

## MRS Independent Living



Policy and guidance topic	Formal complaints (from service users and other agencies)
Last updated	February 2022
Due for review	February 2024
Appendix	MRS Complaints Form

### **Purpose**

MRS Independent Living ('MRS') aims to provide a high quality service for all of its service users, and we therefore take seriously any and all concerns of our service users and those of the organisations working with them. We view complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to make things right for the person (or organisation) that has made the complaint.

### **Scope**

This policy covers complaints received from service users and others connected to the delivery of our services. It does not cover complaints from staff and volunteers, who should refer to the organisation's Grievance and Disciplinary policies.

### **Aims**

Our aims are to:

- Provide a fair complaints procedure that is clear, easy and timely for anyone wishing to make a complaint
- Publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint
- Ensure all staff and volunteers know what to do if a complaint is received
- Ensure all complaints are dealt with fairly, proportionately and without undue delay

- Ensure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired where they can be
- Gather information that helps us improve our services.

If service users or others are dissatisfied with any aspect of our service, as an organisation we will benefit from hearing about it. All staff should encourage service users to report concerns if they have them. This will ensure we are aware of the areas in which we can improve how we carry out our work.

### **Complaints procedure**

If concerns are raised informally, staff should first work with the person reporting concerns to understand the issues and see if the concerns can be resolved informally. The staff member should inform the Director that issues have been raised and ask for advice if necessary.

If it does not seem possible to resolve concerns informally, the person has the opportunity to make a formal complaint. A formal complaint may be made verbally, by phone, by email or in writing. It may also be supplied as an audio recording, and in any language. If the complainant requires help doing this, they can ask the Director for support.

- If the complaint is made verbally or by phone, the staff member who receives the complaint in the first instance should record brief details and the person's contact information, and email these to the Director.
- If the complaint is made by email or in writing, the complaint should be marked '**FAO Director: private and confidential**' and emailed to [complaints@mrsindependentliving.org](mailto:complaints@mrsindependentliving.org), or posted to MRS at the address below.

**MRS Independent Living  
The Adiaha Antigha Centre  
24-30 Dalston Lane  
London  
E8 3AZ**

The MRS complaints form may be used by staff or the complainant as a template, but does not have to be. The complaints form is attached as appendix 1.

The Director should enter the details of the complaint into the MRS complaints log. The complaint will then be dealt with following the stages outlined below.

Staff should continue to work with the complainant to attempt to resolve matters informally, if this seems appropriate.

## **Formal complaints**

### **Stage 1: Investigation and response by Director**

- Formal complaints will be investigated by the Director. In the event that the complaint concerns the Director, this stage will be carried out by the Assistant Director instead.
- The Director will acknowledge the complaint and start their investigation within 48 hours.
- The Director will seek to understand the finer details of the complaint and what the person feels needs to be done to resolve it. This may involve an initial phone call with the complainant, and will involve talking to relevant staff members and/or volunteers.
- If the complaint concerns work done in the complainant's home, the Director will offer to visit the complainant as soon as possible. This has been shown to significantly reduce the stress experienced by the complainant and makes it much more likely that a resolution will be reached.
- The Director will respond formally within 10 working days of receipt, setting out their view of what has happened and what action the organisation proposes to take.
- They will send a copy of their response to the Chair of Trustees for information and in case of appeal.
- If the complainant is unhappy with the response received, they may appeal through stage 2 of the complaints procedure.

### **Stage 2: Appeal to Chair of Trustees**

- If users are not happy with the response received from the Director, they can appeal to the Chair of Trustees.
- The complainant should do this in writing or using another appropriate medium as outlined above, and should set out any areas of dispute and any further points they wish to make.
- The appeal should be marked '**For the attention of: Chair of Trustees (Private and Confidential)**' and sent by email to [appeals@mrsindependentliving.org](mailto:appeals@mrsindependentliving.org) or to the postal address above.
- The Chair will investigate the matter (or nominate a deputy), looking at all documents relating to the earlier investigation and talking to relevant staff members and/or volunteers.

- A written response to the appeal will be provided within 15 working days.
- If the complainant is still unhappy with the response received, they may progress to stage 3 of the complaints procedure.

### **Stage 3: Local Government Ombudsman**

- If complainants feel they have suffered an injustice after they have exhausted the MRS complaints procedure, they can raise the matter with the Local Government Ombudsman.
- This can be done by using their online form, ringing 0300 061 0614 or using their call back service by texting “call back” to 0762 481 1595. The Ombudsman has information in a wide range of languages and media.
- Note that the Ombudsman will generally only accept cases that have been through the full complaints procedure of the organisation being complained about.

### **How complaints will be evaluated**

In judging complaints, managers and Trustees will generally be considering whether the organisation has met its own goals in terms of service quality, efficiency and inclusivity.

Should they feel that the complaint requires the organisation to review general policy issues, they will raise these at a Management Committee meeting and inform the complainant that this has been/will be done.

### **Review of complaints**

On an annual basis, the Director will report the number of complaints received to the Management Committee and note how many of them were resolved. In addition, they should report any significant increase in numbers or changes in types of complaints at the next Management Committee meeting.

### **Related policies**

This policy should be read, used and reviewed in conjunction with:

- Whistleblowing policy
- Confidentiality policy
- Equal Opportunities policy





**MRS Independent Living  
Complaints Form**

You can use the form below as a template to make a complaint to MRS management about a service you have received or an experience you have had.

The complaint should be marked '**FAO: Director (private and confidential)**' and emailed to [complaints@mrsindependentliving.org](mailto:complaints@mrsindependentliving.org), or posted to MRS at the address below.

**MRS Independent Living  
The Adiaha Antigha Centre  
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You can also make a formal complaint by telephone or in person if you prefer. To do so, please contact the Director on 0330 380 1013 to make an appointment.

<b>Information about the person completing this form</b>	
Name	
Address	
Phone number	
Email address (if available)	
Date complaint submitted to MRS	

<b>Information about the person affected (only if different from the person making the complaint)</b>
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## Appendix 1: MRS formal complaints form

Person affected's name	
Their address	

Please tell us about your complaint (give as much information and detail as you can).

Please tell us what you think we can do to help resolve the complaint.

Thank you for taking the time to tell us about your complaint. We are sorry this situation has arisen and we hope we can work with you to resolve your concerns. You will receive an acknowledgement of the complaint within 48 hours of submission, and a full response within 10 working days. Please contact us on 0330 380 1013 if you have any concerns in the meantime.

Please note that making a formal complaint does not mean complainants cannot use MRS services – please continue to use them as you would normally, if you feel it is appropriate.