



Complaints Policy

This procedure is for use by complainants from outside Carers Federation and by service users.

How to make a complaint

Carers Federation is strongly committed to investigating complaints promptly and thoroughly, and to learning from them, as part of our commitment to improving our processes and providing high quality services.

Carers Federation defines a complaint as: 'a clear expression of dissatisfaction about the standard of service, action or lack of action by the Federation or its staff affecting an individual or group'.

This information is designed to help you make your complaint. If you require assistance in making a complaint, a member of staff will help you formulate and express your complaint.

Commitment

Carers Federation wishes to settle complaints quickly and informally at your first point of contact. We can normally sort out mistakes and misunderstandings quickly and the people who can best do this are those who provide the service.

If your complaint cannot be resolved in this way, these procedures are here to assist you. Your complaint should be made in writing (via email or letter).

Carers Federation is committed to dealing with all complaints in an efficient and understanding way. To do this we will:

- take all complaints seriously;
- deal with complaints as quickly as possible;
- send an acknowledgement letter to you within five working days if we cannot deal with your complaint immediately;
- aim to send you a final written answer within 10 working days of receiving your complaint;
- keep you regularly informed if we cannot answer you in 10 working days;
- make sure you get a letter explaining the result of your complaint;

- treat you with respect;
- make sure we treat your complaint in confidence;
- look at the pattern of complaints and try to improve areas with continuing problems.

For all complaints, the following three-stage procedure is used. Complaints may be resolved at any of the three stages. You may decide to take a complaint to the next stage if you remain dissatisfied.

Stage 1

Wherever possible we will try to deal with your complaint at the service point involved. We can usually sort out simple mistakes or misunderstandings straightaway. Always keep a record of the details of your complaint, who you spoke to and their response to you.

The person investigating will aim to:

- (i) resolve the complaint, or
- (ii) recommend action to whoever is in the best position to resolve the complaint.

Stage 2

If you are unhappy with the way your complaint has been dealt with at stage 1 you should contact the Manager of the service you wish to complain about.

The Service Manager will:

- acknowledge that your complaint has been received;
- begin their independent investigation;
- aim to write a reply to you within 10 days detailing the outcome.

If more time is required to investigate, the Manager will write to you giving a time limit for the response.

Stage 3

If you are still unhappy you can write to the Senior Manager of Carers Federation Directorate involved. The Senior Manager will look at your complaint independently and make sure it is thoroughly investigated.

Manager names and contact details at Carers Federation:

Chief Executive - r.gardiner@carersfederation.co.uk

Deputy Chief Executive – j.bell@carersfederation.co.uk

All complaints submitted in writing should be addressed to a manager (as above) at the following address: *Christopher Cargill House, 21-23 Pelham Road, Nottingham NG5 1AP.*

The Senior Manager will only investigate your complaint if it has already been investigated under stages 1 and 2 of the complaints procedure.

Whistleblowing

Carers Federation has a policy and procedures for whistleblowing which can be used by the public.

You should use this policy if you have a genuine concern relating to a member of Carers Federation staff or volunteer and that there are reasonable grounds for believing that:

- a) A criminal offence has been committed, is being committed, or is likely to be committed; or
- b) A person has failed, is failing or is likely to fail to comply with their legal obligations; or
- c) A miscarriage of justice has occurred, is occurring, or is likely to occur; or
- d) The health and safety of any individual has been, is being, or is likely to be endangered; or
- e) The environment has been, is being, or is likely to be damaged; or
- f) Any of the above are being, or are likely to be, deliberately concealed.

A copy of the full Whistleblowing policy is available from Human Resources at the above address but we would encourage you to contact them immediately on 0115 9629363 if your concerns fall within any of the above categories.