



Comments, Compliments and Complaints Our Policy and Procedure

1. Our Commitment

1.1 **West Midlands Employers is committed to providing an efficient and good standard of quality services.** We will take seriously any concern or complaint and will look into it promptly, for resolution as quickly as possible and we aim to act promptly and give helpful, courteous, and informative help and advice.

1.2 We welcome your compliments, complaints, and suggestions as part of our commitment to providing good customer service. We would like to know when we have done things well; if we have failed to provide you with the level of service you expect; or if you have any suggestions for improvements. Our complaints procedure will be part of the process of monitoring the quality, effectiveness and non-discriminatory nature of our services.

1.3 It is important to establish the difference between a concern and a complaint. Taking informal concerns seriously at the earliest stage will reduce the likelihood of their developing into formal complaints. If you have any concerns about our work, please tell our staff or their manager as soon as possible, so they can quickly understand your concerns and try to put things right.

1.4 If you are not happy with the response to your concern and/or you want to make a formal complaint please follow the procedure set out at 3. We will handle all complaints fairly, politely and within agreed timescales and will also pass on any compliments or suggestions for improvement to the relevant staff, whilst respecting your right to confidentiality.

1.5 The purpose of this policy is to ensure everyone knows how to make a complaint and how a complaint will be handled. We will:-

- ensure that complaints are dealt with consistently, fairly and sensitively within clear time frames
- provide individuals with a fair and effective way to complain about our work
- ensure that complaints are monitored to improve our services

2. Types of Complaint

2.1 A complaint might include the following:

- **where you consider the attitude and conduct** of an individual member of staff to be inappropriate
- **where you feel the quality of service** has not met your expectations
- **where you feel that there has been a case of maladministration** e.g. failing to follow the right procedures
- **where you feel that there have been process delays** in receiving information or a response from us

2.2 Depending on the nature of the complaint we will take appropriate steps to investigate and respond to the complainant.

2.3 If we are unable to respond to a complaint because it is outside our jurisdiction, we will let you know and will try to advise you to whom your complaint should be addressed. Examples include;

- A query or comment about government policy
- A complaint about a political party
- A complaint about an individual local authority
- A complaint about a third party service provider

2.4 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.

3. How to make a complaint or share a compliment or suggestion

3.1 There are three stages to the complaint procedure:

Stage One – making a complaint

Stage Two – investigating the complaint and providing a response

Stage Three – appealing a decision or requesting escalation if the complainant is not satisfied with the response

Stage 1: Making a complaint (offering a compliment or suggestion)

You should first communicate your complaint/compliment/comment directly with the person with whom you have been in contact – this may be an informal approach if that is your preference.

You can express your views by letter, email, or telephone but if you do wish to make a formal complaint, we ask that you please set out the details of your complaint in writing. Letters should be addressed to WME, Room 101 JQ Modern, 120 Vyse Street, Birmingham B18 6NF

If you do not have a specific contact at WME you may email your complaint/compliment/comment to info@wmemployers.org.uk A member of our business team will acknowledge receipt of your email and take appropriate action to share the compliment or suggestion, or to ensure the complaint is passed to an appropriate member of our team to handle.

We will acknowledge your communication within 5 working days and advise who will be investigating the complaint, and we will provide you with their contact details.

If the complaint is about the Chief Executive, then the matter will be escalated to a Director to handle, who will investigate the matter with the Chair and Vice Chair of the WME Management Board.

Stage 2: Investigating your complaint

Generally, a complaint will be fully investigated by the relevant Service Manager. A written confirmation of the outcome of any investigation will be provided including any recommendations/remedies made, or appropriate improvements to our services within 15 working days. Where the complaint is upheld, an apology will be offered.

Occasionally investigations may take longer, particularly if the complaint is complex. Should this be the case a holding letter/email will be sent after ten working days and a final date given for a response.

If you remains dissatisfied with the outcome from Stage Two, you can appeal within ten working days of the date of the outcome and progress to Stage Three.

Stage 3: Appeal

If you are not satisfied with the response to a complaint, you may request in writing that the issue be considered by the Director responsible for the service, and you may request this by letter or email.

The Director will acknowledge receipt within three working days, they will review the Stage Two investigation and recommend one of the following actions within ten working days (from the date the complainant requested a Stage 3 appeal).

- Uphold the action taken at Stage Two
- Make changes to the Stage Two recommendation/actions

The complainant should be informed in writing of the outcome of stage three, the decision reached about this complaint will then be final, but other options for appropriate further escalation should be detailed in the letter to the complainant.

4. Complaints of a serious nature

4.1 Our process is designed to enable WME to manage service delivery and quality complaints quickly and efficiently and to ensure good customer service by escalating decisions to our Senior Officer Team as necessary.

4.2 For complaints of a more serious nature relating to misconduct, whistleblowing, potential fraud etc, these should be reported to the Chief Executive. This type of complaint may be escalated to the WME Elected Member Management Board for consideration and to determine if a complaint warrants further independent investigation.

4.3 If the complaint is about the Chief Executive, the complaint should be sent to a Director, who will investigate the matter with the Chair and Vice Chair of the WME Management Board.

5. Our Promise to you

5.1 All communications will be acknowledged within 5 working days and we will :-

- Listen carefully to complaints and treat complaints as confidential, where possible
- Record, store and manage complaints accurately and in accordance with the Data Protection Act
- Investigate the complaint fully, objectively, and within the stated time frame
- Notify the complainant of the results of the investigation and any right of appeal
- Inform the complainant of any action that will be implemented to ensure there is no re-occurrence
- Keep a register of complaints received, the outcomes and any actions taken to help us to continually improve our services

5.2 We strive to provide an excellent service to all who contact us. In return our staff have the right to be treated with courtesy and politeness. If contact or correspondence (including email) is abusive, malicious or constitutes a personal attack, we reserve the right to limit our response to an acknowledgement. If any of our staff are subjected to abusive behaviour, they have been advised to walk away or put the phone down.