

Complaints Policy

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1. Policy Statement

YMCA North London is committed to providing accessible, quality service and achieving the highest standards. We recognize that from time to time there may be concerns or complaints, that our stakeholders have the right to raise such complaints or concerns, and that they need a mechanism to do so to ensure an early and effective resolution of complaints.

2. Policy Purpose

The purpose of the Policy is to:

- Provide a consistent and positive approach to complaints handling
- Deliver satisfaction to the service users and members of the community
- Use the experience as an aid to improve our service delivery and reduce the level of complaints in future.

3. Application of Policy

This policy applies to all complaints received from, service users, other individuals or groups, external organisations and from members of the local community about our activities, programs, services, staff and volunteers.

This policy does not apply to employees or volunteers as YMCA North London has specific policy to address employee concerns and complaints as they arise.

4. Equality Statement

The Organisation will have due regard for the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote equality of opportunity, and provide for good relations between people of diverse groups, in particular on the grounds of the following characteristics protected by the Equality Act (2010); age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, and sexual orientation, in addition to any other protected characteristics.

5. Monitoring & Review

The policy will be reviewed and monitored periodically.

6. Policy Principles

The principles that underpin this purpose are

- To increase people's confidence that their complaints will be taken seriously and that services will improve as a result of their experiences.
- To have a flexible approach to resolving complaints, which includes effective support.
- To provide a seamless approach to complaints handling and investigations.
- To ensure Organisational openness and fairness when dealing with complaints.
- To ensure an approach which is fair to people using our services.
- To place the emphasis on early and effective resolution of complaints.

7. Definition of a Complaint?

Complaints are defined as an expression of dissatisfaction with regard to a service/program, an action or a decision taken by the YMCA, or the way in which YMCA employees or volunteers carry out their duties.

8. Who can complain?

A complaint can be made by anyone affected or likely to be affected by the service, actions or decisions taken by the YMCA North London. A complaint can also be made by someone acting on behalf of a service user, with their consent.

9 Time limit for making a complaint

Complaints should be made within 6 months of the matter occurring or from the date it came to your notice. If there are good reasons for not having made the complaint within the above timeframe and, if it is still possible to investigate the complaint effectively and fairly, the executive team have discretion to waive this time limit.

10. Lodging a complaint

YMCA North London will receive complaints in any format which the complainant wishes to use to forward the details relating to their complaint. This will include:

10.1 Verbal Complaints

Verbal complaints may be made by phone to 020 8340 6088 / 020 8340 2345 or in-person at 184 Tottenham Lane, Hornsey, London, N8 8SG.

We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint and gather basic contact information including the complainant's name, phone number and email address for follow-up purposes

10.2 Written Complaints

Written complaints may be mailed HR Manager, YMCA North London, 184 Tottenham Lane, Hornsey, London, N8 8SG or sent by email to complaints@ymcanorthlondon.org.uk

We will acknowledge receipt of a written complaint within two (2) business days to confirm the complaint has been received, and indicate expectations for how long the investigation will take if it can be reasonably assessed at that point.

Once you have lodged a complaint, YMCA North London is committed to handling the complaint promptly, consistently, and fairly. You will be kept informed of the status of the complaint

11. Stages of dealing with complaints.

YMCA North London has a three (3) stage complaints procedure.

11.1 Informal Stage

If you have a complaint or concern, you are encouraged to discuss the matter with a member of staff or to a manager of the service area who will endeavour

to resolve the issue within 24hours; we hope that at this early stage, we can resolve most issues or matters of simple error that can be corrected to your satisfaction.

11.2 Formal Stage

If you feel that the complaint has not been satisfactorily resolved at the informal stage, you may address the complaint in writing to a member of the Executive Team. In most cases, we aim to provide a full response within 7 working days. However, if this is not possible because for example, a detailed investigation is required, we will provide an interim reply explaining what is being done to deal with the complaint and provide a revised timescale.

A full response will then be sent in writing within 14 days. In some cases where the complainant may have expressed a preference for a telephone discussion regarding the outcome, this will always be followed up by a written response so that both parties have a written record of the outcome.

11.3 Appeal Stage

If you still feel that the complaint has not been dealt with to your satisfaction, you may appeal by writing to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) within 10 working days of receiving the written response. The CEO will endeavour to make a decision on the appeal. You will need to state why you are unhappy with the outcome and include copies of any correspondence exchanged during the earlier stages. The complainant will be notified in writing within 14 days from the date of the appeal. The decision made at this level is considered final.

12.Complaint Referral to the Ombudsman Service

Should you feel that having exhausted the internal procedure, you believe that your case has not been dealt with properly by the Organisation or that the outcome is unreasonable, you may contact the office of the Independent Ombudsman Scheme below:

Housing Complaints Referral

Housing Ombudsman Service
Exchange Tower
Harbour Exchange Square
London
E14 9GE
Telephone: 0300 111 3000
Email: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Child Care Complaints Referral

Ofsted
Telephone: 0300 123 1231/0300 123 4666
Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Fitness Centre and Harringay Club Complaints Referral

Local Authority Ombudsman
Telephone :0300 061 0614

13. Confidentiality

YMCA North London will make every effort to ensure confidentiality for the person reporting a complaint or concern. In some programs that receive funding from partner agencies, complaints may need to be shared with those agencies. No person who in good faith and under this policy submits a concern/complaint shall suffer harassment or retaliation

14. Anonymous Complaints

Any anonymous complaint will be dealt with in line with this policy. Anonymous complaints received will be referred to the Head/Director of Service area concerned, who will review the complaint and decide if the matter needs to be investigated further.

15. Variation to the Complaints Policy

YMCA North London reserve the right to vary the procedure for a good reason. Where for example it is necessary to avoid a conflict of interest.

16. Third Party Complainants

Where a complaint has been made on behalf of a service user by a third party, we reserve the right to seek confirmation that the third party has obtained the service users consent to make the complaint on their behalf.

17. Learning from complaints

Complaints will be monitored and reviewed with the aim of learning in order to improve services and levels of satisfaction