

**MySmallHelp UK charity no. 1123830 ('MSH')**  
**Complaints Policy**  
**- updated to 2 September 2018**

## **Introduction**

MSH is committed to providing an excellent service to its beneficiaries and other stakeholders working in an open and accountable way that builds trust and respect. We have developed a Complaints Policy that explains our approach to receiving complaints.

## **Our Aim**

MSH aims to resolve complaints quickly, fairly and effectively. One of the ways in which we can continue to improve the services that we provide is by listening and responding to the views of our beneficiaries, donors, team members, volunteers, partners and stakeholders and in particular responding positively to complaints, and by putting mistakes right. We aim to ensure that:

- making a complaint is as easy as possible;
- we treat a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with our service which calls for an immediate response;
- we deal with it promptly, politely and when appropriate confidentially;
- we will respond in the correct way – for example, with an explanation, or an apology or information on any action taken;
- we will learn from complaints and use them to improve the services that we offer;
- we review annually our complaints policy and procedures.

MSH recognises that many concerns raised will be informal, and we aim to deal with these quickly. In the first instance we would expect any complaint to be raised directly with the member of staff concerned. But if concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, then the formal complaints procedure should be followed.

## **Definition**

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction with our services; whether justified or not; with MSH, with a member of staff, or with an MSH Trustee, that relates to MSH and that requires a formal response.

## **Purpose**

MSH's complaint procedure is intended to ensure that all complaints are handled fairly, consistently and wherever possible resolved to the complainant's satisfaction.

MSH'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;
- take appropriate action if required;

The complainant's responsibility is to:

- raise their concerns promptly and directly with the person concerned and if their concerns cannot be resolved satisfactorily informally, then to follow the formal complaints procedure as detailed;
- explain the problem as clearly and as fully as possible, including any action taken to date;
- allow MSH a reasonable amount of time to deal with the matter;
- recognise that some circumstances may be beyond MSH's control.

### **Monitoring and Reporting**

Trustees of MSH will receive regularly a report of complaints made and their resolution, prepared to protect confidential information and names.

### **Confidentiality**

Except in exceptional circumstances, every attempt will be made to ensure that both the complainant and MSH maintain confidentiality. However the circumstances giving rise to the complaint may be such that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality. Should this be the case, the situation will be explained to the complainant.

### **Principles of the Complaints Policy**

- The Complaints Policy will apply to all the services that MSH provides.
- If at any time during the investigation of a complaint matters arise that warrant investigation under disciplinary proceedings, or through a criminal investigation, the complaints procedure will be suspended until those investigations are concluded. Similarly, the complaints procedure should be suspended if a complainant is actively seeking legal redress.
- Where a complaint is against a member of staff they should be informed of the support services available to them.
- The Trustees should be informed of the receipt of any formal complaint. A complete record of the entire process should be kept. A copy of all reports, transcripts of interviews and other relevant information should be forwarded to the Trustees for review.
- MSH may, at any stage of the formal complaints procedure, review a complaint and give a decision, without a formal investigation, where the Trustees deem the complaint to be deliberately repetitive or vexatious. Examples of such complaints being unsubstantiated or repetitive complaints against an individual or service, or where a complaint has previously been investigated and appropriate action taken.
- When appealing against a previous decision, the complainant will be asked to state why they are dissatisfied with how their complaint was handled.