

Complaints Policy

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Author	Melanie Martin
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MB Housing

Supporting housing co-ops in London and Kent

MB Housing Management Ltd: 167-169 Great Portland Street, Fifth Floor, London W1W 5PF
Call: **020 3924 2810** Email: **enquiries@mbhousing.uk** Web: **www.mbhousing.uk**

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1. Introduction

1.1 MB Housing Management Services Limited (MBH) is committed to delivering high-quality housing management services to our client housing co-operatives and their tenant-members.

1.2 We recognise that, despite our best efforts, there may be occasions when our services do not meet expectations.

1.3 We welcome complaints as an opportunity to put things right; improve our services and strengthen the relationships we have with our clients and their communities.

1.4 We aim to make it straightforward for clients and tenant-members to raise concerns or complaints. Complaints can be made by telephone, in person, in writing, by email or via our website.

1.5 Every complaint will be considered fairly, impartially and on its own merits. We will normally only investigate complaints relating to events that occurred within the previous six months, however, we may exercise discretion where there are exceptional circumstances that prevented the complaint from being raised sooner.

2. Definition of a Complaint

2.1 MBH defines a complaint as:

> *"An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions, lack of action, policy, procedure or contractual duty provided by MB Housing Management Services Limited, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected."*

2.2 We will not unnecessarily restrict what people can complain about.

3. Objectives of this Policy

3.1 The objectives of this policy are to:

- provide an accessible and straightforward complaints procedure;

- ensure complaints are handled fairly, consistently and courteously;
- investigate complaints thoroughly and respond promptly;
- resolve complaints wherever possible at the earliest opportunity;
- learn from complaints and use the lessons identified to improve our services;
- maintain confidence and accountability in the services we provide.

4. How we respond to Complaints

4.1 Complaints management rests with the Head of Housing & Repairs and the Director of MB Housing Management Services Limited.

4.2 Where a client housing co-operative is dissatisfied with services delivered under the Management Agreement, concerns should be raised with the Director.

4.3 Complaint Timescales:

Stage	Response	Target Timeframe	Responsible
One	Complaint received	Day 1	Head of Housing & Repairs
	Acknowledgement	Within 5 working days	
	Full Response	Within 10 working days of acknowledgement	
	If more time is needed	Update given explaining reasons for delay and revised timeframe	
Two	Complaint received	Day 1	Director
	Acknowledgement	Within 5 working days	
	Full Response	Within 20 working days of acknowledgement	
	If more time is needed	Update given explaining reasons for delay and revised timeframe	

4.4 The complaint will be investigated by the appropriate person at each stage. Where the complaint concerns the Director, an alternative person will be appointed to investigate the matter.

4.5 We aim to provide a full written response within the time frames in the table at 4.3 and if additional time is required to complete the investigation, we will write to the complainant explaining:

- why there is a delay;
- what further action is being taken; and
- when a full response can be expected.

4.6 When we respond to complaints our response will explain:

- whether the complaint has been upheld, partially upheld or not upheld;
- the reasons for our decision;
- any actions we will take to remedy the matter; and
- the timescale for completing those actions;

4.7 Where we have made a mistake, we will acknowledge it openly and apologise where appropriate.

5. Complaints we cannot consider

5.1 There are certain matters that fall outside this complaints policy.

5.2 MBH will normally not investigate complaints:

- where legal proceedings have commenced;
- where we reasonably believe legal proceedings are likely;
- where the matter has already been determined by a court or tribunal;
- relating solely to the decisions, policies or actions of one of our client housing co-operatives.

5.3 Where a complaint relates to the actions or decisions of a client housing co-operative, we will refer the complainant to the relevant co-operative's own complaints procedure and, where appropriate, forward the complaint to the Co-operative Secretary.

5.4 Clients should also note that the Management Agreement contains a separate dispute resolution procedure for contractual disputes between MBH and the client co-operative.

5.5 MBH is committed to ensuring that everyone has the right to raise concerns and have them properly considered. However, there may be occasions where a complainant's behaviour becomes unreasonable because they:

- repeatedly raise the same complaint after it has been fully investigated;
- submit excessive correspondence or make repeated telephone calls about the same issue;
- refuse to accept a reasonable outcome without providing new evidence;
- behave in a manner that is abusive, threatening or offensive towards staff.

5.6When considering whether behaviour is unreasonable, MBH will have regard to the guidance issued by the Housing Ombudsman regarding unreasonable behaviour and persistent complaints.

5.7 Any decision to restrict contact with a complainant will be proportionate, recorded and communicated in writing, explaining the reasons for the decision and any review arrangements.

6.Equality and Accessibility

6.1 MBH is committed to ensuring that this complaints procedure is accessible to everyone.

6.2 Where required, we will make reasonable adjustments to enable people to make a complaint which may include providing information in alternative formats, arranging interpretation or translation services, or communicating through an agreed representative.

6.3 No person will be disadvantaged in accessing the complaints process because of disability, language, age or any protected characteristic.

7. Monitoring, reporting and learning

7.1 The Director will maintain a register of all complaints received.

7.2 Where complaints have been received that relate to a client housing co-operative, MBH will include a summary within its regular management reports. This will include:

- the number of complaints received;
- the nature of the complaints;
- outcomes achieved;
- lessons learned; and
- any service improvements introduced.

7.3 An annual report on complaints will also be presented to each client's Annual General Meeting where complaints have been received during the year.

7.4 MBH is committed to using complaints as an opportunity to improve the quality of the services we provide.

8. Policy Review

8.1 This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner where there are changes to legislation, regulation, Housing Ombudsman guidance or operational requirements.

9. How to exercise your rights

9.1 To exercise your rights, please contact:

Ashleigh Martin – Head of Housing and Governance
MB Housing Management Limited
enquiries@mbhousing.uk
167-169 Great Portland Street, Fifth Floor, London W1W 5PF
020 3924 2810

9.2 When you contact us, please provide sufficient information so that we can identify you and understand your request.