour to operate its complaints policy in accordance with these requirements.
- 10.2 The majority of Contact's fundraising is conducted by paid Contact staff. Contact is registered with the Fundraising Regulator. The administration of Contact's society lottery is undertaken by a third party, CFP Lottery and Raffles Ltd. Contact's fundraising team and CFP Lottery and Raffles Ltd comply with fundraising and Gambling Commission regulations and the Code of Fundraising Practice set by the Fundraising Regulator. Contact's society lottery is registered with Hackney Council under registration number 105602. Contact also uses third party fundraising agencies to recruit regular monthly donors and Contact lottery players.

10.3 Where a complaint is about Contact's fundraising you can contact the Fundraising Regulator and lodge a complaint via their website at any stage – <https://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/makea-complaint/complain-about-a-fundraising-approach/> - or via telephone 0300 999 3407. Full details of their procedure can be found on their website.

10.4 The Charity Commission's publication CC47 – Complaints about charities is available on their website www.charity-commission.gov.uk. All charities are subject to regulation and the Charity Commission will take up complaints where it decides that there is a serious risk of significant harm to or abuse of the charity, its assets, beneficiaries or reputation and if it considers that it needs to intervene to protect them. If you feel you have an issue that meets these criteria you should contact the following:

- The Charity Commission in England and Wales by telephoning 0845 300 0218, or writing to Charity Commission Direct, PO Box 1227, Liverpool, L69 3UG or by e-mail via the Charity Commission website.
- The Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) in Scotland by writing to OSCR, 2nd Floor, Quadrant House, 9 Riverside Drive, Dundee DD1 4NY, telephoning 01382 220446 or sending an email to info@oscr.org.uk.
- The Charity Commission of Northern Ireland in Northern Ireland by writing to Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, 4th Floor, 24-26 Arthur Street, Belfast, BT1 4GF, telephoning 028 90 515490 or e-mailing admin@charitycommissionni.org.uk.

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Feedback Form

The form can be completed and submitted here:

<https://contact.org.uk/about-contact/contact-us/feedback>

Or you can write to us, including the following information:

First name:

Last name:

Phone:

Email:

Address:

Feedback type:

- Compliment
- Complaint
- General feedback

Tell us a bit more:

If you're completing this form on behalf of someone else, please add the relevant information in the boxes below:

- Individual's name
- Your relationship to individual
- Are they aware you are writing on their behalf?

If this is a complaint, what would be a satisfactory outcome?

We will look after your details in accordance with our [data protection policy](#)

CaF Compliments Log

Reference (URN)	Name of user	Date of compliment	Verbal or Written	Details of compliment	Actions taken