



# Circles Network Policy

## Complaints Policy

P0034 V3

Circles Network Human Resources

# Introduction

Circles Network welcomes feedback, including complaints which arise regarding our services or operations. These allow us to correct any problems with our service, give us a chance to improve our relationships, and enable us to learn how to improve our service quality.

This policy and procedure is for use by people who are supported by Circles Network, along with their families, advocates, professionals, or others who have an interest in the organisation.

## Circles Network will ensure:

- That people supported and/or all significant people in their lives understand the Complaints Procedure and that it is expressed in a clear and transparent way, provided positively in various formats.
- Wherever possible, complaints will be resolved at a local level.
- Circles Network will record all suggestions, concerns and complaints received and any action taken.
- Circles Network are committed to be fair to both complainant and respondent.
- Confidentiality will be maintained as far as is practicable and the complainant will be kept informed of the progress of the investigation, along with reasons for any delays.
- Where a complaint involves external agencies, there will be full co-operation with that agency in seeking to resolve a complaint.
- All formal complaints and the response made to them will be recorded and stored for a period in line with data handling and protection procedures.

## Procedure

1. If you have a complaint to make, it should be made to the manager or other senior member of staff within the service, who will initially try to resolve the issue informally.

2. If the issue is serious, or you are not satisfied after raising it with the service manager, you should make a formal complaint.

3. A formal complaint should be made in writing\*, marked Private & Confidential and sent to the Head of Operations who will acknowledge it in writing (normally within seven days of receipt). Remember to keep a copy of your letter. \* If you need an interpreter or advocate to assist you in making a complaint, then this can be arranged for you.

4. The Head of Operations may contact you regarding your complaint during their investigation. They will communicate the results of the investigation to you within a reasonable time - normally 30 days.

5. You have the right - if dissatisfied with the results of the investigation - to put your appeal case in writing to the Chief Executive Officer.

6. If you are dissatisfied with the final outcome, then you may wish to take it to a regulatory body such as OSCAR or The Charity Commission in England.

7. Where appropriate, Circles Network will make a written apology to the complainant and agree any further action necessary to make good the cause of the complaint and prevent similar future cause for complaint.

8. The Board of Trustees shall be informed by the Chief Executive Officer at the first available meeting of the number and nature of any formal complaints and their outcome, and consideration will be given to the implications these have for the planning and management of future services annually, as part of Circles Network's self-evaluation.

## Time Restriction

New complaints will only be investigated if they are raised within 24 months of the incident/issue occurring.

## Repeated Complaints

While we encourage open communication, we recognise the importance of avoiding the repetitive investigation of the same issue, which can hinder progress and consume resources. Therefore, we reserve the right to decline multiple complaints on identical/related matters. Subsequent complaints concerning the same issue will not undergo further investigation, except in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of our leadership team.

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