

**FIRM FOUNDATION TRUST
COMPLAINTS
HANDLING
POLICY AND
PROCEDURE**

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Terms:

“FFT” or “The Trust” refer to “Firm Foundation Trust.”

“Trustees” refers to the legal Directors or Trustees of the Trust.

Introduction

FFT views any legitimate complaint as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as an opportunity to put things right for the person or organisation that has made the complaint, should the complaint be upheld.

Definition of a Complaint

A complaint is a written or verbal expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about an individual acting on behalf of FFT, or about policies and procedures of FFT.

Who Can Make a Complaint

Complaints may come from any person or organisation who has a legitimate interest in FFT.

Complaints Handling Policy

Our policy is:

- To provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint;
- To publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint;
- To ensure that the relevant people at FFT know what to do if a complaint is received;
- To ensure that all complaints are investigated impartially and in a timely manner;
- To ensure that any person complained about has the right to know the details of any allegations made against them;
- To ensure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired and restored;
- To gather information which helps FFT to improve what it does.

Data Protection and Confidentiality

To process a complaint, FFT will hold personal data about the complainant, which the individual provides and which other people give in response to investigating the complaint. We will hold this data securely in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and only use it to help address the complaint. The identity of the complainant will only be made known to those who need to consider the complaint and will not be revealed to other people or made public. However, it may not be possible to preserve confidentiality in some circumstances, for example where relevant legislation applies or allegations are made which require the involvement of, or include the conduct of third parties.

Under the Data Protection Act 1998, individuals have a right to obtain a copy of their personal data. However, there are exceptions to this right as detailed in the aforesaid Act.

Responsibility

Overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation lies with FFT's Board of Trustees.

Complaints Handling Procedure

We implement this in the following way.

Stage One

If any individual or organisation has a complaint against any of FFT's employees (should there be such) or Trustees they should first speak to that person and seek to resolve any issue between them in an attitude of mutual respect. If the complaint is about any of the policies of FFT the complainant should proceed to the step of writing to the FFT chair of the Trustees outlined under stage two.

Stage Two

In the event that the matter remains unresolved the complainant should submit the complaint in writing to the chair of the Trustees. The letter should make clear the nature of the complaint, include all relevant information and personnel relating to the complaint and be signed and dated by the complainant. The chair will raise the complaint with one or more of the Trustees. FFT Trustees believe that every opportunity should be given for any complaint to be treated seriously and resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant and the Trust and its representatives. At this stage notes should be taken of all discussions and correspondence from both parties.

The Trustees will within ten working days of receiving the letter reply in writing to the complainant acknowledging receipt of the letter. The Trustees will undertake to write a considered reply within 28 days. The Trustees will consult together before writing to the complainant to suggest ways of resolving any legitimate issue in an attitude of mutual respect.

Stage Three

If the response given at Stage Two does not resolve the complaint to the satisfaction of the complainant, the complainant must write to the chair of the of the Trustees of FFT giving the reason for the lack of satisfaction with the response. The chair should write a reply within ten working days, offering to have a formal hearing of the complaint by a mutually agreed third party qualified to arbitrate in such disputes.

Both the complainant and FFT must agree that the arbitrator's decision should be accepted as binding.

A written complaint should be addressed to Firm Foundation Trust, Challenge House, 29 Canal Street, Glasgow G4 0AD.