

1 Introduction

Turning Tides Complaints Policy outlines our commitment to handling feedback and complaints. We aim to provide excellent services at all times but recognise that on occasion we may fail to do so. We are committed to continual improvement and value all feedback and complaints as a learning opportunity to help improve our service provision and relationship with the people who use our services, the local community, and other stakeholders.

Turning Tides is striving to become a co-produced organisation, recognising that we need input from people who use our services and other stakeholders, to be able to respond to changing need in our community and to provide effective services.

For the purpose of the policy, a complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction (however it is made) about the standard of service, actions, or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, which requires a response.

The review of this Policy has been led by people who use Turning Tides' services, to ensure it is in line with clients' experiences, expectations and right to have a say in their own lives, the support they receive and how Turning Tides' services are delivered.

1.1 Scope

This policy applies to all stakeholders, including clients, their representatives, external agencies, and members of the local community. A complaint can be made directly or by a third party representing the interests of the person.

The policy does not apply to disputes between clients or employment related disputes. Clients wishing to raise a complaint about another client should speak with a member of staff at the service. Staff wanting to make a complaint should refer to the Turning Tides Grievance Policy.

Complaints related to a member of staff will be managed sensitively and will be investigated fairly. If the complaint is made by a client or their representative, steps will be taken to ensure where possible that neither party are disadvantaged, and that any trauma is minimised. These steps will include that whilst the investigation into the complaint is being conducted that there will be, where practical, no direct contact between the staff member and client, until the complaint has been concluded. At which stage mediation will be considered as appropriate.

1.2 Related Documents

- Staff Grievance Policy and Procedure
- Complaints Procedure
- Client Appeal Procedure
- IT and Data Management Policy and Procedure
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Repairs Policy

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- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
- Dignity and Respect Policy
- Professional Boundaries Policy
- Whistle Blowing Policy & Procedure
- Duty of Candour Policy
- Privacy statement
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy

2 Principles

The key principles of this policy are to:

- Treat people with dignity and respect.
- Encourage feedback and complaints from all stakeholders.
- Listen and respond to complaints and feedback by resolving complaints at the earliest point in the process.
- Ensure objectivity, fairness, transparency, openness, and resolution of conflict.

3 Policy Statement

Turning Tides respects everybody's right to raise concerns or make a complaint regarding the services they receive, the care and support that has been observed, or behaviours of third parties acting on our behalf that does not meet acceptable standards.

Turning Tides supports and actively promotes a positive culture towards feedback and complaints. This means that all feedback and complaints are treated as a learning opportunity and not a threat. Turning Tides will encourage opportunities for feedback through a range of methods, to ensure we are listening to everyone in a way that they can feel both comfortable with and heard.

All complaints made to Turning Tides will be recorded and reported to the relevant manager and/or Senior Management Team. The Senior Management Team will provide the Board of Trustees with a summary of the feedback, compliments and complaints received, including changes or improvements Turning Tides may be making as a result.

This policy aims to:

- Improve the quality of Turning Tides' practice and services and identify areas needing improvement and change.
- Ensure people's experiences are listened to.
- Provide a means for positive change, based on feedback and complaints.
- Encourage respectful, sensitive, consistent, effective, and efficient handling of feedback and complaints.
- Be a responsible and accountable organisation.
- Enable Turning Tides to have a transparent, fair, and honest approach to feedback and complaints.
- Minimise any potentially adverse effects resulting from issues and reduce the chances of them escalating.
- Acknowledge when something goes wrong and apologise.
- Make it easy for you to contact us during the duration of your complaint, to keep you informed and to provide clear reasons for any decisions and actions taken in relation to your complaint.

4 How to make a complaint

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It is important that you let us know as soon as possible about your complaint and how you would like it resolved, so that we can deal with the matter swiftly. We wish to deliver the highest quality of service, and your feedback helps us to learn how to improve the services we offer.

A complaint can be made in any of the following ways:

- In person by speaking with a member of staff at any of our services
- Online by completing a complaints form via the Contact Us section on Turning Tides website: www.turning-tides.org.uk/contact
- By phone by calling 01903 680740
- In writing to the following address:

Development and Quality
Turning Tides
Worthing Town Hall
Chapel Road
BN11 1HA

4.1 Complaints Process

We will only investigate complaints about things that have happened within the last 6 months unless there are clear reasons for a complaint to be made after this time. These reasons could include the complainant having evidence that was unavailable to them at the time that the complaint would have been triggered.

Turning Tides operates a 3 Levels complaints procedure to proactively resolve complaints and ensure that complaints are directed to the most appropriate person at each stage.

4.2 Level 1

Some complaints and concerns can be resolved very quickly within the team or service. If you think your complaint could be dealt with by a member of staff within the service or team, you should speak to any member of staff you feel comfortable with. The member of staff who received the complaint will then ensure that the complaint is dealt with as quickly as possible to reduce the chance of the issue escalating.

Examples of Level 1 complaints include:

- Reporting low level anti-social behaviour including noise complaints
- Non urgent maintenance issues not being addressed within expected timescales
- Concerns in relation to the conduct of a member of staff which does not constitute a safeguarding risk

Level 1 complaints are usually dealt with by the local manager or deputy manager of the service.

If the complaint cannot be resolved at the time, a meeting will be arranged within 5 working days. If this time needs to be extended, you will be notified and a reason provided for the need for an extension.

