

AAFDA

(Advocacy After Fatal Domestic Abuse)

Complaints Policy

Policy Title: Complaints policy

Date Adopted: January 2019

Approved by: Chief Executive Officer

Next Review Date: April 2025

Accountable Person: Frank Mullane, Chief Executive Officer

Version History:

Date	Summary of Change
March 2024	Policy reviewed. Footer updated.
January 2019	New Policy Adopted
August 2021	Policy reviewed. No change
April 2023	

To whom the policy applies: All

Introduction

AAFDA is committed to providing the very highest levels of service and support to clients, partners and supporters. We accept that, at times, things can go wrong and it is important to us to learn from any occasion where we have not achieved these high standards. This policy outlines our process and procedures when a complaint is received.

How to complain

In most cases, the first course of action, should be to raise the problem informally with the person concerned. They will often be able to resolve your concern quickly and simply.

If this is not appropriate, you can contact AAFDA by e-mail, by sending to help@aafda.org.uk for the attention of the CEO or Deputy CEO.

If you do not feel comfortable doing this, you can also write by post to:

Chief Executive Officer, PO Box 3636, Swindon, SN3 9BG.

If your complaint is about the Chief Executive Officer, you can make your complaint directly to the Chair of the Board of Trustees by writing to the following address, marking it 'Private and Confidential':

The Chair, AAFDA, PO Box 3636, Swindon, SN3 9BG.

What to include in your complaint

Please state clearly and briefly:

- What went wrong
- When and where it happened
- Who was involved
- What outcome you would like from your complaint
- Your name, address and contact details

Policy

Our policy is:

- To provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint
- To publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint
- To make sure everyone within AAFDA knows what to do if a complaint is received
- To make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way
- To make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired
- To gather information which helps us to improve what we do

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registered in England and Wales.

Registered Office: 30 Commercial Road, Swindon, England, SN1 5NS

Charity Number: 1185078 Company Number: 9527065

Procedure

Stage 1

AAFDA will:

- Log the complaint as soon as it is received.
- Delegate an appropriate person to investigate the complaint (if it has not already been resolved) and take appropriate action. If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and be given a fair opportunity to respond.
- Within 10 working days of receiving a complaint, acknowledge the complaint in writing. The letter of acknowledgment will outline who is dealing with the complaint and when the person complaining should expect a reply. A copy of the complaints policy will also be attached.
- Within 28 working days of receiving a complaint, the person complaining should receive a full response outlining the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation and action taken as a result of the complaint.
- If it is not possible to meet this timeline because for example, an investigation has not been completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.

Stage 2

If the complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage One, they can request that the complaint is reviewed at Board level.

At this stage, the complaint will be passed to the Board of Trustees. The request for Stage 2 Board level review should be acknowledged within five working days of receiving it. The acknowledgement should say who will deal with the case and when the complainant can expect a reply.

The Board of Trustees may investigate the facts of the case themselves or delegate a suitably senior person to do so. This may involve reviewing the paperwork of the case and speaking with the person who dealt with the complaint at Stage One. The person who dealt with the original complaint at Stage One should be kept informed of what is happening.

If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a further opportunity to respond. Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within a month. If this is not possible because for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given. Whether the complaint is upheld or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint. The decision taken at this stage is final, unless the Board decides it is appropriate to seek external assistance with resolution.

We will aim to resolve all Stage 2 complaints within 28 working days of the Board receiving them.

Stage 3 – External

Should the complainant feel, after Stages 1 and 2, that their complaint has not been satisfactorily resolved, they can contact the Charity Commission. More information can be accessed here:

<https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity>

All complaint information will be handled sensitively, telling only those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements.

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