

# **Customer Complaints Policy**

## **1. Our aims**

1.1 Evenbrook aims to take a positive approach to customer complaints. Taking regular account and reviews of feedback enables Evenbrook as a landlord to continually improve the service provided to tenants.

## **2. Upon receiving a complaint we aim**

- 2.1.1 To deal with the complaint in an efficient and courteous manner.
- 2.1.2 To provide tenants with a formal means of communicating their dissatisfaction.
- 2.1.3 To maintain formal record of complaints made.

## **3. Who can complain?**

- 3.1.1 Anyone dissatisfied with the service, actions or lack of action of the landlord.
- 3.1.2 Someone acting on behalf of and with the permission of the above.
- 3.1.3 Anonymous complaints may be acted upon at the discretion of the management.

## **4. Rights of complainants**

- 4.1.1 Complainants have the right to have a friend or relative support them in the complaining process.
- 4.1.2 Complainants have the right to confidentiality.
- 4.1.3 Complainants have the right to be kept informed of the progress of their complaint.
- 4.1.4 Complainants have the right to be informed of any changes in policy following a complaint.

## **5. Rights of Evenbrook Staff**

- 5.1.1 Staff members have the right to be treated with courtesy and respect at all times.
- 5.1.2 Staff members have the right to be supported by a senior or other member of staff during the complaints process.

## **6. Publicity**

- 6.1.1 The complaints procedure will be publicised on the company website.
- 6.1.2 Written copies will be made available on request.
- 6.1.3 Large print or brail copies are also available.

## 7. How to complain

- 7.1.1 Complaints may be made in writing, by email or by telephone.
- 7.1.2 Complaints do not need to be addressed, in the first instance, to the department concerned.
- 7.1.3 Any member of the Evenbrook team may accept and log an initial complaint.
- 7.1.4 Complaints made via email should be addressed to [complaints@evenbrook.co.uk](mailto:complaints@evenbrook.co.uk)
- 7.1.5 Written complaints should be marked for the attention of the appropriate department and addressed to:

Evenbrook Group  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Brecon House  
Browns Green  
Birmingham  
B20 1FE

## 8. Stages of Complaint

Complaints can be set out in three stages as detailed below:

### 8.1 Stage 1: Informal

- 8.1.1 Wherever possible the complaint will be dealt with quickly and informally, at the time or within a few days. It is envisaged that the vast majority of complaints will be resolved in this way.

### 8.2 Stage 2: Formal Investigation

- 8.2.1 Where complaints can not be resolved immediately or where complainants remain dissatisfied following stage one, a formal investigation is to be undertaken.
- 8.2.2 This investigation will be undertaken by a more senior member of staff than investigated the matter at the first stage.
- 8.2.3 The investigating member of staff will be a member of the department concerned.
- 8.2.4 The member of staff will be responsible for ensuring that a thorough investigation is carried out and for the reporting of the findings of the investigation.
- 8.2.5 Where appropriate some complaints may be directly referred to stage 2.

### 8.3 Stage 3: Review

- 8.3.1 If the complainant continues to be dissatisfied following stage 2, the complaint can be reviewed by the Director.
- 8.3.2 The Director will be responsible for ensuring a full and thorough review is carried out.
- 8.3.3 The actual review may be delegated as appropriate.
- 8.3.4 The Director will also be responsible for ensuring that the results of the review are communicated to all relevant parties.

### 8.4 Stage 4: The Housing Ombudsman

- 8.4.1 If, after having completed the full in house complaints procedure, you remain dissatisfied with the outcome, you may take your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman.
- 8.4.2 The Housing Ombudsman provides a free and fair service to complainants wishing to complain about landlords that are members of the Housing Ombudsman service.
- 8.4.3 Further details about the Housing Ombudsman and how to forward your complaint are available on request.
- 8.4.4 Large print and brail version are also available.

## 9. Cross Departmental Complaints

- 9.1.1 If a complaint should involve more than one department, a 'lead' department will be nominated to address the issue and liaise with the complainant.

