

## COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURE Resources (NE) Ltd

Resources (NE) Ltd views complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person or organisation that has made the complaint.

### **Our policy is:**

1. To ensure that making a complaint is an easy process.
2. To publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint.
3. To treat a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction of our service which we will respond to immediately.
4. To deal with it promptly, politely and, when appropriate confidentially.
5. To make sure everyone at Resources (NE) knows what to do if a complaint is received.
6. To make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way.
7. To make sure that complaints are wherever possible resolved, and that appropriate relationships are repaired
8. To gather information which helps us to improve what we do.

### **Definition of a Complaint**

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of Resources (NE) Ltd

### **Where Complaints Come From**

Complaints may come from both internal and external customers, stakeholders, members of the general public or any person or organisation who has a legitimate interest in Resources (NE) Ltd.

A complaint can be received verbally, by phone, by email or in writing.

This policy does not cover complaints from staff; staff should use Resources (NE) Ltd.'s Discipline and Grievance policies.

### **Confidentiality**

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

### **Responsibility**

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the Managing Director who could delegate the complaint down to a member of the Senior Management Team for investigation.

## **DEALING WITH A COMPLAINT**

### **Stage One**

Written complaints may be sent to Resources (NE) Ltd, by post, or if the complainant has a direct contact details by email. Verbal complaints may be made by telephone or in person to any of our centres. All centre addresses and telephone numbers can be found on our web-site [www.resourcesneltd](http://www.resourcesneltd).

### **Receiving Complaints**

Complaints may arrive through channels publicised for that purpose or through any other contact details or opportunities the complainant may have.

Complaints received by telephone or in person need to be recorded.

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

1. Write down the facts of the complaint.
2. Take the complainant's name, address and telephone number.
3. Note down the relationship of the complainant to Resources(NE) Ltd
4. Tell the complainant that we have a complaints procedure.
5. Tell the complainant what will happen next and how long it will take.
6. Where appropriate, ask the complainant to send a written account by post or by email so that the complaint is recorded in the complainant's own words.

### **Process**

1. In many cases a complaint is best resolved by the person responsible for the complaint that has been made. If the complaint has been received by that person they should endeavour to resolve it as swiftly as possible, as long as it is within their role of capabilities of the scope of the complaint.
2. Whether or not the complaint has been resolved, the complaint information must be passed to the appropriate senior manager within one day of the complaint being logged.
3. Upon receiving the complaint it should be recorded in the complaints log. If it has not already been resolved, an appropriate person should be delegated to investigate it and to take appropriate action.
4. If the complaint relates to a specific person they should be informed and given a fair opportunity to respond.
5. Complaints should be acknowledged by the person handling the complaint within 1 week. The acknowledgement should say who is dealing with the complaint and when the person complaining can expect a reply. A copy of this complaints procedure should be attached
6. Ideally complainants should receive a prompt definitive reply. 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.

7. Whether the complaint is justified 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.

## **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 Director Level. The request for a higher level review should be requested by the complainant within 1 week of receiving the initial complaint outcome. At this stage the complaint will be passed to the relevant member of the Senior Management team who will carry out the required investigations. An acknowledgement will be sent to the complainant to say who will now be dealing with the complaint and when the complainant can expect a reply. The Director may investigate the facts of the case themselves or delegate a suitably senior person to do so.

This may involve reviewing:-

1. The paperwork of the case and speaking with the person who dealt with the complaint at Stage One.
2. If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a further opportunity to respond.
3. The person who dealt with the original complaint at Stage One should be kept informed of what is happening.
4. Ideally the complainant should receive a definitive reply within four weeks. 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.
5. 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.
6. The decision taken at this stage is final, unless the Directors decide it is appropriate to seek external assistance with resolution such as a national body or other independent organisations.

### **Guidance for Handling a Verbal Complaint.**

1. Remain calm and respectful throughout the conversation.
2. Listen - allow the person to talk about the complaint in their own words.
3. Sometimes a person just wants to "let off steam"
4. Don't debate the facts in the first instance, especially if the person is angry.
5. Show an interest in what is being said.
6. Obtain details about the complaint before any personal details.
7. Ask for clarification wherever necessary.

8. Show that you have understood the complaint by reflecting back what you have noted down.
9. Acknowledge the person's feelings (even if you feel that they are being unreasonable)  
This can be done without making a comment on the complaint itself or making any admission of fault on behalf of the organisation. e.g. "I understand that this situation is frustrating for you"
10. If you feel that an apology is deserved for something that was the responsibility of our organisation, then apologise.
11. Ask the person what they would like done to resolve the issue.
12. Be clear about what you can do, how long it will take and what it will involve.
13. Don't promise things you can't deliver.
14. Give clear and valid reasons why requests cannot be met.
15. Make sure that the person understands what they have been told.
16. Wherever appropriate, inform the person about the available avenues of review or appeal.

#### **Handling Complaints Well:**

1. Demonstrates our commitment to our clients and other stakeholder.
2. Demonstrates our commitment to providing the best possible service.
3. Helps us to find out about things that have gone wrong so we can fix them.
4. Helps us to prevent things going wrong again in future.

#### **Review**

***This policy will now be reviewed annually or at such time that an amendment is required prior to the review date.***