

Suggestions and Complaints Procedure

1 Commitment to Good Quality Services

- 1.1 The FNA is committed to providing good quality services but recognise that there may be occasions where we make mistakes or get things wrong. We also recognise that our users may have suggestions they wish to make that may improve our services. Both complaints and suggestions provide us with useful information about the users' views of our organisation. Our suggestions and complaints procedure provides the opportunity for these views to be made and responded to.

At the same time, when complaints are made, we must comply with the terms and conditions of our Professional Indemnity Policy when appropriate. As soon as we become aware of potential claim or any actual claim being made against us, we'll notify our insurer and await further instructions from the insurers.

- 1.2 The FNA's staff team is the first point of contact for all complaints or suggestions. When you wish to make a suggestion or a complaint, you can do so in one of three ways:
- by letter
 - by telephone
 - by e-mail
- 1.3 This applies throughout the period that we are dealing with your suggestion or complaint.
- 1.4 We will keep written records of the suggestions and complaints we receive and will review our procedure regularly to ensure that issues raised are responded to appropriately according to our procedure. We will also look at issues raised to consider what changes if any may be necessary to our working practices.
- 1.5 This procedure is in place to respond to suggestions and complaints that are received from individuals and organisations who use our services. It does not address those received from members of staff or volunteers.

2 How to Make a Suggestion

- 2.1 We welcome suggestions from users about the services we provide. If you have a suggestion to make that you feel may improve the way our services are delivered then please contact a member of staff dealing with the area of work you wish to make a suggestion about.
- 2.2 We will respond to you in the most suitable format within ten working days. If for any reason this is not possible we will contact you to explain why and give you a date when we will respond.

3 How to Make a Complaint

- 3.1 If you have not been happy with the service you have received from us, we would like to deal with the matter informally whenever possible. To do this, please speak to the member of staff who is dealing with the area of work which has raised your concern. If, after discussing the matter with us informally, you feel that the matter had not been dealt with to your satisfaction then you may wish to make a formal complaint. Our formal complaints procedure has three stages and your complaint will need to be made in accordance with each appropriate stage.

4 Formal Complaint Stage One

- 4.1 Once you have decided to make a formal complaint you will need to make your complaint to the person who deals with matter you are complaining about. Once we receive your complaint we will send you a copy of our complaints procedure, investigate your complaint and respond to you within ten working days. If this is not possible then we will contact you to explain why and tell you when we will be able to give you a full response.
- 4.2 If the complaint is about a member of staff then you should make your complaint to the Staff Team comprising all workers at the Centre'
- 4.3 We hope that when you receive your response you will feel that the matter is resolved to your satisfaction but if you feel the matter has not been dealt with to your satisfaction then you will need to move to stage two of the procedure.

5 Formal Complaint Stage Two

- 5.1 In stage two you will need to complain to the Chair of the Board of Trustees who is responsible for the matter you feel has not been dealt with satisfactorily. Please state:
- what the matter is you are complaining about and
 - why you feel the original complaint has not been resolved.
- 5.2 The Chair will respond to you within ten working days and contact you if this is not possible to explain why and give you a date by which you will receive a response.

6 Formal Complaint Stage Three

- 6.1 We envisage that there stage three complaints will be a rarity as we expect stages one and two will provide ample opportunity for your complaint to be resolved to your satisfaction. If however you feel that the matter still needs further consideration then your complaint can be heard by the next meeting of the Board of Trustees. Please state:
- what the matter is you have complained about and
 - why you feel it has not been resolved.
- 6.2 The Board of Trustees will investigate your complaint and respond to you as soon as is feasible. We will let you know within five working days how long this will take as it depends when the next meeting is scheduled.
- 6.3 All correspondence should be addressed to: The Secretary, FNA Management Committee, C/O 29 Gordon Mansions, Torrington Place, London WC1E 7HF and marked "Private and Confidential".

APPENDIX 1

Suggestions and Complaints Form

Suggestion

Complaint

Name:.....

Address:.....

Contact Details.....(phone or e-mail address)

In the case of a complaint, please give details of the nature of your complaint and who has been dealing with the matter so far.

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Signed:.....

Date:.....

APPENDIX 2

Complaints and Suggestions Procedure *Procedures for Staff*

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Our complaints and suggestions procedure provides instructions to individuals and organisations that wish to make a suggestion or formal complaint to the FNA. It is important to remember that both suggestions and complaints can provide us with useful feedback about ways in which we might improve our services.

