

# Complaints Policy



## 1. Introduction

MB Housing Management Services Limited (MBH) aims to make it easy for clients and their tenant-members to let us know if they are unhappy with the services that we provide. We recognise that there will be times when we may get things wrong, and we will always respond positively and effectively to your concerns.

We will make the process easy for clients and tenant-members to make a complaint when they are dissatisfied with the service they have received. We will accept complaints over the phone, in person, in a letter / email or through our website (currently under production).

We will always consider each complaint on its own merits, however, we will not normally accept a complaint about something that happened more than six months previously.

## 2. Our definition of a complaint

We define a complaint as *“a formal dissatisfaction with a policy, procedure, service or contractual duty.”* This means we will not restrict what people can make a complaint about.

## 3. Objectives of the complaint policy

Our objectives are:

- ◆ To ensure that complaints are dealt with in a courteous and effective manner and resolved promptly;
- ◆ To provide an accessible way for clients and their tenant-members to register a complaint if they are unhappy with the service they have received;
- ◆ To learn from complaints and use them to shape the services we deliver.

## 4. The process

Responsibility for addressing complaints rests with the Director of MBH. In cases where the client co-operative expresses dissatisfaction with the service being provided under the terms of the service agreement, they should in the first instance raise their concerns with the Co-operative Support Manager for their contract before making a formal complaint. Clients should also note that the service

agreement offers a formal disputes mechanism which may sometimes be more of a appropriate method of resolving a dispute.

We will aim to respond to all complaints within the time-scales set out below. If during the investigation there is a reason why we cannot provide a full response within our target time-scales, the director will write to the complainant to advise them when they can expect to receive one.

Process Stage	Action	Target
One	Complaint received. Acknowledgement letter / email sent out.	Within 2 working days
Two	Investigation carried out and written response sent.	Within 10 working days

We will be honest and open about what we can and cannot do to meet the expectations of the complainant. When we respond to a complaint, we will set out:

- ◆ If we have upheld the complaint or not. We may fully or partially uphold a complaint.
- ◆ What, if any action we will take as a result of the complaint.
- ◆ How long it will take us to complete actions we have promised to take.
- ◆ Whether any compensation will be payable, and how much compensation will be.

### **5. The things we cannot consider under the complaints policy**

MBH cannot accept complaints from any person who is in a legal dispute with us. This includes where legal proceedings have started, or if we think legal proceedings are a likely outcome of a dispute. Matters that have previously been the subject of legal action will not be reconsidered under the complaints process.

We may also not accept something is a complaint on the first occasion that we are told about it. For instance, when tenant-members report anti social behaviour or repairs we could not have been expected to know about in advance.

Nor can MBH accept complaints which relates to the policies, procedures or actions of a client co-operative. We will instead forward such complaints to the Secretary of the Co-op concerned so that they can investigate under their own complaints process.

### **6. Vexatious and persistent complaints**

Although MBH intends that its complaints process should be open to everyone, there may be times when we consider that a complaint is acting unreasonably and that it would not be a constructive use of our time to continue a dialogue.

We will consider that a complainant is acting unreasonable if we receive repeated complaints about the same subject, or multiple letters / emails and telephone calls about the same complaint.

In deciding whether a complainant is acting unreasonably we will use the definition of 'unreasonable behaviour' and 'persistent complaints' provided by the Independent Housing Ombudsman.

## **7. Monitoring, reporting and review**

The Director of MBH will be responsible for keeping a record of complaints and a report will be provided to the Annual General Meeting detailing the overall number of complaints received, the nature of the complaints, what action was taken (if appropriate), the lessons learnt and the changes (if any) that were made as a result.

We will advise quarterly in the monthly management report we supply to each client co-operative of any complaints that have been made by the co-operative's tenant-members.

This policy will be reviewed annually. It will also be reviewed if there are changes to relevant legislation.