## **10. Letters of Acknowledgement**

- 10.1 Shall set out:
- When the complaint was made
  - Where the complaint was made (if appropriate)
  - Who took the complaint
  - The nature of the complaint
  - Who will be handling the complaint
  - The expected resolution timescale

## **11. Procedure**

### **11.1 Stage One Procedure**

- 11.1.1 The purpose of stage one is to try to resolve the complaint informally and at the first opportunity.
- 11.1.2 The person receiving the complaint will record it and either formally acknowledge or fully resolve the complaint in writing within three working days.
- 11.1.3 If the complaint cannot be immediately resolved, the complainant will be advised that further enquiries will be carried out and a response will be made as soon as possible and within a maximum of 10 working days.
- 11.1.4 If the complaint cannot be resolved within 20 working days of the original complaint, the complainant will be informed of the reasons by written correspondence and the complainant will be offered the opportunity to progress to stage 2.
- 11.1.5 The full response at stage one will advise the complainant of their right to escalate the complaint to stage 2 if they are not satisfied with the outcome of the stage 1 investigation and resolution.
- 11.1.6 The complainant will be advised that they have a maximum of 28 days within the date of the full response letter to take any further action. Enquiries

### **11.2 Stage Two Procedure**

- 11.2.1 The purpose of stage 2 is to formally investigate the complaint, consider the findings and make a decision about the outcome.
- 11.2.2 Stage 2 procedure will be implemented:
- When a complaint cannot be resolved at stage 1
  - When the person complaining is not satisfied with efforts to resolve the complaint at stage 1
  - When the complainant wishes (and an appropriate senior member of staff agrees) to start proceedings at the formal investigation stage
  - When a complaint is received via the Ombudsman
- 11.2.3 All formal complaints are to be recorded in writing by the receiving member of staff and forwarded to an appropriately senior member of staff in the department concerned.
- 11.2.4 A member of staff is appointed to ensure a formal investigation is undertaken.
- 11.2.5 The appointed member of staff must ensure all actions are logged and recorded and that all progress is made within set timescales.
- 11.2.6 The investigating member of staff will normally require the cooperation of other departments. Any information requested of these departments must be provided within 5 working days.
- 11.2.7 In response to the complaint a full and written reply will be provided to the complainant as soon as possible or within a maximum of 20 working days.

- 11.2.8 When the response time is expected to exceed 20 working days a written explanation and update is to be provided to the complainant. Further updates should be provided at least every 10 days until a resolution is achieved.
- 11.2.9 The head of the department concerned should ensure that the formal response clearly represents the views of the department. Where appropriate, a senior member of staff should also be consulted to ensure they have reviewed and agree with any actions proposed.
- 11.2.10 If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they should be informed that they have up to 28 days from the date of the formal response to escalate their complaint to stage 3.

### **11.3 Stage Three Procedure**

- 11.3.1 The receipt of formal request for a review should be confirmed in writing within 3 working days.
- 11.3.2 The confirmation of receipt should include details of how the review is to be conducted.
- 11.3.3 The Director will be responsible for ensuring that a full and thorough review of the initial complaints procedure is carried out.
- 11.3.4 The Director will give a final decision on whether or not the investigation carried out and the actions proposed to rectify the situation were adequate.
- 11.3.5 This decision will be communicated to the complainant in writing and the complainant will be informed of this and made aware that if they remain dissatisfied with the outcome that they may contact the ombudsman.

## **12. Monitoring and evaluation**

12.1 All complaints co-ordinators (members of staff taking complaints) should keep a record of the following:

- 12.1.1 Date the complaint was received from the complainant
- 12.1.2 12.1.2 Date the complaint was acknowledged by an appropriate member of Evenbrook staff
- 12.1.3 12.1.3 Date the complaint was responded to
- 12.1.4 12.1.4 Stage of procedure at resolution
- 12.1.5 12.1.5 Nature of complaint
- 12.1.6 Staff behaviour
- 12.1.7 Landlord's decision
- 12.1.8 Service standard
- 12.1.9 Failure to provide a service
- 12.1.10 Inadequate provision of information
- 12.1.11 The report will also include a summary of any action taken or policies amended following the complaint.

# **Complaints Form**

**Date complaint received:**

**Date formally acknowledged:**

**Nature of complaint:**

**Summary of issue raised:**

**Summary of response and any actions taken:**

**Stage of procedure at resolution:**

**Staff member:**