



## 6. Compliments and Complaints Policy and Procedure

### 1. Policy Statement

1.1 SUPPORT OUR PARAS strives for high standards in everything that it does and welcomes feedback from individuals, intermediaries, charities and anyone who works with us, on all aspects of our work. Such feedback is an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person (or organisation) that has made the complaint, or feedback to individuals or teams following receipt of a compliment.

1.2 The objectives of the Compliments and Complaints Policy are to:

- Ensure everyone knows how to provide feedback and how a complaint will be handled
- Ensure that complaints are dealt with consistently, fairly and sensitively within clear and acceptable timeframes
- Ensure that compliments and complaints are monitored and used to improve our services.

1.3 We will ensure that we:

- Listen carefully to complaints and treat complaints as confidential, where possible
- Record, process, store and manage all complaints accurately and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998
- Investigate the complaint fully, objectively and within the stated timeframe
- Notify the complainant of the result of the investigation and any right to appeal
- Inform the complainant of any action that will be implemented as a result of the complaint, where appropriate
- Report, on a quarterly basis, the number of compliments and complaints received, the outcomes of investigations and any actions taken.

### 2. Definition of a Complaint

2.1 A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction by an individual, whether justified or not. An individual may make a complaint if they feel we have:

- Failed to provide a service or an acceptable standard of service
- Delayed in providing a service
- Made a mistake in the way we provide a service
- Failed to act in a proper way
- Provided an unfair service.

2.2 This policy and procedure relates only to complaints received about SUPPORT OUR PARAS and its services. Individuals who make complaints about partner organisations will be notified in writing within one working day of receipt of the complaint that they need to complain to the organisation they have the complaint with, and will be provided with contact details, where possible.

### 3. Compliments and Complaints Procedure

#### 3.1 Compliments

Any verbal or written compliments will be recorded by the member of staff receiving the compliment and be passed to the appropriate manager for recording on the Compliments Register. Any member of staff identified as being the subject or contributing to any matter given rise to the compliment will be notified within three working days. Feedback on compliments will be shared with employees at appropriate timings.

#### 3.2 Complaints

##### Stage One

- 3.2.1 We aim to settle issues quickly and satisfactorily. It may be resolved quickly by way of an apology, by providing the service required or by providing an acceptable explanation to the individual.
- 3.2.2 Individuals wishing to make a formal complaint should contact SUPPORT OUR PARAS by emailing [secretary@supportourparas.org](mailto:secretary@supportourparas.org) or writing to us at: RHQ PARA, Merville Barracks, Colchester CO2 7UT.
- 3.2.3 On receipt, each complaint will be allocated a unique reference number and logged on the Complaints Register. Details of the complaint will be emailed immediately to the Complaints Investigator.
- 3.2.4 Complaints will be acknowledged within one working day of receipt. The complaints will be fully investigated and a written response, either hard copy or email, provided to the complainant by the investigator within 20 working days of receipt. In exceptional circumstances where this deadline is not able to be met, the complainant will be advised of the reasons for this and notified of a revised date for response.
- 3.2.5 The Complaints Register will be updated by the Secretary and any pending complaints flagged so they are followed up by the relevant manager.
- 3.2.6 Individuals will be advised that if they are not satisfied with the response to their complaint, they may appeal within 14 working days and progress to Stage Two.

##### Stage Two

- 3.2.7 The Director will investigate personally. This person may need to contact the complainant to clarify the issues, conduct the investigation and explore resolution. The complainant will receive written confirmation of the outcome of any investigation within 20 working days of receipt of the appeal together with any recommendations/remedies made, such as, staff development and training, reviewing of policies or appropriate improvement to our services. The outcome should not refer to any individual employee or groups of employees. Where the complaint is against the Director, any investigation will be conducted by the Regimental Secretary.
- 3.2.8 Occasionally, investigations may take longer, particularly if the complaint is complex. Should this be the case, a holding letter will be sent after 20 working days and a final date given for a conclusion to be reached.
- 3.2.9 If an individual remains dissatisfied with the outcome from Stage Two they can request an Independent Review within 14 working days of the date of the outcome letter and progress to External Stage.

## External Stage

3.2.10 The complainant can complain to the Charity Commission <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity>

## 4. Anonymous Compliments and Complaints

4.1 Compliments and complaints received anonymously will be recorded and considered, but action may be limited if further information is required to ensure a full and fair investigation.

## 5. Data Protection

5.1 To process a complaint, we will hold personal data about the complainant, which the individual provides and which other people give in response to investigating the complaint. We will hold this data securely in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and only use it to help address the complaint. The identity of the person making the complaint will only be made known to those who need to consider the complaint and will not be revealed to other people or made public. However, it may not be possible to preserve confidentiality in some circumstances, for example, where relevant legislation applies or allegations are made which involve the conduct of third parties.

5.2 Under the Data Protection Act 1998, individuals have a right to obtain a copy of their personal data. However, there are exceptions to this right. We will normally destroy compliments and complaints files in a secure manner six years after the compliment has been made or the complaint closed.

## 6. Monitoring

6.1 Compliments and complaints are an important tool which, alongside data provided by exit surveys, user feedback and focus groups, will allow us to learn more about the services we provide. They offer a useful source of information about how individuals see our charity and how we are service them. To ensure we can learn from compliments and complaints, the following data will be collected:

### Compliments:

- Name and address
- Nature of the compliment
- Date of compliment
- Action(s) taken/recommendations made in response to the compliment, if appropriate.

### Complaints:

- Name and address
- Name of person dealing with the complaint
- Date of complaint and response date
- Nature of complaint
- Action(s) taken/recommendations made in response to the complaint
- Lessons learnt.

6.2 Compliments and complaints information will be considered on a quarterly basis by the SUPPORT OUR PARAS Board of Trustees. Wherever possible the data will be used to improve and develop the service.