If for any reason you do not feel comfortable speaking to a member of staff, you can raise your complaint by phone, in writing or by completing an online form. If required, a member of the Quality Team can be available to assist you.

The aim for Level 1 complaints is for them to be resolved or escalated within 10 working days. If this time needs to be extended you will be informed.

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You will be informed of the outcome of your complaint through your preferred communication method, whether in writing, via email, in person or on the phone. Please confirm with your complaint handler what your preferred method of communication is.

4.3 Level 2

If you are not happy with the outcome of Level one, you may escalate your complaint. You can do this by either informing the investigating manager of your level 1 complaint or by emailing feedback@turning-tides.org.uk or calling 01903 680740.

At Level 2, your complaint will be heard by an alternative manager who will investigate your complaint and any findings made during the Level 1 process.

The aim for Level 2 complaints is for them to be resolved or escalated within 10 working days. If this time needs to be extended, you will be informed, and a reason provided for the need for an extension.

You will be informed of the outcome of your complaint through your preferred communication method, either in writing, via email, in person or on the phone. Please confirm with your complaint handler what your preferred method of communication is.

4.4 Level 3

Where an issue or concern raised is deemed to be more serious in nature, or when a complaint cannot be dealt with at Level 1 or 2, Turning Tides will follow the Level 3 complaint procedure.

Examples of Level 3 complaints include:

- Reporting high level anti-social behaviour including severe disruption to our local community.
- Urgent maintenance issues not being addressed which have an immediate high risk to safety.
- Concerns in relation to the conduct of a member of staff which does constitute a safeguarding risk.

All complaints at Level 3 are dealt with by a Senior Manager and an investigation will be carried out. The Senior Manager will decide who should conduct the investigation. To escalate your complaint please do this by emailing feedback@turning-tides.org.uk or by calling 01903 680740.

A meeting will be arranged within 5 working days, and you will be notified of this in writing. If this time needs to be extended, you will be notified, either in writing or by telephone, according to your communication preferences.

After the meeting a letter or email will be sent detailing the outcome of the investigation. You will be sent this within 7 working days of the end of the investigation, including details of how you can appeal the outcome of the complaints process, if you are unhappy with the outcome that has been reached.

4.5 Appealing the outcome of a Level 3 Complaint

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint process, you can forward your complaint to the Chief Executive, John Holmstrom who reports to the Board of Trustees. Details of how to do this will be provided in the letter explaining the outcome of your complaint.

For CQC registered services, (at present, this only applies to the Recovery Project) you can also register your complaint with the CQC directly, if you wish to do so. They do not have the authority to investigate individual complaints, but will use the information when they carry out their next inspection.

The CQC can be contacted via:

Tel: 03000 616161

Email@ enquiries@cqc.org.uk

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Website: www.cqc.org.uk

Address: Care Quality Commission, Citygate, Gallowgate, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE1 4PA

For complaints related to Turning Tides Fundraising team, you can contact the Ombudsman. The fundraising regulator is an independent body that works to ensure that charities raising money from the public do so honestly and protects the public, donors, and potential donors from unacceptable fundraising practices.

Turning Tides are a member of the fundraising regulator, and we are committed to abiding by any decision they reach on complaints which are escalated to them.

The regulator can be reached in the following ways:

By post at:

The Fundraising Regulator
Eagle House,
167 City Road,
London EC1V 1AW

Or online: [Make a complaint | Fundraising Regulator](#)

Via email: complaints@fundraisingregulator.org.uk

Via phone: 0300 999 3407 (Monday to Friday, 09.30 am – 4.30 pm)

5.0 Recording and monitoring

All complaints are recorded and monitored to help us improve our service and we regularly publish the lessons we have learnt from client feedback. This includes via an annual report shared with all residents in our accommodation-based services and via annual statutory accounts which are available online.

Complaints relating to service provision will be recorded on Inform, Turning Tides' internal database system, which will trigger an email to be sent to staff in the service and service Managers. Complaints will be logged on a complaint's tracker, with contact information only retained until the complaint has been resolved.

Data relating to the number of complaints made each quarter, any trends and actions taken to resolve complaints is captured within the organisational Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) and the Board of Trustees, CE and senior management all have access to this information.

6.0 Anonymity

Feedback and complaints can be made anonymously. However, in such circumstances it is not always possible to discuss the concern with the individual, and it may not be possible to feedback changes or improvements made as a result.

7.0 Confidentiality

Turning Tides will ensure all complaints are dealt with confidentially. Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis in line with Turning Tides' Confidentiality Policy.

On occasions, the nature of the complaint may require the organisation or the complainant to contact other agencies. For example, if a person is considered to be at risk to themselves or others, Turning Tides' safeguarding procedures will be implemented.

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Turning Tides may need to contact other agencies where significant incidents, criminal acts or issues of abuse or adult safeguarding procedures have been reported. You will be informed if we need to contact other agencies and where required your consent sought, before doing so.

8.0 Equality

Turning Tides will ensure our practices do not disadvantage minority groups or disabled people and do not discriminate any client or stakeholder on grounds of their race, ethnic origin, gender, sexuality, marital status, disability, age, religion, or class.

We welcome complaints in all formats and will provide support for clients with hearing difficulties, sight problems, learning difficulties or those who have difficulty with written English.

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