

Complaints Comments Or Compliments

COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Approach Lodge operates in a spirit of openness and respect and with a non-judgmental attitude. We encourage honest feedback on the quality of our services and invite comments on how our services might be improved. It is crucial that we enable people with concerns to raise them without fear or retribution or a sense that they will not be taken seriously. Our philosophy includes the principle that people should be assisted to learn from mistakes whilst recognising that intentional or malicious wrongdoing needs to be dealt with swiftly and firmly. Complaints from any source will be dealt with openly and honestly involving, where appropriate, the statutory authorities and the Police. The approach taken will be transparent, firm but fair, ensuring all parties are listened to and decisions made in an informed manner and on a basis of best belief and not prejudice.

All complaints will be taken seriously and a simple procedure made available for all who wish to complain.

The Complaints Policy and associated Procedure apply to all complaints whether Approach Lodge staff, clients, clients' service-users, members of permanent staff, relatives, or other interested parties. The Complaints Policy and associated Procedures should be seen as an "umbrella" for the various policies and procedures that are available to cater for specific types of incident/complaint.

The Complaints Procedure details how complaints can be made and to whom. It further describes how the complaint may then be dealt with and, depending upon the nature of the complaint, via other Approach Lodge procedures designed for specific situation or types of complaint.

The Policies and Procedures covered under the "umbrella" of this policy are:

Whistle Blowing policy January 1998

Sexual Abuse policy January 1996

Racial Harassment April 1998

Sexual Harassment policy 1996

Anti-discrimination and Anti-Harassment March 1997

IMPORTANT NOTES

We at Approach Lodge are always working to improve our services for our clients. However, if you have something to say about our services we want YOU to tell US.

COMPLAINTS, COMMENTS OR COMPLIMENTS

We hope that YOU are satisfied with OUR services as a provider of temporary staff. However, there maybe times when you have reason to complain, if so we need to know what your complaint is so we can investigate and correct any problems for the future.

This Complaints Booklet contains a form for you to use if you have a complaint, comment or compliments.

If we are unaware of your complaints you may have we are unable to put our complaints procedure into practice.

YOU can contact US by:

Writing to or sending us the complaints form to:

The Manager
Approach Lodge
2 Approach Road
London
E2 9LY

Or telephoning us on: 020 8981 2210

Or Faxing us on: 0208 981 2210

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE (How to make a complaint)

Approach Lodge aims to provide services to meet the needs of its clients, the service-users of our clients and our employees, and to do so in ways that reflect the values of Approach Lodge. However, should there be times when you feel that Approach Lodge has failed to meet this aim and you feel unable to resolve the issue yourself, you may wish to make a formal complaint. Should this be the case, then we would like to hear from you.

You have the right to complain and this is how you do it:

As a client of Approach Lodge we need to be made aware immediately of any complaints. Please talk to your Consultant at Approach Lodge who will record your complaint and provide you with a copy of this record detailing the nature of the complaint and to whom it was made. Your complaint will be investigated. However, if your complaint is about work conduct and you are not satisfied with a member of our staff then a replacement staff member will be offered. If the complaint is regarding one of our staff's misconduct associated with one or more of your service users then that member of staff will be suspended pending a formal investigation.

Note: It is the policy of Approach Lodge to give any client who has genuine concerns about a situation the opportunity to voice these concerns with the knowledge that his/her complaint will be taken seriously.

If you are involved in either making a complaint or are subject to an investigation you may make use of REC Legal Advice help line

ANOYMOUS COMPLAINTS

Approach Lodge encourages people to take responsibility for their complaint and supports open comment. Approach Lodge does not encourage anonymous complaints but in exception cases some people may feel this is the only way they can make a complaint. Anonymity can, and almost always does, cause difficulties due to lack of information that inhibits the investigation process. Anonymous complaints will be investigated with reference to the guidelines above.

The Whistle blowing Procedure is available to clients who may feel that they need support to air their complaint/grievance.

Respect

Whilst we understand that feelings may be running high, all complaints must be made in a respectful manner, bearing in mind that there is always more than one perspective or point of view.

Complaints recording and monitoring

All formal complaints must be recorded using the complaints form and copies sent immediately to:

The Manager at Approach Lodge
The complainant - to acknowledge the complaint

Approach Lodge must have a complaints record on site containing:

A copy of the complaints procedure in a language that can be easily understood
Copies of all complaints forms

A copy of procedural guidance notes

All complaints directed through a formal investigation process must be clearly identified, and the details and nature of the problem under investigation must be recorded.

The Manager of Approach Lodge will look into any apparent local trends or outstanding complaints, and will make recommendations as to how these may be addressed.

COMPLAINTS AND ABUSE

Definitions

A minor complaint is one that involves discontent, inconvenience or discomfort but is not considered abusive or life threatening.

A serious complaint is one that may result from any act that has or could be perceived as having jeopardised the well-being of another person or can be considered an illegal act.

Abuse is any act that wilfully deprives a person of his/her rights that may cause actual physical injury or emotional harm to that person. This would include physical assault, the improper or unauthorised use of physical or chemical restraint, neglect, withholding of food, any form of racial or sexual abuse, the misappropriation of Service Users finances and psychological abuse including malicious teasing, ignoring and verbal threats (see Adult Abuse policy).

