

SOFT UK

Support Organisation for Trisomy 13/18

SOFT UK Complaints Policy and Procedure

Introduction

SOFT UK is committed to providing an excellent service to its members and other beneficiaries. We aim to work in an open and accountable way that builds trust and respect. We have developed a Complaints Policy and Procedure that explains our approach to receiving complaints.

Our Aim

SOFT UK aims to resolve complaints quickly, fairly and effectively.

- We aim to ensure that:
- Making a complaint is as easy as possible
- We treat a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with our service, which calls for an immediate response
- We deal with it promptly, politely and when appropriate confidentially
- We will respond in the correct way – for example, with an explanation, an apology or information on any action taken
- We will learn from complaints and use them to improve that services that we offer
- We review annually our complaints policy and procedures

SOFT UK recognizes that many concerns raised will be informal and we aim to deal with these quickly. In the first instance we would expect any complaint to be raised directly with the member of staff, volunteer or Trustee concerned. But if concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, then the formal complaints procedure should be followed.

Definition

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction with our services (whether justified or not) with SOFT UK, with a member of staff, with a volunteer, or with a SOFT UK Trustee, that relates to SOFT UK and that requires a formal response.

Purpose

SOFT UK's complaint procedure is intended to ensure that all complaints are handled fairly, consistently and wherever possible resolved to the complainant's satisfaction.

- SOFT UK's responsibility will be to:
- Acknowledge the formal complaint in writing
- Respond within a stated period of time
- Deal reasonably and sensitively with the complaint
- Take appropriate action if required

The complainant's responsibility is to:

- Raise their concerns promptly and directly with the person concerned and if their concerns cannot be resolved satisfactorily informally, then to follow the formal complaints procedure as detailed
- Explain the problem as clearly and fully as possible, including any action taken to date
- Allow SOFT UK a reasonable amount of time to deal with the matter as detailed in the formal complaints procedure
- Recognise that some circumstances may be beyond the control of SOFT UK.

Monitoring and Reporting

For each quarterly Board meetings Trustees of SOFT UK will receive a report of complaints make and their resolution.

Confidentiality

Except in exceptional circumstances, every attempt will be made to ensure that both the complainant and SOFT UK maintain confidentiality. However the circumstances giving rise to the complaint may be such that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality. Should this be the case, the situation will be explained to the complainant.

Principles of the Complaints Policy

- The Complaints Policy will apply to all the services provided by SOFT UK.
- If at any time during the investigation of a complaint matters arise that warrant investigation under disciplinary proceedings, or through criminal investigation, the complaints procedure will be suspended until these investigations are concluded. Similarly, the complaints procedure should be suspended if a complainant is actively seeking legal redress.
- At any stage of the formal complaints procedure SOFT UK may review a complaint and give decision, without a formal investigation, where the Chair of the Board of Trustees deems the complaint to be deliberately repetitive or vexatious.
- When appealing against a previous decision, the complainant will be asked to state why they are dissatisfied with how their complaint was handled.

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1. We aim to settle issues quickly and satisfactorily by the member of staff or the relevant Trustee who provides the service. It may be resolved quickly by way of an apology, by providing the service required or by providing an acceptable explanation to the individual.
2. If you are unable to resolve the issue informally and wish to make a formal complaint you should write a formal letter to the Chair of the Board of Trustees. In your letter you should set out the details of your complaint, the consequences for you as a result, and the remedy you are seeking.

Our contact details are:

SOFT UK, 48 Froggatts Ride, Walmley, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands B76 2TQ

Email: enquiries@soft.org.uk

Tel: 07923 056132

URL: www.soft.org.uk

3. The Chair of the Board of Trustees, in conjunction with the Trustees responsible for the relevant area of SOFT UK's work, will normally respond within 10 working days to inform you of the action that will be taken to investigate the complaint, and the expected timescale of the investigation.
4. The outcome of the investigation will be communicated to you in writing with details of any action taken and a time-scale for implementation (if applicable and appropriate). This information will also be presented to the Board of Trustees at the next quarterly Board meeting.
5. Staff and Trustees concerned should report back to the Chair of the Board of Trustees within ten days of their receipt of the outcome of the complaint, explaining how they have implemented any recommendations.
6. Should you be dissatisfied with the outcome you should be informed of your right to seek legal redress or to make representation to any appropriate statutory body including the Charity Commission and the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator:

The Charity Commission
PO Box 1227
Liverpool L69 3UG
0845 3000 218
www.charity-commission.gov.uk

Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR)
2nd Floor
Quadrant House
9 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY
<https://www.oscr.org.uk>

Policy issue date: September 2014

Policy agreed by the Board of Trustees: 14 September 2014

Policy reviewed by the Board of Trustees: 20 September 2015

Review Date: September 2016