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Changes Log:

Change to – page no	By	Date
Bringing policy up to date around roles and format, and new logo.	Sam Palmer, Rob Wardle	April 2023
Review of the policy, job titles and updated logo.	Sam Palmer	May 2024
Review of the policy, updated email address	Sam Palmer	May 2026

Context

Respect for All tries to give the best service possible. There may be times when this is not the case. We would like to know about it and have the chance to put things right.

Making a complaint means speaking up about something you do not like, or something you are not happy with.

Making a complaint or a comment about services from Respect for All, helps us to get things right, and to make things better in the future.

We also like to hear compliments about the things Respect for All is doing well. We like to share them with our team and the board so that we can feel what we are doing is appreciated by those that need it the most.

Introduction

This complaints procedure is intended for users of Respect for All services, contractors, partner organisations, and the public.

Serious complaints about the quality of service provided by an individual counsellor, should first be addressed with reference to the BACP (British Association of Counselling Psychotherapist) Ethical Framework and Respect for All Quality Standards.

The Trustees will nominate an appropriately qualified lead professional to investigate and advise on appropriate steps in the case of professional issues raised by a complaint.

Confidentiality

Only the person dealing with the complaint, the COO, CEO, Trustees, and (where relevant) the person against whom the complaint is being made, will have knowledge of the complaint, its progress, and outcomes. Matters relating to the complaint may be discussed by a counsellor as part of supervision or counsellor meetings. This will be subject to the counsellor's usual policies on confidentiality.

Procedure

When someone wishes to make a complaint, it will be treated confidentially, the following procedure should be adopted:

The complaint should be received either in writing via email or by a request to the

Counselling Coordinator to make a verbal complaint.

Step 1 – Informal

The complainant should be invited to discuss the complaint with a member of management team at Respect for All. Informal complaints can be made via email to enquires@respectforall.org.uk or via telephone on 0161 532 4070.

This can be in person or over the phone, whichever is appropriate. An accurate record will be kept of what is said.

Respect for All should endeavour to resolve the issue as quickly as possible or at a maximum of within 14 working days from the date the complaint is received. If this is not possible, the complainant will be informed with a reason why and a new timescale agreed with them.

If agreement cannot be reached and the complainant is still dissatisfied, they will be asked if they wish to go on to the next stage, making a formal complaint. In this case the complainant will be given full details of the formal complaints' procedure.

Step 2 - Formal

This stage involves a more formal investigation of the complaint, reaching a judgement on it and deciding on how best to sort things out.

Formal complaints can be made via email to enquires@respectforall.org.uk or via telephone on 0161 532 4079.

The COO (or person nominated by the COO) will acknowledge the complaint in writing within 5 working days. If the complaint is against the COO, the CEO will acknowledge the complaint.

A suitable person within the management team or board member who has no prior knowledge of the issues raised where possible will investigate the complaint. This will involve inviting the complainant to put details of the complaint in writing, and/or interviewing the complainant and others, to establish the facts.

The complainant will receive a written response within 28 days of the complaint being made. The response will summarise what investigation has been carried out, and what action is proposed to resolve the complaint.

The complainant will be offered a verbal response, where a written response would be unsuitable.

The complainant has the right to support from a third party, or advocate, if they wish.

The person complained against has the right to support from a third party, or advocate, if they wish, during investigation of the complaint.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the way the investigation has been carried out, the conclusion reached, or the proposed action, they can decide to go on to stage 3 of the procedure. This decision to go to the next stage should be made within 28 days.

Stage 3 – Review

The review panel will comprise of:

- A member of the Board
- A Respect for All Counsellor (not subject to any part of the complaint)
- An independent person (who will act as chair)

No member of the review panel will have been involved with the complaint at any previous stage, to ensure impartiality.

7 days written notice should be given of the review meeting. All parties will be given notice to submit papers (or audio recordings) to the panel. These papers will be included with the written notice of the review meeting to the panel members and the complainant. If the complaint is against an individual that person will also be given the papers.

The review meeting will be as informal as possible. The complainant may attend if they wish.

The complainant will be informed they can bring a person of their choice for support if they wish.

The review panel will then consider their action in private and write to the complainant with their decision within 7 days of the meeting. Papers will be given to all attending the meeting.

If the complaint is against an individual, they will also be written to within 7 days. The decision of the panel is final.

Recording

All complaints will be recorded and kept on file and will be treated subject to the confidentiality policy.

A report will be made yearly to the management committee summarising the nature of complaints and how they were resolved, and any anonymised themes that should be addressed.