2 What to do if someone wants to make a suggestion.

- 2.1 We welcome suggestions about how we could improve our services. We will not always be able to make changes to our services in line with a suggestion made but we do have a responsibility to consider them.
- 2.2 Suggestions will be made that would not be appropriate for formal consideration under this policy as they are too minor or would normally be dealt with in a different way e.g. suggestions made about the content of the handbook. Staff should be able to assess whether it is appropriate to send out the Complaints and Suggestions policy and whether a suggestion should be discussed with the Board of Trustees. If a member of staff is in any doubt they should talk to their colleagues at a team meeting.
- 2.3 If someone who uses our services wishes to make a suggestion about the way in which they feel we could improve our services, direct them to contact the member of staff who deals with that area of work. The member of staff should:
- 2.3.1 Enquire what has prompted this suggestion
 - 2.3.2 Send them a copy of the Complaints and Suggestions procedure if appropriate
 - 2.3.3 Thank the person for their suggestion and tell them that we will be considering it at an appropriate time.
 - 2.3.4 Provide a response in ten working days if the person has specifically requested one (or give a date of reply if this is not possible)
 - 2.3.5 Ensure that the suggestion is raised with the Board of Trustees for consideration where appropriate.
- 2.4 If the relevant member of staff is not available any other worker should follow steps 2.3.1 to 2.3.5.

3 What to do if someone wants to make a formal complaint

- 3.1 We wish to avoid formal complaints wherever possible by dealing with expressed dissatisfaction promptly and informally. This should be done by the member of staff dealing with the area of work concerned. In the absence of that member of staff, another colleague should deal with the matter.
- 3.2 Where the informal approach has not completely dealt with the matter and the person wishes to make a formal complaint, staff should follow the procedures which apply to each stage of the complaints and suggestions procedure.

4 For Both Suggestions and Complaints

- 4.1 Send a copy of the suggestions and complaints procedure to the complainant.
- 4.2 Set up a file to contain all correspondence to and from the complainant while the complaint is being dealt with. The file should also have a cover note (see appendix 1) which should be completed by the member of staff who is dealing with the complaint.
- 4.3 Written records should be maintained once the complaint has been received.
- 4.4 Staff should inform the Chair of the Board of Trustees of the formal complaint.
- 4.5 All complaints should be dealt with in accordance with our confidentiality policy.
- 4.6 All complaints about individual members of staff should be passed to the Chair of the Board of Trustees.
- 4.7 Where a deadline for response cannot be met the complainant should be informed as soon as possible and given another date by which they will receive a response.

5 Where the complaint is about a member of staff the Chair should:

- 5.1 Discuss the complaint with the member of staff concerned taking into account any evidence available and decide on the appropriate next course of action, if any.
- 5.2 Write to the complainant with the outcome of the complaint.

6 Formal Complaint Stage One

Once the complaint file has been set up and all relevant staff have been informed, the member of staff dealing with the complaint should:

- 6.1 Investigate the matter by considering the issues raised by the complainant.
- 6.2 Discuss the matter with colleagues at the Staff Team meeting to ensure all aspects of the complaint are fully covered.
- 6.3 Respond to the complaint within ten working days.
- 6.4 In the event that the complainant does not feel that the matter has been dealt with fully they may wish for the complaint to be looked at again by someone else. In this case the complainant should be directed to stage 2 of the complaints and suggestions procedure.

7 Formal Complaint Stage Two

- 7.1 If the complaint is at this stage then it will need to be passed to the Chair or in her/his absence, another member of the Executive Committee to deal with. The member of staff who has been dealing with the complaint to date should pass the complaint file to the Chair stating:

7.1.1 What the original complaint was

7.1.2 Details of the handling of the complaint to date

- 7.2 The Chair should investigate the matter through discussion with the relevant member of staff and respond to the complainant within ten working days. If this deadline cannot be met then the complainant should be informed and notified of an achievable date.

8 Formal Complaint Stage Three

- 8.1 It should be a rarity for a complaint to reach stage three. If the complainant feels having had responses through stages one and two, that the matter has still not been resolved then the file should be referred to the next meeting of the Board of Trustees stating:
- 8.1.1 What the original complaint was
 - 8.1.2 Details about the handling of the complaint to date.
- 8.2 The Committee should investigate the matter and respond within ten working days.

9 Annual Report and Review

- 9.1 The Board shall receive an annual report on complaints and suggestions made during the year, and review the workings of the policy.

Policy amended: October 2023

Next review: October 2024