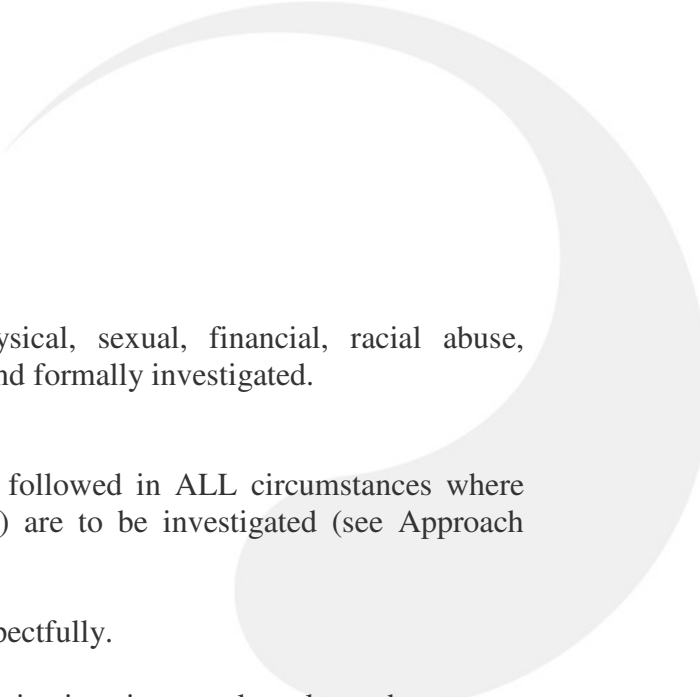
Note: Further guidance can be found in the Adult Abuse policy.

A grievance can be defined as a situation in which an employee of Approach Lodge feels that s/he has a personal difficulty relating to an issue at work, for example, a management decision that is perceived as unfair, a duty roster that is considered to be unfair, a policy or procedure relating to staff management that has not been followed, or any other perceived difficulties which are staff or work related.

Whistle blowing is a term used to describe a situation where an employee has genuine concerns about a situation but needs some reassurance or safety to voice these concerns.

COMPLAINTS - ADDITIONAL NOTES FOR GUIDANCE

Throughout this document where the word “must” is used this should be considered mandatory, where “should” is used this indicates best practice.



All complaints regarding any verbal, physical, sexual, financial, racial abuse, harassment or neglect must be immediately and formally investigated.

Local Adult Protection procedures must be followed in ALL circumstances where abuse issues regarding your services user(s) are to be investigated (see Approach Lodge Adult Abuse Protection Policy).

ALL complaints received must be treated respectfully.

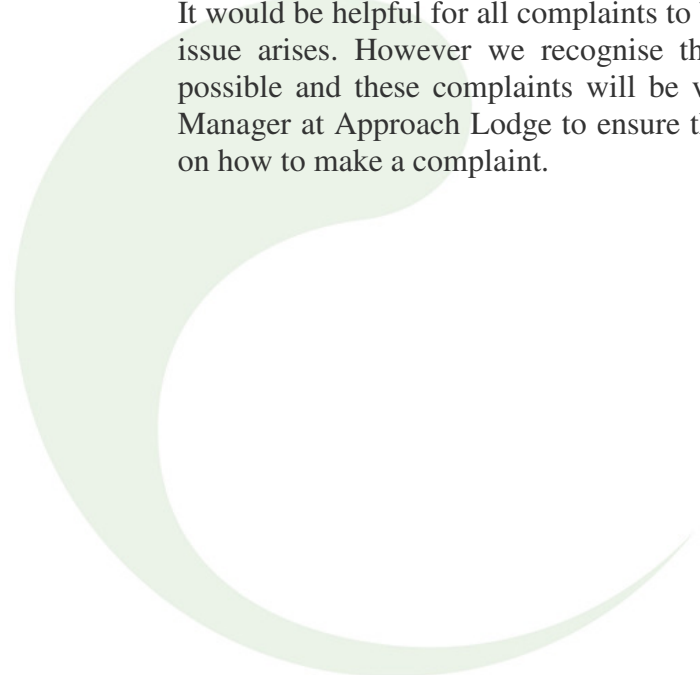
IN ALL situations where a formal investigation is to take place the person investigating must ensure that the complainant is briefed and given regular progress reports. Under all circumstances where a complaint has been made one person should be appointed to communicate with the alleged perpetrator. This person should keep the alleged perpetrator informed of the progress of the investigation. If a formal investigation has been instigated or it is assessed that a complainant may be at risk of intimidation the confidentiality of the complainant must be upheld.

In the case of a minor complaint it may be beneficial to hold a three-way meeting to try to resolve the issue.

ALL complaints regarding working conditions or service quality must be resolved as soon as possible. It may not be necessary to invoke a formal process at the time and every attempt should be made to deal with local problems as they arise without compromising the individual's right to complain.

ALL minor complaints must be acted upon within 14 days of receipt.

IN ALL situations where a serious complaint has been received action **MUST** be taken within 24 hours of the complaint being made.



It would be helpful for all complaints to be reported in a timely fashion, as soon as the issue arises. However we recognise that in some circumstances this may not be possible and these complaints will be viewed sympathetically. It is the duty of the Manager at Approach Lodge to ensure that all staff and clients are given instructions on how to make a complaint.