

Complaints policy and procedures

Sponsor Refugees (Citizens UK) views complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the individual(s) that has made the complaint.

What is this policy for?

- To make it easy for a Sponsorship group and their group members and resettled refugee individuals or families to report and/or make a complaint
- To provide a fair and timely complaints procedure
- To make sure everyone providing resettlement support knows what to do if a complaint is received
- To make sure that resettled individuals and families know how to make a complaint
- To make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired
- To gather information which helps us to improve on the services provided as part of the sponsorship agreement

What is a complaint?

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of care provided as part of the sponsorship agreement. This will include complaints about:

- The conduct of the Sponsor Refugees team members
- The conduct of a sponsorship group and its members
- The conduct of a resettled family
- The quality of the support received
- Other service providers (e.g. relating to accommodation, interpreters and translators, medical or English Language tuition providers)

Who can make a complaint?

Complaints may come from any member of the resettled family placed in the care of a sponsorship group, or a sponsorship group and/or its members. A complaint can be received verbally, by phone, by email or in writing.

How are details of a complaint managed?

All complaint information will be managed sensitively and with care and confidentiality, telling only those who need to know.

Complaints Procedure

How should a complaint be made?

A complaint should be made at the earliest opportunity by calling directly and speaking with or emailing Laura Griffiths, Assistant Director in the first instance, or Jonathan Cox, CUK Deputy Director.

Laura Griffiths (Assistant Director, Sponsor Refugees) Telephone Email Address	07877 439922 laura.griffiths@citizensuk.org
Jonathan Cox (Deputy Director, Citizens UK) Telephone Email Address	07930 638837 jonathan.cox@citizensuk.org

If this is not possible or is inappropriate to do so due to the nature of the complaint, the complainant should contact safeguarding@citizensuk.org

How should a complaint be responded to?

Complaints received verbally or by telephone should be written down immediately, and a secure record kept.

The person receiving the complaint should:

- Record the complainant's name, address, and contact telephone number
- Write down the **facts** of the complaint
- Remind the complainant of the complaints procedure
- Advise the complainant what will happen next and give an idea of timescales
- If possible, and where appropriate, ask the complainant to follow up by providing a written account of the complaint in their own words

Complaints will receive a written response within **two working days**, including all the above as well as the name and contact details of the person assigned to manage the complaint.

Resolving a complaint

- In many cases, a complaint is best resolved directly by the person being complained about. If the person receiving the complaint feels they may be able to resolve the complaint swiftly they should do so if possible and appropriate.

Whether or not the complaint has been resolved, the complaint information should be passed to Laura Griffiths and Jonathan Cox within **two working days**.

- On receiving the complaint, it will be recorded in the complaints log. If it has not already been resolved, an appropriate person will be designated to investigate it and to take appropriate action.
- Complaints should be acknowledged by the person managing the complaint within **two working days**. The acknowledgement should say who is dealing with the complaint and when the person complaining can expect a reply. A copy of this complaints procedure should also be attached
- If the complaint relates to a specific person, that person should be informed and given a fair and timely opportunity to respond as part of any investigation.
- Ideally complainants should receive a definitive written reply **within 10 working days**. If this is not possible because for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.
- Whether the complaint is justified or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.
- If the complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved, they can ask for the complaint to be escalated

Responding to an escalated complaint

If the complainant feels their complaint has not been satisfactorily resolved following the initial investigation, they can request it is escalated.

At this stage, the complaint will be passed to Sponsor Refugees (Citizens UK). The request for escalation should be made to Jawed Neshat Jawed.Neshat@citizenswales.org.uk, and whistleblowing@citizensuk.org. This should be acknowledged **within two working days** of receiving it.

The designated person should acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing and advise the complainant how their appeal will be managed.

The designated person may investigate the fact of the case themselves or delegate a suitably senior person to do so. This may involve reviewing the paperwork of the case and speaking with the person who dealt with the initial complaint.

The same process outlined in v) - vii) above should be followed.

Any individuals who dealt with the original complaint should be kept informed and given ample opportunity to explain the reasons for the original decision.

Variation of the Complaints Procedure

Sponsor Refugees (Citizens UK) may vary the procedure for good reason. This may be necessary to avoid a conflict of interest, for example, a complaint about a person who is responsible for reviewing a complaint.

Monitoring and Learning from Complaints

Complaints are reviewed periodically to identify any trends which may indicate a need to take further action.

Language Translation

A copy of this complaints policy is made available to the resettled family in their own first language. This will be included as part of their welcome pack provided on their arrival at their new home.

Translation into the appropriate language is also provided, as necessary, both for the complaint itself and for subsequent communications during the complaint process, including the final response.

Who is responsible for this policy?

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with Sponsor Refugees.

Appendix A: Complaints Form

This form is to help Sponsor Refugees and you have a record of what the problem is and when it happened.

Name of person(s) making the Complaint	Date of complaint
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