

ACT Ubumbano

Complaints Policy and Procedure [FINAL – adopted 230404]

1. Our Aim

ACT Ubumbano is committed to working in an open and accountable way that builds trust and respect. One of the ways in which we can continue to improve our work is by listening and responding to the views of our partners and stakeholders, and in particular by responding positively to complaints, and by correcting mistakes.

Therefore we aim to ensure that:

- making a compliment or complaint is as easy as possible,
- we welcome compliments, feedback, and suggestions,
- we treat a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with our work which we deal with it promptly, politely and, when appropriate, confidentially,
- we respond in the right way - for example, with an explanation, or an apology where we have got things wrong, or information on any action taken, etc.,
- we learn from complaints, use them to improve our work, and
- we recognise that many concerns will be raised informally, and dealt with quickly.

Our aims are to:

- resolve informal concerns quickly,
 - keep matters low-key, and
 - enable mediation between the complainant and the individual to whom the complaint has been referred.
- This policy ensures that we welcome compliments and provide guidelines for dealing with complaints from members of the public about our work, our board, our staff, and where appropriate our volunteers.

2. Definitions

A compliment is an expression of satisfaction about the standard of service we provide.

A complaint is defined as any expression of dissatisfaction, however it is expressed. This would include complaints expressed face to face, via a phone call, in writing, via email or any other method. It may be expressed by an organisation or an individual. All staff should have sufficient knowledge to be able to identify an “expression of dissatisfaction” even when the word “complain” or “complaint” is not used.

3. Responsibilities

ACT Ubumbano’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, and
- take action where appropriate.

A complainant's responsibility is to:

- bring their complaint, in writing, to ACT Ubumbano's attention normally within 4 weeks of the issue arising,
- explain the problem as clearly and as fully as possible, including any action taken to date,
- allow ACT Ubumbano a reasonable time to deal with the matter, and
- recognise that some circumstances may be beyond ACT Ubumbano's control.

4. Confidentiality

Except in exceptional circumstances, every attempt will be made to ensure that both the complainant and ACT Ubumbano maintain confidentiality. However the circumstances giving rise to the complaint may be such that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality (with each complaint judged on its own facts). Should this be the case, the situation will be explained to the complainant.

5. Complaints Procedure

The formal complaints procedure is intended to ensure that all complaints are handled fairly, consistently and wherever possible resolved to the complainant's satisfaction. Written records must be made by ACT Ubumbano at each stage of the procedure.

Stage 1

In the first instance, staff member(s) must establish the seriousness of the complaint. If concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, then the formal complaints procedure should be followed.

Stage 2

If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, the complainant should be advised that a formal complaint may be made and the following procedure should be explained to them. It may be appropriate for the ACT Ubumbano director or board member to make this explanation.

A formal complaint can be made either verbally or in writing. If in writing the attached form should be used. If verbally, a statement should be taken by the staff member, director, or board member.

In all cases, the complaint must be passed on to a staff member. In the event of a complaint about the staff member, the complaint should be passed to the director, and if the complaint is about the director this must be passed on to the chair of the board.

The staff member, director, or board chair, depending on the nature of the complaint, must acknowledge the complaint in writing within one week of receiving it.

One of the above will investigate the complaint. Any conclusions reached should be discussed with the staff member involved.

The person making the complaint will receive a response based on the investigation within four weeks of the complaint being received. If this is not possible then a letter must be sent explaining why.

Stage 3

If the complainant is not satisfied with the above decision then the board will convene a committee to examine the complaint. The committee may wish to conduct further interviews, examine files / notes, etc. They will respond within four weeks in writing. Their decision will be final. <end>

ACT Ubumbano Complaints Form

Organisations or individuals may use this form to make a complaint about ACT Ubumbano, its staff, board, consultants, or volunteers. Please submit the completed form as soon as possible.

Your Name	
Your Email	
Organisation (if applicable)	
Your Contact Number	
Date & Time of Incident	
Location of Incident (if relevant)	

Please describe the incident or complaint

What action would you like to be taken?

What times are convenient for you to have an appointment to discuss this?