



Respect Complaints Policy and Procedure For dealing with complaints regarding Respect members

Policy

Respect expects members to provide high quality services in a non-discriminatory way. Members are required to sign Respect's statement of support when they join Respect and to reaffirm their commitment to this when they renew their membership annually. Details are available from Respect.

Respect members who run DVPPs and ISS services are also expected to have achieved or be working towards Respect's safe minimum practice (SMP) standard and/or accreditation. The Respect accreditation standard has been developed to give a system for quality assuring DVPPs and ISS services.

It is our policy to take all complaints regarding our members seriously and to ensure that they are promptly responded to and investigated at an appropriate level. We are also committed, whenever possible, to take action to reduce the likelihood of a recurrence of similar problems.

We expect Respect members to work according to and in support of Respect's statement of support and where applicable the SMP/Accreditation standard. Respect will take breaches of these seriously. Respect reserves the right to revoke membership where there is evidence of a breach and refer a breach of the SMP/Accreditation (Service) standard to the relevant member(s) of Respect staff (for SMP breaches) Accreditation panel (for Accreditation standard breaches), for investigation and a decision regarding SMP/Accreditation status.

The procedures outlined below are intended to be used when an organisation or individual wishes to complain about the action, conduct or quality of service of a Respect member organisation.

Respect will only investigate complaints concerning a current Respect member.

Procedure A

1. In most circumstances a complainant should first follow the complaints procedure of the member organisation/individual. They can then complain to Respect if they are dissatisfied with the process or outcome of that investigation. However, Respect understands that there may be some circumstances where a complainant (service user) may not wish to pursue a complaint directly with an organisation and, therefore, they may ask Respect to lodge a complaint to the member organisation on their behalf. Respect will consider carefully whether or not it can represent the complainant (service user). If Respect does do this then procedure B will be followed.
2. Any complaint about a Respect member should be made to Respect as soon as possible and in any event no later than three months after the matter has been responded to by the member organisation or individual
3. Anybody wishing to complain about a Respect member should initially contact Respect's Membership Manager in writing (via email, fax or post) outlining the details of the complaint with copies of all relevant information including the original letter of complaint and the response from the member organisation (where there was a response), any further correspondence and the alleged breached organisation's Complaints Policy and Procedures.



4. If a Respect member refuses to cooperate with this policy and procedure, Respect may revoke their membership and/or SMP/accreditation status.
5. Upon receipt of a written complaint regarding a member, Respect will
 - acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing within five working days, outlining Respect's powers and limitations regarding the matter and the process that will be followed and arrange a meeting/phone call/skype (as appropriate) to clarify the complaint and agree the action that Respect will undertake.
 - contact the member individual/organisation concerned within two days of confirming receipt of the complaint to inform them of the complaint made against them and requesting information regarding the complaint, including the process followed by their organisation and the outcome. Respect expects to receive this information within five working days of the request being made.
 - Respect will aim to meet with (but if this is not possible use telephone/other means) the complainant to clarify the complaint and then decide what action Respect proposes to take rather than relying on the written submission. Respect will then contact the member organisation that is the subject of the complaint to ensure that the correct questions are asked/information requested from the start.
 - consider the information and response from the member organisation that is in alleged breach and make a decision whether further information or action is required and undertake this accordingly.
6. consider any safety issues that may arise from taking action and endeavour to minimise any potential risks
7. keep the complainant informed
8. keep the member organisation informed
9. undertake further actions as appropriate, draw conclusions from the investigation and make recommendations for any further action in relation to the member organisation or the complainant.
10. notify the complainant and the member organisation of the outcome of the investigation, within 30 days of receiving the complaint, or, as soon as possible, thereafter.
11. Decisions will be confirmed in writing to all parties.
12. If any party remains dissatisfied after investigation, they can appeal to Respect's Chair of the Board (or another nominated member of the Board) within 1 calendar month of the decision. After consideration of an appeal the decision of the Chair of the Board (or the nominated member of the Board) will be final; there will not be any further recourse to appeal within Respect. Details of current Board members are available directly from Respect and are also available on our website www.respect.uk.net
13. Respect will maintain a confidential record of all complaints and the outcomes of any investigations and appeals.



Procedure B - for use when Respect lodges a complaint to a Respect member on behalf of a Respect helplines service user

1. Respect will only investigate complaints concerning a current Respect member.
2. Any complaint about a Respect member should be made to Respect as soon as possible and in any event no later than three months after the matter/last incident occurred.
3. A service user wishing Respect to complain on their behalf about a Respect member should contact Respect's helpline workers outlining the details of the complaint. The Helpline Worker can either transcribe the complaint (and then ask the complainant to check this for accuracy) or ask the complainant to put this in writing themselves.
4. The Respect helpline worker will seek the consent of the complainant to share their personal information with the Respect member. If the complainant does not consent and wishes their details to be anonymised then the helpline workers will explain this and clarify with the complainant what, if any, specific personal information can be shared with the member project.
5. Upon receipt of a complaint regarding a member, from a helplines service user Respect's helplines workers will hand over all details of the complaint to the Membership Manager who will:
 - acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing within five working days, outlining Respect's powers and limitations regarding the matter and the process that will be followed and arrange a meeting/phone call/skype (as appropriate) to clarify the complaint and agree the action that Respect will undertake.
 - contact the member individual/organisation concerned within 2 days of confirming receipt of the complaint to inform them of the complaint made against them, to outline this and to request the member organisations' complaints policy.
 - Respect will then lodge a complaint with the member organisation in line with their complaint policy.
 - consider the information and response from the member organisation that is in alleged breach and make a decision whether further information or action is required by Respect and undertake this accordingly.
 - consider any safety issues that may arise from taking action and endeavour to minimise any potential risks.
 - keep the complainant informed.
 - keep the member organisation informed.
 - undertake further actions as appropriate, draw conclusions from the outcome of the member organisations' investigation and make recommendations to Respect staff for any further action in relation to the member organisation or the complainant. (For example, make a recommendation for a spot check on SMP/Accreditation or to revoke SMP/Accreditation status).
 - notify the complainant and the member organisation of the outcome of the investigation, within 30 days of receiving the complaint, or, as soon as possible, thereafter, depending upon the member organisation's process times.
6. Decisions will be confirmed in writing to all parties.
7. If any party remains dissatisfied, they can appeal to Respect's CEO within 1 calendar month of the decision. After consideration of an appeal the decision of the CEO (or other nominated member of Respect staff) will be final; there will not be any further recourse to appeal within Respect.



8. Respect will maintain a confidential record of all complaints and the outcomes of any investigations and appeals.

Contact

If you wish to make a complaint about a Respect member or would like further information about this policy/procedure please contact Respect's Membership Manager. Email membership.respect@respect.uk.net or telephone 020 7549 0578.