

Complaints Policy: Public Health Collaboration

Introduction

Public Health Collaboration (PHC) views complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future. We take complaints seriously and endeavour to treat everyone fairly and to find a satisfactory resolution.

- Our policy is to provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use
- To make our complaints procedure easily accessible from our website
- To ensure that everyone at PHC knows what to do if a complaint is received
- To investigate all complaints fairly and in a timely way
- To gather information so that we can improve what we do

Definition of a complaint

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of PHC encompassing our fund raising and advocacy work and our projects namely The Lifestyle Club, Liberate, Real Food Rebellion and Real Food Runners.

Confidentiality

All complaint information will be handled sensitively, telling only those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements.

Responsibility

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the Board of Trustees of Public Health Collaboration.

Review

This policy is reviewed regularly and updated as required.

Complaints Procedure

Making Complaints

Individuals may submit a complaint using any of the following methods:

- Address: Public Health Collaboration c/o Reed Smith, 1 Blossom Yard, London E1 6RS
- Email: info@phcuk.org
- Verbal: in person or by phone to any of PHC's staff, volunteers or trustees

Data protection complaints should be directed to the Public Health Collaboration Data Protection Officer using the details set out below:

- Address: Public Health Collaboration, c/o Reed Smith, 1 Blossom Yard, London E1 6RS
- Email: sam.feltham@phcuk.org

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When making a complaint, individuals should provide: their name and contact details; a description of the concern; any relevant reference numbers or correspondence; and their preferred outcome, if known.

Complaints may be made on behalf of another individual by an authorised representative. We will ask for evidence of authority to act, such as a signed letter of authority or power of attorney, before processing such complaints.

Receiving Complaints

The person who receives a phone or in person complaint should:

- Write down the facts of the complaint
- Take the complainant's name, address, email and telephone number
- Note the relationship of the complainant to PHC, e.g. donor, volunteer, participant in one of PHC's projects
- Tell the complainant that we have a complaints procedure
- Tell the complainant what will happen next and how long it will take
- Where appropriate, ask the complainant to send a written account by post or email so that the complaint is recorded in the complainant's own words

Resolving Complaints

Stage One

In many cases, a complaint is best resolved by the person responsible for the issue being complained about. If the complaint has been received by that person, they should be able to resolve it swiftly and should do so if possible and appropriate. Whether or not the complaint has been resolved, the complaint information should be passed to the PHC Director within 10 days.

On receiving the complaint, the Director records it in the complaint logbook. If it has not already been resolved, they will delegate an appropriate person to investigate it and to take appropriate action. If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a fair opportunity to respond.

Complaints should be acknowledged by the person handling the complaint within 30 days. The acknowledgement should say who is dealing with the complaint and when the complainant can expect a reply. A copy of this complaints procedure should be attached. Ideally, complainants should receive a definitive reply within 3 months. If this is not possible, because, for example, an investigation has not been completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.

Whether the complaint is justified or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusion from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.

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Stage Two

If the complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage One, they can request that the complaint is reviewed at Board level.

At this stage, the complaint will be passed to the Board of Trustees. The request for Board level review should be acknowledged within 10 days of receiving it. The acknowledgement should say who will deal with the case and when the complainant can expect a reply.

The Board of Trustees may investigate the facts of the case themselves or delegate a suitably senior person to do so. The person who dealt with the complaint at Stage One should be kept informed with what is happening.

If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a further opportunity to respond. Ideally, complainants should receive a definitive reply within 3 months. If this is not possible because for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given. Whether the complaint is upheld or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint. The decision taken at this stage is final, unless the board decides it is appropriate to seek external assistance with resolution.

External Stage

The complainant can complain to the Charity Commission at any stage. Their contact details can be found on the government website at <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity>

If the complaint relates to data protection and the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of their complaint, or if we do not respond within the stated timeframe, the complainant has the right to lodge a complaint with the ICO at the following address:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Helpline number: 0303 123 1113

ICO website: <https://www.ico.org.uk>

Variation in Complaints Procedure

The Board may vary the procedure for good reason. This may be necessary to avoid a conflict of interest, for example, a complaint about a Chair or trustee should not also have the Chair or trustee involved in as a person leading a Stage Two review.

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c/o Reed Smith, 1 Blossom Yard, London E1 6RS
www.phcuk.org | info@phcuk.org
Registered Charity No. 1171887

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Monitoring and Learning from Complaints

Individual complaints are reviewed as they arise to identify lessons learned. An annual review of all complaints is undertaken to identify trends and any mitigating actions that might need to be taken.